

Round [*segalgal*] – סְגֵלְגַל: From the root *gimmel, lamed, gimmel, lamed* [*galgal*], with an added *samekh*, which in Aramaic often replaces the letter *shin* at the beginning of the conjugation of an Aramaic verb. This is also found in Hebrew, e.g., with the root *shin, het, reish, reish* and similar roots. The Sages use *segalgal* to denote roundness.

Narrow [*terutot*] – טְרוּטוֹת: Possibly from the Greek *δερτός, dêros*, meaning long or overly long. It may also come from the Latin *teres*, whose genitive case is *teretis*, which means round, something with rounded angles. Here it means that her eyes were unusually narrow.

Se'a [*geriva*] – גְּרִיבָא: This word also appears as *griva* in Syriac, and *جرب*, *jarib*, in Arabic. It is the name of a dry measurement that the Sages called *se'a*.

Gourds [*butzinei*] – בוּצֵינֵי: From Aramaic, meaning either gourd or squash, or referring to a candle. Both meanings may have their origins in other languages. It seems that it usually meant gourd in Babylonia, based on the Aramaic translations of the Torah and the Persian analogue, which means gourd.

Lamps [*sheraggei*] – שְׂרָגֵי: Originally from Iranian and borrowed into several Aramaic dialects. In modern Persian, the word is *chirāgh*, which means lamp or candelabrum.

NOTES

Narrow – טְרוּטוֹת: The Commentary on *Nedarim* explains that this means weak, while the Rosh and the Ran understand it to mean that her eyes were round.

Stubby – בְּלוֹם: The Commentary on *Nedarim* and the Ran explain that this means her nose was blocked. Alternatively, it was wrinkled up so that it appeared blocked (Rosh). *Tosefot Rabbeinu Peretz* explains that it was stubby and did not protrude outward.

Babylonian – בְּרִיבְלֵי: One of the factors that caused the woman's mistakes was the difference in style and language spoken in Babylonia and in Eretz Yisrael. Although the Jews in both places spoke Aramaic, the two dialects differed. There was a recognizable difference between the dialect of Eretz Yisrael, which was closer to Syriac, and that of Babylonia, which was influenced by Akkadian. This difference also influenced the grammar of the language as well as the meaning and use of many words.

PERSONALITIES

Bava ben Buta – בָּבָא בֶּן בּוּטָא: An outstanding student of Shammai and an important Sage of his generation, Bava ben Buta was renowned in his lifetime both for his great righteousness and for his wisdom. Many stories are told of his exceptional humility and his lack of concern for his own honor whenever he could assist in matters involving domestic peace, or to increase the honor of God. He likely served as a judge in Jerusalem and was also highly regarded for his knowledge of worldly matters. It is related in the Talmud that when Herod killed many of the Sages of Israel, he blinded Bava ben Buta but kept him alive so he could continue to seek his advice. The Gemara relates that it was Bava ben Buta who advised Herod to undertake his magnificent rebuilding of the Temple.

HALAKHA

You fulfilled your husband's desire, etc. – בְּעֵלְיָךְ וְכוּ: The Sages said that the most fit woman is the wife who fulfills her husband's wishes (*Shulhan Arukh, Even HaEzer 69:7*, in the comment of Rema).

ההוא דאמר לדיביתהו "קונם שאי את גמליאל לי עד שתרוקי בו ברבן שמעון בן גמליאל". אתת ורקק אלבושיה. אמר ליה רב אחא מדפתי לרבינא: והא היא לילויאתא קא מיבויזו! אמר ליה: מיקק על מי דרבן שמעון בן גמליאל – וילותא רבתא היא.

ההוא דאמר לדיביתהו "קונם שאי את גמליאל לי עד שתראי מום יפה שבין לרבי שמעאל ברבי יוסי".

אמר להם: שמא ראשה נאה? אמרו לו: סגלגל. שמא שערה נאה? דומה לאמצי פשתן. שמא עיניה נאות? טרוטות הן. שמא אזניה נאות? כפולות הן. שמא חוטמה נאה? בלום הוא. שמא שפתותיה נאות? עבות הן. שמא צנארה נאה? שקוט הוא. שמא כריסה נאה? צבה הוא. שמא רגליה נאות? רחבות כשל אוונא. שמא שמה נאה? לבלובית שמה. אמר לה: יפה קורין אותה לבלובית, שהיא מלובלבת במומין ושוייה.

ההוא בר בבבל דסליק לארעא דישראל, נסיב איתתא. אמר לה: בשילי לי תרי טלמי בשילה ליה תרי טלמי. רתח עליה. למחר אמר לה: בשילי לי גרויא. בשילה ליה גרויא. אמר לה: וילי אייתי לי תרי בוציני. אזלת ואייתי ליה תרי שרגי.

אמר לה: וילי תברי יתהון על רישא דבבא. הוה יתיב בבא בן בוטא אבבא. וקא דאין דינא. אזלת ותברת יתהון על רישיה. אמר לה: מה הדין דעבדת? אמרה ליה: כך ציוני בעלי. אמר: את עשית רצון בעליך – המקום יוציא ממך שני בנים בבבא בן בוטא.

הדרן עלך רבי אליעזר

The Gemara relates: There was a certain person who said to his wife: Benefiting from me is *konam* for you until you have spat on Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. She came to Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel and spat on his clothing. Rav Aha of Difti said to Ravina: But this man intended the humiliation of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, which is not achieved by spitting on his clothing. Ravina said to him: Spittle on the clothing of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel is a great humiliation for him, and she has thereby fulfilled the vow.

The Gemara relates: There was a certain person who said to his wife: Benefiting from me is *konam* for you until you show some beautiful [*yafeh*] part of you to Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Yosei. Rabbi Yishmael attempted to find something beautiful about the woman.

He said to his students: Perhaps her head is beautiful? They said to him: It is round [*segalgal*].¹ Perhaps her hair is beautiful? They replied: Her hair resembles stalks of flax. Perhaps her eyes are beautiful? They are narrow [*terutot*].^{LM} Perhaps her ears are beautiful? They are double in size. Perhaps her nose is beautiful? It is stubby.^N Perhaps her lips are beautiful? They are thick. Perhaps her neck is beautiful? It is low and short. Perhaps her stomach is beautiful? It is swollen. Perhaps her legs are beautiful? They are as wide as a goose's. Perhaps her name is beautiful? Her name is Likhluhkit. He said to them: It is fitting [*yafeh*] that she is called by the name Likhluhkit, as she is dirty [*melukhlehket*] with blemishes, and he permitted her to benefit from her husband, because she did have one beautiful feature, her fitting name.

The Gemara cites another incident: There was a certain Babylonian^N who went up to Eretz Yisrael and married a woman there. He said to her: Cook two lentils, i.e., some lentils, for me. She cooked exactly two lentils for him. He grew angry with her. On the following day, so that she would not repeat what she had done, he said to her: Cook a *se'a* [*geriva*]^L for me, intending: A large amount. She cooked an actual *se'a* for him, far more than what one person could eat. He said to her: Go and bring me two *butzinei*,^L intending small gourds, as *butzinei* are small gourds in the Aramaic dialect spoken in Babylonia. She went and brought him two lamps [*sheraggei*],^L called *butzinei* in the Aramaic dialect spoken in Eretz Yisrael.

In anger, he said to her: Go and break them on the head of the *bava*, intending the gate, as *bava* means a gate in the Aramaic dialect spoken in Babylonia. She did not recognize this word. At that time, the Sage Bava ben Buta^P was sitting as a judge at the gate. She went and broke them on his head, as his name was Bava. He said to her: What is this you have done? She said to him: This is what my husband commanded me to do. He said: You fulfilled your husband's desire,^H may the Omnipresent bring forth from you two sons, corresponding to the two candles, like Bava ben Buta.