

Talmud Tour – Sunday 11 May 2025 – 13 Iyyar 5785 by Zoom  
8.00pm UK time

Colour code: blue – Talmud Tractate Shabbat 33b-34a, including Rashi and Tosefot; purple – passages from elsewhere in the Talmud and other classical texts; black – Chassidic and other comments

Special session in honour of Lag B'Omer next Thursday night, 15 May.

Shabbat 33b-34a.

Link to this page of Talmud in the standard edition: <https://hebrewbooks.org/shas.aspx?mesechta=2&daf=33b&format=pdf>

ואמאי קרו ליה "ראש המדברים בכל מקום"? דיתבי רבי יהודה ורבי יוסי ורבי שמעון, ויתבי יהודה בן גרים גביהו. פתח רבי יהודה ואמר: כמה נאים מעשיהן של אומה זו: תקנו שווקים, תקנו גשרים, תקנו מרחצאות. רבי יוסי שתק. נענה רבי שמעון בן יוחאי ואמר: כל מה שתקנו, לא תקנו אלא לצורך עצמן. תקנו שווקין — להושיב בהן זונות, מרחצאות — לעדן בהן עצמן, גשרים — ליטול מהן מכס. הלך יהודה בן גרים וסיפר דבריהם, ונשמעו למלכות. אמרו: יהודה שעילה — יתעלה. יוסי ששתק — יגלה לציפורי. שמעון שגניח — יקרג.

In this *baraita* Rabbi Yehuda is described as head of the speakers in every place. The Gemara asks: **And why did they call him head of the speakers in every place?** The Gemara relates that this resulted due to an incident that took place **when Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yosei and Rabbi Shimon were sitting, and Yehuda, son of converts, sat beside them. Rabbi Yehuda opened and said: How pleasant are the actions of this nation, the Romans, as they established marketplaces, established bridges, and established bathhouses. Rabbi Yosei was silent. Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai responded and said: Everything that they established, they established only for their own purposes. They established marketplaces, to place prostitutes**

**in them; bathhouses, to pamper themselves; and bridges, to collect taxes from all who pass over them. Yehuda, son of converts, went and related their statements** to his household, **and** those statements continued to spread until **they were heard by the monarchy. They** ruled and **said: Yehuda, who elevated the Roman regime, shall be elevated** and appointed as head of the Sages, the head of the speakers in every place. **Yosei, who remained silent, shall be exiled** from his home in Judea as punishment, and sent **to** the city of **Tzippori** in the Galilee. **And Shimon, who denounced the government, shall be killed.**

Rashi: וסיפר דבריהם לתלמידים או לאביו ואמו ולא להשמיען למלכות ונשמעו על ידו למלכות: Yehuda told over the conversation to the students, or his parents, not intending the government to hear, but the word got to the government.

Tosafot:

ה"ג ר"ת הלך רבי יהודה בן גרים וסיפר דברים ונשמעו למלכות ויש ספרים שכתב בהן יהודה ואין נראה לרבינו תם דאמרינן בפרק קמא דמועד קטן (דף ט) כי הווי מיפטרי ר' יהודה בן גרים ור"ש בן חלפתא מר' שמעון בן יוחי אמר ליה לבריה אנשים הללו אנשי צורה הם זיל גבייהו דליברכוך מכלל דגברא רבה היה ובסוף שמעתא ל"ג גל: של עצמות בלשון גנאי אלא נח נפשיה:

Tosafot: **This is [the version that] Rabbenu Tam taught:** Rabbi Yehudah, son of converts, went and related statements and they were heard by the government. But there are books in which it is written, "Yehudah" (without the title, Rabbi). But this does not appear [correct] to Rabbenu Tam. For we say in the first chapter of Moed Katan (9a) that when Rabbi Yehudah, son of converts and Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta were parting from Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, he said to his son, "These people are men of noble form; go to them so that they will bless you." It is implied [from this] that he was a great man. And at the end of the discussion, [Rabbenu Tam] did not teach, "[turned him into] a pile of bones," [which] is an expression of disgrace. Rather, "his soul rested."

Note<sup>1</sup> that Rabbi Yehuda ben Rabbi Illay was actually very poor. Because he praised the government, he was elevated to a high public position. At the same time he is a very prominent figure in Talmudic thought. We see his poverty, and also his greatness, from a passage in Nedarim 49b:

דְּבִיתָהּ דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה נִפְקֶת, נִקְטַת עֲמָרָא, עֲבָדָה גְּלִימָא דְּהוּטְבִי. כַּד נִפְקֶת לְשׁוּקָא מִיכְסִיָּא בֵּיהּ, וְכַד נִפִּיק רַבִּי יְהוּדָה לְצִלוּיִי הָהּ מִכְסִי וּמַצְלִי. וְכַד מִיכְסִי בֵּיהּ הָהּ מְבָרַךְ "בָּרוּךְ שֶׁעָטְנִי מְעִיל".

The Gemara further relates: **Rabbi Yehuda's wife went out** to the market, **collected wool**, and **made a thick [huteveī] cloak**. **When she would go out to the market she would cover herself with it**, and **when Rabbi Yehuda would go out to pray he would cover himself with the cloak and pray**. **And when he would cover himself with it he would recite the blessing: Blessed is He who wrapped me in a coat**, as he took much pleasure in it.

זִמְנָא חֲדָא גִּזְר רַבִּין שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל תַּעֲנִיתָא, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה לָא אָתָא לְבֵי תַעֲנִיתָא. אָמְרִין לֵיהּ: לָא אֵית לֵיהּ כְּסוּיָא. שָׂדֵר לֵיהּ גְּלִימָא וְלָא קִבִּיל.

On one occasion Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, the *Nasi*, decreed a fast. Rabbi Yehuda did not come to the house of the fast, where everyone gathered. The people said to Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel: Rabbi Yehuda **does not have** a dignified garment to **cover** himself with, and therefore he shies away from public events. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel **sent him a cloak** of his own, **but** Rabbi Yehuda **did not accept** this gift.

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דְּלִי צִיפְתָּא וְאָמַר לֵיהּ לְשִׁלּוּחָא: חֲזִי מַאי אִיכָא. מִיהוּ, לָא נִיחָא לִי דְּאִיתְהֵגִי בְּהֵדִין עֲלָמָא.

**He lifted the mat [tzifeta] 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

<sup>1</sup> See Likkutei Sichot vol.16 p.39

explained: **However, it is not amenable to me to derive benefit in this world.**

Back to Shabbat 33b:

אָזל הוא ובריה, טָשׁוּ בִּי מִדְּרָשָׁא. כָּל יוֹמָא הָהּ מִתְּנָא לֵהּ דְּבִיתָהּ וְרִיפְתָּא וְכוּנָא דְּמִיָּא וְכַרְכִּי. כִּי תִקְרִי גְזִירְתָּא אָמַר לִיהּ לְבָרִיהּ: נָשִׁים דַּעְתָּן קָלָה עֲלֵיהֶן, דִּילְמָא מַצְעָרִי לֵהּ וּמַגְלִיא לֵן. אָזְלוּ טָשׁוּ בְּמַעְרָתָא. אֵיתְרַחֲשׁ נִיסָא אִיבְרִי לֵהּ חֲרוּבָא וְעֵינָא דְּמִיָּא, וְהָווּ מְשַׁלְחֵי מְנִיָּיהּ וְהָווּ יְתִבִּי עַד צְוֹאֲרֵיהּ בְּחָלָא. כּוּלִּי יוֹמָא גָרְסִי. בְּעֵידָן צִלוּנִי לְבָשִׁי מִכֶּסֶּס וּמְצִלוּ, וְהָדָר מְשַׁלְחֵי מְנִיָּיהּ כִּי הֵיכִי דָלָא לִיבָלוּ. אֵיתִיבוּ תְּרִיסַר שָׁנִי בְּמַעְרָתָא. אָתָּא אֵלֶיהּ וְקָם אִפִּיתְחָא דְּמַעְרָתָא, אָמַר: מָאן לֹודְעִיָּה לְבַר יוֹחֵי דְּמִית קִיסַר וּבָטִיל גְּזִירְתֵּיהּ.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai **and his son, Rabbi Elazar, went and hid in the study hall. Every day Rabbi Shimon's wife would bring them bread and a jug of water and they would eat. When the decree intensified, Rabbi Shimon said to his son: Women have sensitive feelings** and, therefore, there is room for concern **lest the authorities torture her and she reveal our whereabouts. They went and they hid in a cave. A miracle occurred and a carob tree was created for them as well as a spring of water. They would remove their clothes and sit covered in sand up to their necks. They would study Torah all day in that manner. At the time of prayer, they would dress, cover themselves, and pray, and they would again remove their clothes afterward so that they would not become tattered. They sat in the cave for twelve years. Elijah the Prophet came and stood at the entrance to the cave and said: Who will inform bar Yoḥai that the emperor died and his decree has been abrogated?**

**Women have sensitive feelings. Literally:** נָשִׁים דַּעְתָּן קָלוֹת. This could be translated women are 'light of mind'. But a famous Talmudic text states: 'extra בינה יתרה ניתנה באשה יותר מבאיש Understanding was given to the woman, more than to the man' (Nidah 45b). Further a Biblical verse states 'the wisdom of womanhood builds her home' (Mishlei/Prov. 14:1). So one might suggest taking דַּעַת as הרגש, 'feeling', and the meaning of the phrase is that a woman is more sensitive in her feelings, and

hence the Romans might take advantage of this idea and torture her.

נפקו, חזו אינשי דקא פֿרבי וזרעי, אַמרינ: מניחין חיי עולם ועוסקין בְּחיי שְׁעָה. כָּל מָקוֹם שְׁנוֹתָנִין עֵינֵיהֶן מִדְּנִשְׂרָף. יֵצְתָה בֵּת קוֹל וְאַמְרָה לָהֶם: לְהַחֲרִיב עוֹלָמִי יִצְאָתֶם?! חִיזְרוּ לְמַעַרְתְּכֶם! הַדּוּר אֲזוּל אֵיתִיבוּ תְּרִיסַר יָרְחֵי שָׁתָא. אַמְרִי: מִשְׁפָּט רָשָׁעִים בְּגִיחָנָם לְשָׁנִים עֶשְׂרִי חֹדֶשׁ. יֵצְתָה בֵּת קוֹל וְאַמְרָה: צֵאוּ מִמַּעַרְתְּכֶם! נִפְקוּ. כָּל הֵיכָא דְהוּא מְחֵי רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, הוּא מְסִי רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן. אֲמַר לוֹ: בְּנִי, דִּי לְעוֹלָם אָנִי וְאַתָּה.

**They emerged from the cave, and saw people who were plowing and sowing. Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai said:** These people **abandon eternal life** of Torah study **and engage in temporal life** for their own sustenance. The Gemara relates that **every place that Rabbi Shimon and his son Rabbi Elazar directed their eyes was immediately burned. A Divine Voice emerged and said to them: Did you emerge from the cave in order to destroy My world? Return to your cave. They again went and sat there for twelve months. They said: The judgment of the wicked in Gehenna lasts for twelve months.** Surely their sin was atoned in that time. **A Divine Voice emerged and said to them: Emerge from your cave. They emerged. Everywhere that Rabbi Elazar would strike, Rabbi Shimon would heal. Rabbi Shimon said to Rabbi Elazar: My son, you and I suffice for the entire world,** as the two of us are engaged in the proper study of Torah.

The Rebbe points out that ‘you and I suffice for the entire world’ does not mean that they are only concerned for their own elevated and constant Torah study, without regard to anyone else. Rather, Rashbi now feels that what needs to be accomplished for the whole Jewish people by their constant Torah study, can now be accomplished by him and his son<sup>2</sup>. (This might link with what Rashbi said in Succah 45b ‘I am able to exempt the whole world from judgement from my birth till now, and together with my son

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<sup>2</sup> Likkutei Sichos vol.17 p.309.

Eliezer, from the beginning of Creation till now, and if also together with Rabbi Yotam ben Uzziel – from Creation till the end’.)

בְּהָדֵי פָּנֵי דַּמְעָלִי שַׁבָּתָא חֲזוּ הָהוּא סָבָא דְהוּה נְקִיט תְּרֵי מִדְּאֵי אָסָא וְרֵהִיט בֵּין הַשְּׁמָשׁוֹת. אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ: הֲנִי לָמָּה לָּךְ? אָמַר לְהוּ: לְכַבּוֹד שַׁבָּת. וְתִסְגִּי לָךְ בְּחֵד! — חֵד פִּנְגָּד "זְכוֹר" וְחֵד פִּנְגָּד "שְׁמוֹר". אָמַר לֵיהּ לְבָרִיהּ: חֲזִי פֶמָּה חֲבִיבִין מְצוֹת עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל. אֵיתִיבָה דְעֵתִיבָהּ.

**As the sun was setting on Shabbat eve, they saw an elderly man who was holding two bundles of myrtle branches and running at twilight. They said to him: Why do you have these? He said to them: In honor of Shabbat. They said to him: And let one suffice. He answered them: One is corresponding to: “Remember the Shabbat day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8), and one is corresponding to: “Observe the Shabbat day, to keep it holy” (Deuteronomy 5:12). Rabbi Shimon said to his son: See how beloved the mitzvot are to Israel. Their minds were put at ease and they were no longer so upset that people were not engaged in Torah study.**

The Rebbe discusses the transformation between the earlier 12 years in the cave, and the 13<sup>th</sup> year. He compares this to Chagigah 14b, which tells of ‘Four who entered Pardes’. But three of them came to some kind of harm, and only Rabbi Akiva ‘entered in peace and came out in peace’.

Chagigah 14b:

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: אַרְבַּעַה נִכְנְסוּ בְּפֶרֶדֶס, וְאֵלֵיוֹ הָיוּ: בֶּן עֲזַאי, וּבֶן זֹמָא, אֲחֵר, וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא. אָמַר לָהֶם רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא: כְּשֶׁאַתֶּם מֵגִיעִין אֶצְלִי אֲבָנֵי שֵׁשׁ טְהוֹרִים, אַל תֹּאמְרוּ "מִיָּם מִיָּם", מִשּׁוֹם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "דּוֹבֵר שְׁקָרִים לֹא יָכוֹן לִנְגֹד עֵינָיו".

**§ The Sages taught: Four entered the orchard [pardes], i.e., dealt with the loftiest secrets of Torah, and they are as follows: Ben Azzai; and ben Zoma; Aher, the other, a name for Elisha ben Avuya; and Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Akiva, the senior among them, said to them: When, upon your arrival in the upper worlds, you reach pure marble stones, do not say: Water, water, although they appear to be water, because it is stated: “He who speaks**

**falsehood shall not be established before My eyes” (Psalms 101:7).**

בן עזאי הציץ ומת, עליו הכתוב אומר: "יקר בעיני ה' המותה לחסידיו". בן זומא הציץ ונפגע, ועליו הכתוב אומר: "דבש מצאת אכול דיך פן תשבוענו והקאתו". אחר קיץ בנטיעות. רבי עקיבא יצא בשלום.

The Gemara proceeds to relate what happened to each of them: **Ben Azzai glimpsed** at the Divine Presence **and died. And with regard to him the verse states: “Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His pious ones” (Psalms 116:15). Ben Zoma glimpsed** at the Divine Presence **and was harmed**, i.e., he lost his mind. **And with regard to him the verse states: “Have you found honey? Eat as much as is sufficient for you, lest you become full from it and vomit it” (Proverbs 25:16). Aher chopped down the shoots** of saplings. In other words, he became a heretic. **Rabbi Akiva came out in peace** (safely). In the Jerusalem Talmud it states: ‘entered in peace and came out in peace’.

The Rebbe says: The three who came to harm were striving for ever higher intimations of the Divine, called רצוא ‘striving upwards’. But Rabbi Akiva could also achieve the שוב, the return<sup>3</sup>.

Thus too, our story of Rashbi, the first twelve years are like the striving upwards, and the thirteenth year is the expression of the ‘return’.

Usually ‘striving upwards’ and ‘return’ are opposite movements. But Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai could combine them both<sup>4</sup>.

Another way of understanding this, is that the first 12 years are within the realm of the downchaining of worlds – like the 12

<sup>3</sup> These two kinds of spiritual movement are expressed in Ezekiel 1:14 – והחיות רצוא ושוב – the angels were moving forward and coming back.

<sup>4</sup> Nishmata D’Oraita, Shabbat p.288-9, Likkutei Sichot vol.17 p.307.

months of the year – while the 13<sup>th</sup> year is above that realm, like the 13 Attributes of Mercy<sup>5</sup>.

Rashbi expressed the heights of the revealed Torah, as we see from the continuation of this page of Talmud, and also the heights of the Kabbalistic dimension as we see from his Zohar and Tikkunei Zohar. But even greater was his ability to combine them together<sup>6</sup>.

The Rebbe Maharash<sup>7</sup> explains that Rashbi expressed a deep dimension of hidden spirituality, much higher than his colleagues the other Sages. This was like the sea. Then he would reveal this to some of them, through his teachings, which was like the dry land. He thus combined the greatest heights with also the possibility of revealing this level to others<sup>8</sup>.

The Rebbe's father<sup>9</sup> explains that both Talmud and Kabbalah are very exalted, but the radiance of Chassidic teachings combines both, because it comes from a higher level. In order to reach that high level there might have to be a period of concealment, as happened with Rashbi, and also with Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi<sup>10</sup>.

The Rebbe comments that on the one hand, Rashbi believed that a person should totally devote himself to Torah study to the exclusion of everything else, as we see here and in Shabbat 11a, where Rashbi is described as 'his Torah is his craft'. But in another passage in Menachot 99b, where there is a discussion of

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<sup>5</sup> Likkutei Sichot vol.17 p.309, and n.60.

<sup>6</sup> Likkutei Sichot vol.16 p.39 (note).

<sup>7</sup> Fourth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel (1834-1882).

<sup>8</sup> Likkutei Torah Torah Shmuel Veherim 5631 p. 52 (321 in new edition).

<sup>9</sup> Rabbi Levi Yitzhak Schneerson (1878-1944), Chief Rabbi of Yekatrinaslav, sent into exile to Kazakhstan in 1939 for his efforts to strengthen Jewish observance.

<sup>10</sup> Likkutei Sichot vol.16 p.39, and Likkutei Levi Yitzhak, Letters, p.223.

how a person can fulfil the demand that ‘the Torah should not depart from your mouth day or night’ (Joshua 1:8), Rashbi makes the statement that if a person merely says the Shema in the morning and in the evening, he has fulfilled this demand. He thus had the highest aspirations of spirituality but could also reach down to the simplest man who could not study Torah at all, just recite the Shema. The Rebbe points out that there is an opinion that one can fulfil the Torah demand to say the Shema simply by reciting the single verse ‘Shema Yisrael..’, so we can interpolate that into Rashbi’s view, that through one verse in the morning and one in the evening, the person is fulfilling the demand ‘the Torah shall not depart from your mouth’<sup>11</sup>.

שָׁמַע רַבִּי פִּנְחָס בֶּן יֶאֱזִיר חֲתָנִיה וּנְפֶק לְאַפִּיה. עֵינֵיהָ לְבִי בְנִי, הָיָה קָא אָרִיף לִיה לְבִישָׁרִיה. חֲזָא דְהָיָה בֵּיה פִּילִי בְּגוּפִיה. הָיָה קָא בְּכִי וְקָא נִתְרַן דְּמַעַת עֵינֵיה וְקָמְצוּקָא לִיה. אָמַר לוֹ: אוּי לִי שְׂרָאִיתִיד בְּכָד. אָמַר לוֹ: אֲשָׁרִיד שְׂרָאִיתְנִי בְּכָד, שְׂאִילְמָלָא לֹא רָאִיתְנִי בְּכָד — לֹא מִצָּאֵת בִּי כָד. דִּמְעִיקְרָא כִּי הָיָה מְקַשִּׁי רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחִי קוּשְׁיָא, הָיָה מְפָרֵק לִיה רַבִּי פִּנְחָס בֶּן יֶאֱזִיר תְּרִיסַר פִּירוּקִי. לְסוּף, כִּי הָיָה מְקַשִּׁי רַבִּי פִּנְחָס בֶּן יֶאֱזִיר קוּשְׁיָא — הָיָה מְפָרֵק לִיה רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחִי עֶשְׂרִין וְאַרְבָּעָה פִּירוּקִי.

**Rabbi Pinehas ben Ya'ir, Rabbi Shimon's son-in-law, heard and went out to greet him. He brought him into the bathhouse and began tending to his flesh. He saw that Rabbi Shimon had cracks in the skin on his body. He was crying, and the tears fell from his eyes and caused Rabbi Shimon pain. Rabbi Pinehas said to Rabbi Shimon, his father-in-law: Woe is me, that I have seen you like this. Rabbi Shimon said to him: Happy are you that you have seen me like this, as had you not seen me like this, you would not have found in me this prominence in Torah, as the Gemara relates: At first, when Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai would raise a difficulty, Rabbi Pinehas ben Ya'ir would respond to his question with twelve answers. Ultimately, when Rabbi Pinehas ben Ya'ir would raise a difficulty, Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai would respond with twenty-four answers.**

<sup>11</sup> Likkutei Sichot vol.3 p.1004-5.

In Tanya there is a discussion about whether a person can study *only* the Chassidic dimension of Torah. Rabbi Shneur Zalman says no, you must also studied the revealed dimension, Talmud. He proves this by quoting this passage which shows that in the years in the cave Rashbi's wisdom of Talmudic discourse increased greatly, showing that he was studying the Revealed Torah (orally, as did everyone, the Mishnah had not yet been finalised) as well as mystical teachings<sup>12</sup>.

אמר: הואיל ואיתרחיש ניסא איזיל אתקין מילתא. דכתיב: "ויבא יעקב שלם", ואמר רב: שלם בגופו, שלם בממונו, שלם בתורתו. "ויחן את פני העיר", אמר רב: מטבע תיקן להם, ושמואל אמר: שווקים תיקן להם, ורבי יוחנן אמר: מרחצאות תיקן להם. אמר: איכא מילתא דבעי לתקוני? אמרו ליה: איכא דוכתא דאית ביה ספק טומאה

Rabbi Shimon **said: Since a miracle transpired** for me, **I will go** and **repair something** for the sake of others in gratitude for G-d's kindness, **as it is written: "And Jacob came whole** to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram; and he graced the countenance of the city" (Genesis 33:18). **Rav said**, the meaning of: And Jacob came whole, is: **Whole in his body, whole in his money, whole in his Torah.** And what did he do? **And he graced the countenance of the city;** he performed gracious acts to benefit the city. **Rav said:** Jacob **established a currency for them. And Shmuel said: He established marketplaces for them. And Rabbi Yohanan said: He established bathhouses for them.** In any event, clearly one for whom a miracle transpires should perform an act of kindness for his neighbours as a sign of gratitude. **He said: Is there something that needs repair? They said to him: There is a place where there is uncertainty with regard to ritual impurity**

The Rebbe points out a) after 12 years, when they came out of the cave, their gaze at the world was destructive. But after the 13<sup>th</sup> year, Rashbi sought to put things right in the world. This is

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<sup>12</sup> Tanya Part IV, sec. 26.

because the thirteenth year enabled him to relate to the world on its level.

b) he did not just try to put right a problem which showed itself. He *searched* for the problem in order to correct it. And the problem he found was on a low level, the impurity of death<sup>13</sup>.

One might say, in the account about Jacob, it is interesting that he established market places and bath-houses – exactly what was criticised by Rashbi regarding the Romans, at the beginning of this narrative. I have not yet found a discussion of this parallel. Might one say that this could correspond with the positive aspect of Rabbi Yehuda's statement? He was after all a great man, as is seen from the passage in Nedarim 49b-50a, cited by the Rebbe. Could one suggest that after the thirteenth year in the cave Rashbi himself might have had a different view?

### Shabbat 34a

וְאֵיִת לְהוּ צִעָרָא לְכַהֲנִים לְאַקוּפִי. אָמַר: אֵיכָא אִינִישׁ דִּידַע דְּאִיתְחַזַּק הָכָא טְהֵרָה? אָמַר לֵיהּ  
הָהוּא סָבָא: כָּאֵן קִיִּצְץ בֵּן זַכַּי תוֹרְמָסִי תְרוּמָה. עֲבַד אִיהוּ נָמִי הָכִי, כֹּל הֵיכָא דְהָהּ קָשִׁי —  
טְהֵרָה, וְכֹל הֵיכָא דְהָהּ רָפִי — צִיּוּנָה.

**and the priests are troubled** by being forced to **circumvent it**, as it is prohibited for them to become ritually impure from contact with a corpse. There was suspicion, but no certainty, that a corpse was buried there. Therefore, they were unable to definitively determine its status. Rabbi Shimon **said: Is there a person who knows that there was a presumption of ritual purity here?** Is there anyone who remembers a time when this place was not considered ritually impure, or that at least part of it was considered to be ritually pure? **An Elder said to him: Here ben Zakkai** planted and **cut the teruma of lupines**. In this marketplace Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai, who himself was a priest, once planted lupines that were given to him as *teruma*. On that basis, the conclusion can be drawn that it was definitely ritually pure. Rabbi Shimon, like Jacob,

<sup>13</sup> Likkutei Sichot vol.3 p.1005, see n.26.

**also did so** and took steps to improve the city and examined the ground (*Tosafot*). **Everywhere that the ground was hard, he pronounced it ritually pure** as there was certainly no corpse there, **and every place that the ground was soft, he marked it** indicating that perhaps a corpse was buried there. In that way, he purified the marketplace so that even priests could walk through it.

אמר ההוא סבא: טיהר בן יוחי בית הקברות! אמר ליה: אילמלי לא היית עמנו, ואפילו היית עמנו, ולא נמנית עמנו — יפה אתה אומר. עכשיו שהיית עמנו, ונמנית עמנו, יאמרו: זונות מפרסות זו את זו, תלמידי חכמים לא כל שכן? ייב ביה עיניה ונח נפשיה. נפק לשוקא חזייה ליהודה בן גרים. אמר: עדיין יש לזה בעולם? נתן בו עיניו ועשהו גל של עצמות.

**A certain Elder said** in ridicule and surprise: **Ben Yoḥai purified the cemetery.** Rabbi Shimon got angry and **said to him: Had you not been with us, and even had you been with us and were not counted with us** in rendering this ruling, **what you say is fine.** You could have said that you were unaware of my intention or that you did not agree or participate in this decision. **Now that you were with us and were counted with us** in rendering this ruling, you will cause people to say that Sages are unwilling to cooperate with one another. **They will say:** If competing **prostitutes still apply makeup to each other** to help one another look beautiful, **all the more so that Torah scholars** should cooperate with each other. **He directed his eyes toward him and the Elder died.** Rabbi Shimon **went out to the marketplace** and **he saw Yehuda, son of converts,** who was the cause of this entire incident. Rabbi Shimon, **said: This one still has a place in the world? He directed his eyes toward him and turned him into a pile of bones (but see Tosafot quoted earlier: he died but in an honourable way).**

**One might say that the effect of Rabbi Shimon's gaze can be seen as effecting a Tikkun, repair, for the soul of the person who had caused harm, albeit unwittingly.**

Torah teachings are holy – please treat any print-out of these pages with care