

רַבִּינָא אִיקְלַע לְסוּרָא דְפִרְתָּא. אָמַר לֵיהּ
 רַב חֲבִיבָא מְסוּרָא דְפִרְתָּא לְרַבִּינָא: אָמַר
 מִרְּיּוֹם אֶחָד לְפָנֵי רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה וְרֵאשׁ
 הַשָּׁנָה הֲרֵי כְּאֵן אַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר? אָמַר
 לֵיהּ: אֲנָא מְסַתְבָּרָא כְּרַבָּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הוּא
 דְאָמַינָא.

It was related that Ravina happened to come to the city of Sura on the Euphrates River. Rav Haviya from Sura on the Euphrates said to Ravina: Did the Master say that one day of mourning before Rosh HaShana and Rosh HaShana itself count as fourteen days? He said to him: I said that it stands to reason that this is so according to Rabban Gamliel,^N who maintains that Rosh HaShana is treated like a pilgrim Festival. But I did not rule in accordance with this opinion.

מִתְנַגֵּי אֵין קוֹרְעִין, וְלֹא חוֹלְצִין, וְאֵין
 מְבָרִין, אֲלֵא קְרוֹבֵי שְׁל מֵת. וְאֵין
 מְבָרִין אֲלֵא עַל מִטָּה וְקוֹפָה.

MISHNA Mourners do not rend^N their garments during the intermediate days of a Festival^H and do not remove their garments from their shoulders. And others do not provide them with a meal^N [*mavrin*]^L after the burial, except for close relatives of the deceased. And the consolers provide the first meal after the burial only while the mourner is sitting on an upright bed, and not on one that is overturned.

NOTES

מְסַתְבָּרָא – מְסַתְבָּרָא – It stands to reason according to Rabban Gamliel – **מְסַתְבָּרָא**: It is explained that Ravina did not rule in this manner explicitly. Instead, he said that since the *halakha* is in accordance with Rabban Gamliel, that Rosh HaShana is considered to interrupt mourning like the Festivals, it should also be considered to be like a Festival and count as seven days. He did not mean that the *halakha* is in accordance with Rabban Gamliel's opinion; rather, he was just explaining his reasoning.

According to the Rambam, Ravina did not agree with this ruling. Although the *halakha* is in accordance with Rabban Gamliel, that Rosh HaShana interrupts mourning, Ravina did not agree that Rosh HaShana should count as seven days. This is because it is not a pilgrim Festival at all, and the comparison between *Shavuot* and *Sukkot* cannot be applied to Rosh HaShana. Other halakhic authorities hold that Rosh HaShana is considered to be like a pilgrim Festival because all Festivals are compared to each other.

אֵין קוֹרְעִין וְכו' – Mourners do not rend, etc. – Most of the early authorities explain that this entire mishna specifically discusses

the *halakhot* of mourning during the intermediate days of the Festival. However, this implies that on non-festive days mourners must rend their clothes (*ge'onim*; Ra'avad; Ramban). This also appears to be the conclusion in the Jerusalem Talmud. However, there are some who understand this mishna to be dealing with mourning during weekdays, and according to their explanation it is entirely prohibited to rend their garments (Rashi).

אֵין מְבָרִין – Others do not provide them with a meal, etc. – According to those who understand the mishna to be speaking of the intermediate days of the Festival, a mourner is not required to overturn his bed because mourning does not apply during this time. According to those who understand that this *halakha* was said with regard to regular weekdays, there are those who understand it to mean that the consolers sit on an upright bed, and not with the mourner on an overturned bed (Rashi; Rabbeinu Gershon Meor HaGola; Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel). However, others explain that both out of respect for the consolers and so that they will not have to sit in separate place, the Sages even permitted the mourner to eat the feast after the burial on an upright bed (Ra'avad; Ramban).

HALAKHA

Rendering during the Festival – קְרִיעַה בְּמוֹעֵד – One may rend his garment over a death during the intermediate days of the Festival only when rending the garment is required according to *halakha*. Some disagree and say that one may not rend garments at all during the intermediate days of the Festival. It is the Ashkenazic custom for one to rend his garments during the intermediate days of the Festival only when mourning his father or mother.

When mourning any other relatives one rends his garments after the Festival (Rema). However, in Poland it was customary to rend one's garments when mourning all relatives (*Magen Avraham*). The Sephardic communities of Jerusalem, Izmir, and Thessaloniki, had a similar custom to the Ashkenazic one; however, every place should act in accordance with the local custom there (*Kaf HaChayyim*; *Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 547:6).

LANGUAGE

Provide a meal [*mavrin*] – מְבָרִין – The root *v-r-h* means to eat and is found several times in the Bible (see II Samuel, chapter 13). The custom for mourners to eat their first meal after the burial from other people's food is very ancient and is first mentioned in the book of II Samuel: "And the people came to feed David

bread" (3:35). Similarly, the custom is mentioned when Ezekiel the prophet is prohibited from acting like an ordinary mourner: "And people's bread you shall not eat" (Ezekiel 24:17–22). This meal is referred to as the *se'udat havra'a*, meaning the meal at which the mourners are fed.

NOTES

Because he did not cry... over an upright person – מִפְּנֵי שְׁלֵא בָּכָה... על אדם כָּשָׁר: In punishment for not crying over an upright person, this person will cry over the death of his children, who were certainly upright because they were not yet old enough to sin. Therefore, the punishment is tailored to the sin (Maharsha).

גַּמְ' וְאִפְּלוּ חֲכָם? וְהִתְנַּא: חֲכָם שְׂמַת – הַבַּל קְרוֹבִיו.

GEMARA The mishna teaches that only the relatives of the deceased rend their clothes. The Gemara asks: **And** is this the case **even** if the deceased was a Torah Sage? **But isn't it taught** otherwise in a *baraita*: When a Torah scholar dies, everyone is his relative.^H

הַבַּל קְרוֹבִיו סִלְקָא דַּעֲתָדָּ? אֵלָּא: הַבַּל כְּקְרוֹבִיו – הַבַּל קוֹרְעִין עָלָיו, וְהַבַּל חוֹלְעִין עָלָיו, וְהַבַּל מִבְּרִין עָלָיו בְּרַחֲבָה! לָא צְרִיכָא דְלֵאוּ חֲכָם הוּא.

The Gemara clarifies: **Does it enter your mind** to say that **everyone is his relative**? Rather, this *baraita* should be understood as follows: **Everyone is considered to be like his relative** in the sense that **everyone rends his garment in anguish over him, and everyone bares^H his shoulder over him in mourning, and everyone eats the mourner's meal over him^H in the public square** as mourners do. The death of a Torah scholar is a personal loss for every Jew. So why is the mishna limited to only relatives? The Gemara answers: **No**, it is **necessary** for the mishna to teach this *halakha* in a case **where** the deceased is **not** a Torah scholar.

וְאִי אָדָם כָּשָׁר הוּא – תִּיבִי מִתְּחִיב לְמִיקְרַע, דַּתְנָא: מִפְּנֵי מָה בְּנֵי וּבְנוֹתָיו שֵׁל אָדָם מִתִּים כְּשֶׁהֵן קִטְנִים – כְּדִי שְׂיִבְכָה וְיִתְאַבֵּל עַל אָדָם כָּשָׁר.

The Gemara asks: **And if the deceased was an upright person** who feared Heaven and performed good deeds, then aren't all those present at his death **obligated to rend their garments** over his death?^H **As it is taught** in a *baraita*: **For what reason do a person's sons and daughters die when they are young?** They die so that he will cry and mourn over the death of an upright person.

יִבְכָּה וְיִתְאַבֵּל? עֲרֻבֹנָא קָא שְׁקִיל מִינְהָ?! אֵלָּא: מִפְּנֵי שְׁלֵא בָּכָה וְהִתְאַבֵּל עַל אָדָם כָּשָׁר. שְׁבַל הַבּוֹכָה וּמִתְאַבֵּל עַל אָדָם כָּשָׁר – מוֹחֲלִין לוֹ עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיו בְּשָׁבִיל כְּבוֹד שְׁעֵשָׂה לוֹ! דְּלֵאוּ אָדָם כָּשָׁר הוּא.

The Gemara questions the formulation: They die so that **he will cry and mourn**? **Is security**, i.e., his children, **taken from him** in advance to ensure that in the future he will mourn over the death of an upright person? **Rather** the *baraita* means as follows: His children died **because he did not cry or mourn over an upright person^N** who died. **As with regard to anyone who cries and mourns over an upright person who died, they forgive him for all his transgressions because of the honor he accorded to the deceased.** If this is the case, one also rends his clothes over an upright person. The Gemara answers: **Rather**, the mishna is referring only to one **who was not an upright person**.

HALAKHA

Rending garments over a Torah scholar – קְרִיעָה עַל חֲכָם: When a Torah scholar dies, everyone rends his garment over him on the day of burial or when they hear of his death, provided it is within thirty days of his passing. Additionally, one rends his garment over him at the time of the eulogy if the eulogy is within thirty days of the death (*Shakh; Bah* citing Rosh and Ra'avad). If one did not rend his garment on the day when he heard the news or during the eulogy, then he may no longer rend his garment (Rema). In this context anyone who is asked questions about *halakhot* and knows the answers is called a Torah scholar. When rendering garments over one's own rabbi, one tears until he exposes his chest. When rendering one's garments over other Torah scholars, even if they are equal in wisdom to the mourner, the tear is one handbreadth in length. Some say that one rends his garments only over his rabbi or over one who taught him Torah. The common practice is to be lenient and not rend a garment over one's rabbi (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:7*, and in the comment of Rema).

Everyone bares – הַבַּל חוֹלְעִין: When one's rabbi dies he should uncover his garment from his shoulder, similar to the practice over the passing of his father or mother. Some say that this act of mourning is no longer performed, and this is the common practice (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:17*).

הַבַּל מִבְּרִין עָלָיו – כָּשָׁר: Everyone eats the mourner's meal over the death of a Torah scholar in the public square, even during the intermediate days of a Festival, because everyone is considered to be like his relative (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 401:4*).

Rending garments over an upright person – קְרִיעָה עַל אָדָם – כָּשָׁר: When an upright person dies, one rends his garment between the time of death and burial as a sign of mourning. An upright person is one who is not suspected of committing grave sins or avoiding performance of any mitzva, even if he is not knowledgeable in Torah. Some say that a person does not fall into this category unless he is well known for his acts of kindness (*Shakh, Bah* citing Rabbeinu Yona and Ramban). Torah scholars are not required to rend their garments over such a person; however, some Torah scholars are strict and rend their garments nevertheless (*Shakh*, citing Ra'avad and Rosh).

Others say that only one who is present at the time of the departure of the soul is required to rend his garment over an upright person, however one is required to cry and mourn over him in every case. It is the accepted practice to be lenient and not to rend one's garment (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:6* and in the comment of Rema).

Rending garments at the time of the soul's departure – קריעה בשעת יציאת נשמה – One who is in the presence of a Jew whose soul departs is required to rend his garment. This applies whether the deceased is a man or a woman, but does not apply to a minor who has died (*Shakh*, citing Maharshah), unless he has already studied Torah (*Shakh*, citing *Bah*). This applies even if he was not an upright person, and it is known that he occasionally sinned due to his desires or was negligent and did not trouble himself to perform a certain mitzva. However, one does not rend his garment over one who habitually sins, and even more so over an apostate (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:5*).

A Torah scroll on the bier of a Torah scholar – ספר חכם תורה על מיטת חכם: A Torah scroll is not placed on the bier of a Torah scholar who died, as demonstrated in the incident with Rav Huna (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 353:2*).

Sitting in a place on which a Torah scroll is resting – ישיבה במקום שמונח ספר תורה: It is prohibited to sit on a chair or bench on which a Torah scroll is resting. It is appropriate to be stringent and to raise the Torah ten handbreadths from where one is sitting, or at least three (*Shakh*, citing *Beit Yosef*), but after the fact, one handbreadth is sufficient (*Shakh; Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 282:7*).

NOTES

To a Torah scroll that is burned – לסקר תורה שנשרף: The early authorities offer several explanations for this comparison. Rashi and Rabbeinu Gershom Meor HaGola explain that as one's soul and a Torah scroll are both likened to a candle of God, the mourning for both should be the same. The text of Rashi printed alongside the Rif, and cited in Rashi's name by the Ran, states that since the deceased could have studied more Torah during his lifetime but did not succeed in doing so, it is comparable to a Torah scroll that was burned.

The Ramban writes that just as one rends his garment for a Torah scroll that is burned, so too one rends them over a person who observes the Torah's mitzvot. He similarly explains that the relationship between the body and the soul is similar to that between the parchment and the letters. Once a scroll is burned the letters leave the page, just like the soul departs from the body. Others write that one rends his garment because of the sanctity of the soul that departs from the body (*Commentary on Moed Katan*). Rashi writes in tractate *Shabbat* that since even the most ignorant Jew is filled with mitzvot, every person is similar to a Torah scroll.

The Sages did not rend their garments over him – לא קרעו רבנן עליה: The early authorities ask: Even if Rav Safra was not their teacher, he was certainly an upright person, so why did they not rend their clothes over him? Some say that rending garments over an upright person is only done between the death and the burial. Since this discussion occurred after the burial the Sages thought that they did not need to rend their garments (*Ra'avad*). Others write that Torah scholars do not rend their garments over an upright person unless he is a Torah scholar of their stature (*Ramban*).

אי דקאי התם בשעת יציאת נשמה – חיובי מיחייב, דתניא, רבי שמעון בן אלקעזר אומר: העומד על המת בשעת יציאת נשמה – חיוב לקרוע. למה זה דומה? לסקר תורה שנשרף, שחייב לקרוע!

דלא קאי התם בשעת יציאת נשמה.

כי נח נפשיה דרב ספרא לא קרעו רבנן עליה. אמרי: לא גמרינן מיניה. אמר להו אבוי: מי תנאי הרב שמית? חכם שמת תנאי ועוד: כל יומא שמעתתיה בפומין בבי מדרשא.

סבור: מה דהוה – הוה. אמר להו אבוי, תנינא: חכם. כל זמן שעסקין בהספד – חיבין לקרוע. סבור למיקרע לאלתר. אמר להו אבוי, תנאי: חכם כבודו בהספידו.

כי נח נפשיה דרב הונא, סבור לאותובי ספר תורה אפורייה. אמר להו רב חסדא: מילתא דבחייה לא סבירא ליה, השתא ליקום ליה ליעבד ליה? דאמר רב תחליפא: אנא חזיתיה לרב הונא דבעי למיתב אפורייה, והוה מנח ספר תורה עליה, וכך כדא אארעא ואותיב ספר תורה עליויה. אלמא קסבר: אסור לישוב על גבי משה שספר תורה מונח עליה.

The Gemara challenges: But if one was standing there at the time of the soul's departure, i.e., at the time of death, he is also obligated to rend his clothes. As it is taught in a *baraita*: Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: One who stands over the deceased at the time of the soul's departure is obligated to rend his clothes.¹⁴ To what may this be likened? To a Torah scroll that is burned,¹⁵ for which anyone present is obligated to rend his clothes.

The Gemara answers: The mishna must be referring to a person who was not standing there at the time of the soul's departure but who heard that someone who is not a close relative died, and the deceased was neither a Torah scholar nor an upright person.

§ The Gemara relates that when Rav Safra¹⁶ passed away the other Sages did not rend their garments over him.¹⁷ They said: We did not learn from him, as he did not disseminate his Torah knowledge to the public. Abaye berated them and said to them: Is it taught in the *baraita*: If one's teacher died? It is taught: If a Torah scholar died, and Rav Safra was certainly a Torah scholar. And furthermore, every day his teachings are in our mouths in the study hall, so that even if we did not learn directly from him, we should still be considered his students.

The other Sages thought that what was done was done, and it was now too late for them to rend their garments. Abaye said to them: We learned: With regard to a Torah scholar, as long as they are engaged in eulogizing him, then people are obligated to rend their garments, even after the time of his death. They then thought to rend their garments immediately. Abaye said to them: It is taught in a *baraita*: A Torah scholar's honor is at the time of his eulogy, and so you should wait until the time of the eulogy before rending your garments.

§ The Gemara relates another incident: When Rav Huna¹⁸ died they thought to place a Torah scroll on his bier, as was commonly done after the death of a Torah scholar, as if to say that the deceased fulfilled everything written in the scroll. Rav Hisda said to them: This is a practice that he did not hold with during his lifetime; now should we stand up and do it for him when he is dead? As Rav Tahlifa said: I myself saw Rav Huna, who wished to sit on his bed, and there was a Torah scroll placed on it. And he turned a jug over and placed the Torah scroll on it so that he could then sit on the bed. Apparently he holds that it is prohibited to sit on a bed upon which a Torah scroll lies.¹⁹ Therefore, it would be inappropriate to lay a Torah scroll next to his body after he died.²⁰

PERSONALITIES

Rav Safra – רב ספרא: Rav Safra was an *amora* from the third and fourth generation of *amora'im* in Babylonia. The Talmud records that Rav Safra discussed halakhic matters as a disciple-colleague of the greatest Sages of the third generation of *amora'im*, such as Rabba and Rav Yosef, and continued to flourish into the time of their students Abaye and Rava. Apparently Rav Safra was a merchant, and visited Eretz Yisrael, where he interacted with Sages such as Rabbi Abba and Rabbi Abbahu. He was primarily knowledgeable about *halakha*, and devoted less attention to the study of *aggada* or Bible. Rav Safra was also well known for his character traits, particularly with regard to his desire to entirely avoid falsehood. Because Rav Safra traveled from place to place he did not have his own academy and he was often absent from the study hall. Therefore, some Sages thought that he did not qualify as a Sage for whom everyone mourns.

Rav Huna – רב הונא: One of the greatest second-generation of *amora'im* in Babylonia, Rav Huna succeeded his primary teacher, Rav, as the head of the academy in Sura. After Shmuel passed

away Rav Huna was considered by all to be the most learned scholar in Babylonia.

Under his tenure, the yeshiva of Sura experienced significant growth, both in the number of its students and in their quality. Almost all of the Sages of the next generation were considered Rav Huna's students to a certain degree. This included Rav Ami and Rav Asi, who studied from Rav Huna in Babylonia. Even after they moved to Eretz Yisrael and were recognized as the leading Sages there, they considered themselves subordinate to Rav Huna.

According to a tradition recorded by the *ge'onim*, Rav Huna was from the family of the Exilarch. Nonetheless, he was very poor in his youth, but he studied Torah despite his poverty. He became wealthy later in life (see 27b). The Talmud recounts numerous anecdotes about Rav Huna's piety (see *Taanit* 20b), and his wisdom was legendary.

Rav Huna lived for over eighty years, and after his death he was brought with great honor to Eretz Yisrael, where he was buried next to the great Sage Rabbi Hiyya.

Rav Huna's son, Rabba bar Rav Huna, was among the most prominent *amora'im* of the next generation.

A passing coffin – אָרֹן מֵתִים הַעוֹבֵר – When a coffin is passing from place to place, if the skeleton of the deceased is still intact and there are mourners in that place then they stand in a line to honor the deceased and say the mourners' blessing and the consolation of mourners. If the skeleton is no longer intact then there is no need to do so (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 345:8).

NOTES

Who will take him in – מאן מעייל ליה – Tractate *Bava Metzia* describes the great respect with which Rabbi Hiyya's grave was treated. Only a few unique individuals were able to enter and exit safely. The pillar of fire that accompanied Rabbi Hiyya is also mentioned there. Similarly, the sanctity of Rabbi Hiyya and his sons is compared to that of the Patriarchs. In the Jerusalem Talmud it is told that the Sages suspected that Rav Haggga, who was already old, wished to enter the grave so that he himself would also die in this holy burial place. The qualifications Rav Haggga presented are sufficient to explain why he was fit to enter and exit that cave.

One of the straps of his phylacteries turned around – אַתְּהַפִּיכָא ליה רְצוּעָה דְתַפְּלִין – Some explain that the strap turned over so that the black side, which should face outward, could not be seen (Rabbeinu Gershom Meor HaGola). Others say it was not the straps that turned over, but the letters of God's name, which are formed by the straps of the phylacteries, that were turned over. According to those who explain the passage in this manner, Rav Huna fasted so much because he was concerned that he had not properly fulfilled the mitzva and thought that this might have been a desecration of God's name. There are also those who explain that Rav Huna thought that if this happened to him it must be because he had accidentally sinned in another matter (Commentary on *Moed Katan*).

He stood up Rav Huna's coffin – הוֹנֵא – Many of the early authorities had a version of this text that states that because of this action the Exilarch is never fully punished by Heaven for his sins. Rabbeinu Hananel explains that through the merit of Rav Huna, who was descended from the family of the Exilarch, and through the symbolic act of standing up the coffin, all of his family were privileged to enjoy greatness, even though they did not always deserve it.

דְּנֶפֶק מַאי טַעְמִיחָּ? דְּתַנְיָא: אָרֹן הַעוֹבֵר מִמְּקוֹם לְמְקוֹם – עוֹמְדִים עָלָיו בְּשׁוּרָה, וְאוֹמְרִים עָלָיו בְּרַבְתָּ אַבְלִים וְתַנְחוּמֵי אַבְלִים. דְּלָא נֶפֶק מַאי טַעְמִיחָּ? דְּתַנְיָא: אָרֹן הַעוֹבֵר מִמְּקוֹם לְמְקוֹם – אֵין עוֹמְדִין עָלָיו בְּשׁוּרָה, וְאֵין אוֹמְרִים עָלָיו בְּרַבְתָּ אַבְלִים וְתַנְחוּמֵי אַבְלִים.

קָשְׁיִין אֲהָדְדִין! לָא קָשְׁיָא, כָּאן – שְׂשֻׁלְדוּ קְיָיְמַת; כָּאן – בְּשָׂאִין שְׁלֻדוּ קְיָיְמַת. וְרַב הוֹנֵא שְׁלֻדוּ קְיָיְמַת הוּדָה. דְּלָא נֶפֶק – לָא סְיִימוּהָ קַמֵּיהָ.

אָמְרֵי: הִיכָא נִינְחִיחָּ? רַב הוֹנֵא רִיבִץ תּוֹרָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וְרַבֵּי חֵיָא רִיבִץ תּוֹרָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל הָהוּא.

מַאן מַעֲיִיל לִיחָּ? אָמַר לְהוֹרַב חֲנָא: אֲנָא מַעֲיִילָנָא לִיחָּ, דְּאוֹקְמִתִּיהָ לְתַלְמוּדָאֵי בִי הוֹינָא בְּרַב תַּמְנֵי סָרִי שְׁנִין וְלָא חֲזוּ לִי קָרִי, וּמִשְׁמַע לִיחָּ קַמֵּיהָ וּדְעֵי בְּעוֹבְדִיחָּ. דְּיוֹמָא חַד אֲתַהַפִּיכָא לִיחָּ רְצוּעָה דְתַפְּלִין, וְיַתִּיב עָלָה אַרְבַּעִין תַּעֲנִיתָא.

עֵיילִיחָּ, הָהוּא גְּנִי יְהוּדָה מִמִּינֵיהָ דְאַבּוּהָ, וְחֻזְקִיחָּ מִשְׁמַאלֵיהָ. אָמַר לִיחָּ יְהוּדָה לְחֻזְקִיחָּ: קוּם מִדּוֹבְתִינָךְ, דְּלָאוּ אוֹרַח אַרְעָא דְקָאִים רַב הוֹנֵא. בְּהַדִּי דְקָאִים קָם בְּהַדִּיחָּ עֲמוּדָא דְנוּרָא, חֲזִינִי רַב חֲנָא. אֵיבְעִית, וְקַפִּיחָּ לְאַרְוִיחָּ וּנְפַק, אֲתָא. וְהָאֵי דְלָא אֵינְעֵשׂ עֵנֶשׂ – מִשּׁוּם דְקַפִּיחָּ לְאַרְוִיחָּ דְרַב הוֹנֵא.

בִּי נַח נַפְשִׁיחָּ דְרַב חֲסִדָּא סְבוּר לְאוֹתוּבֵי סַפְרֵי תּוֹרָה אַפּוּרִיחָּ. אָמַר לְהוֹרַבֵּי יַצְחָק: מִילְתָּא דְלְרַבֵּיחָּ לָא סְבִירָא לִיחָּ, אֲנִן נִיקוּם נַעֲבִיד לִיחָּ?

The Gemara asks: Those who went out, what is the reason that they went? As it is taught in a *baraita*: When a coffin is passing from place to place,¹¹ the people stand in a line to show respect for the deceased, and they recite the mourners' blessing and the consolation of the mourners over it. Those who did not go out, what is the reason that they did not? As it is taught in another *baraita*: When a coffin is passing from place to place, they do not stand in a line to show respect for the deceased, and they do not recite the mourners' blessing or the consolation of the mourners for him.

The Gemara asks: If so, these two tannaitic statements contradict each other. The Gemara answers: It is not difficult: Here, the *baraita* is referring to a case where the skeleton of the deceased is still intact, and the mourning practices must be observed. And there the *baraita* is referring to a case where the skeleton of the deceased is no longer intact, and it is not necessary to observe the customs of mourning. And Rav Huna's skeleton was still intact. The reason that the one Sage did not go out was that they did not confirm for him that the skeleton was still intact.

The Sages of Eretz Yisrael said: Where shall we bury him? They concluded: Rav Huna disseminated Torah to the people of Israel, and similarly Rabbi Hiyya disseminated Torah to the people of Israel; therefore, it is appropriate to bury Rav Huna next to Rabbi Hiyya.

They asked: Who will take him inⁿ to Rabbi Hiyya's burial cave, as few are fit to enter it? Rav Haggga^p said to them: I will take him into the cave, for I presented my studies before him when I was just eighteen, never having experiencing a seminal emission. And so too I attended to him and knew his great deeds. For example, one day one of the straps of his phylacteries turned around,ⁿ the unpainted side being turned outward, and he observed forty fasts for this, as he had acted negligently, allowing the black side to face inward.

Rav Haggga took him in. The body of Rabbi Hiyya's son Yehuda lay buried to the right of his father, and the body of his other son Hizkiyya lay to his left. The spirit of Yehuda said to the spirit of Hizkiyya: Rise from your place, as it is not proper conduct to remain lying when the body of Rav Huna is standing here. When Hizkiyya's corpse stood up, a pillar of fire rose with him. When Rabbi Haggga saw this, he was frightened by what he saw, and so he stood up Rav Huna's coffinⁿ and went away. The Gemara comments: And he was not punished or harmed by this pillar of fire because he set up Rav Huna's coffin as protection for himself.

§ The Gemara relates another story about the burial of one of the Sages: When Rav Hisdai died they thought to place a Torah scroll on his bier. Rabbi Yitzhak said to them: This is a practice that this Rabbi did not hold with during his lifetime; should we stand up and do it for him now that he is dead?

PERSONALITIES

Rav Haggga – רַב חֲנָא: Rav Haggga was a Babylonian *amora* who moved to Eretz Yisrael and was active there. Rav Haggga was apparently a disciple-colleague of Rav Huna, as this is consistent with the chronological calculation. In the Jerusalem Talmud, where he is known by the name Rabbi Hagggai, it is told that when Rav Haggga brought Rav Huna for his burial he was already eighty years old, and it is known that he lived for a time afterward.

In Eretz Yisrael he interacted with the students of Rabbi Yohanan, although he also transmitted statements from the Sages of previous generations. It appears that he served as a judge in his city and several stories about his activity there are related in the Jerusalem Talmud and in the *midrashim*. The Sages of the following generations received numerous traditions in his name, and he became known as one of the leaders of his generation.

שְׁלִילַת קָרַע – על חֲכָם: A tear made in mourning for the death of a Sage may be tacked and mended once one has turned his face from the coffin of the deceased (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'ot* 340:17).

סבור דְּלֹא לְמִישְׁלָל קְרַעֵיהֶו. אָמַר לָהֶו רַבִּי יִצְחָק בַּר אַמִּי. חֲכָם, בֵּינָן שֶׁהִחְזִירוּ פְּנֵיהֶם מֵאַחֲרֵי הַמֶּשֶׁה – שׁוּלְלִין.

They then thought not to tack, i.e., sew up, the tears that they had made in their clothes. Rabbi Yitzhak bar Ami said to them: When the deceased is a Torah Sage, they may tack the tears once they turn their faces from the bier.¹¹

בִּי נַח נִמְשִׁיָה דְרַבָּה בַּר הוּנָא וְרַב הַמְנוּנָא אֶסְקִינְהוּ לְהֵתָם.

The Gemara relates that when Rabba bar Huna and Rav Hamnuna died, they took them both up there, to Eretz Yisrael.

Perek III
Daf 25 Amud b

בִּי מָטוּ אֲגִישְׂרָא קָמוּ גְמָלִי. אָמַר לָהֶו הֵהוּא טַיִיעָא: מֵאִי הָאִי אָמְרוּ לִיה: רַבְּנָן דְקָא עֲבָדִי יִקְרָא אֶהְדִּי מִר אָמַר: מִר נִיעוּל בְּרִישָׁא, וּמִר אָמַר: מִר נִיעוּל בְּרִישָׁא. אָמַר: דִּינָא הוּא דְרַבָּה בַּר הוּנָא לִיעוּל בְּרִישָׁא. חֲלִיף גְמָלִיה דְרַבָּה בַּר הוּנָא, נְתוּר כְּבִיָה וְשִׁנְיָה דִּהֵהוּא טַיִיעָא.

When they reached a bridge that could be crossed only in single file, the camels carrying the two Sages stood in their places and would not cross the bridge. A certain Arab [*Tayya'a*]¹ who witnessed what was happening said to them: What is this phenomenon that the camels have stopped moving? They said to him: The deceased Sages are showing honor to each other. It is as if one Sage is saying: The Master should go and cross the bridge first, while at the same time the other Sage is saying: The Master should go and cross first. The Arab said: By law^N Rabba bar Huna should go first, since he is the son of a great man, and the camel carrying Rabba bar Huna then passed first. Shortly thereafter, the molars and other teeth of that Arab fell out due to the disrespect he showed Rav Hamnuna.

פָּתַח עֲלֵיהֶו הֵהוּא יְנוּקָא: "גִּזַּע יְשִׁישִׁים עֲלָה מִבְּבֵל וְעָמוּ סִפְר מִלְחָמוֹת. קָאָת וְקִפּוּד הוֹכְפָלוּ, לְרֵאוֹת בְּשׁוּד וְשִׁבְר הִבָּא מִשְׁנַעַר. קִצַּף עַל עוֹלְמוֹ וְחָמַס מִמְנוּ נִפְשׁוֹת, וְשָׁמַח בָּהֶם כְּכֹלָה חֲדָשָׁה. רֹכֵב עַרְבוֹת שָׁשׁ וְשָׁמַח בְּבֵא אֲלֵיוּ נֶפֶשׁ נְקִי וְצַדִּיק".

When they reached Tiberias a certain child opened his eulogy saying as follows: The shoot of an ancient line, i.e., Rabba bar Rav Huna, who was the descendant of great people, has ascended from Babylonia, and with him is the book of wars, i.e., Rav Hamnuna, who was great in Torah, which is referred to as the book of the Wars of the Lord (Numbers 21:14). The curses of the pelican and the bittern, which are symbols of the destruction of the Temple (Isaiah 34:11), have been doubled,^N to see the ruin and brokenness that has come from Shinar, i.e., Babylonia. The Lord became angry with His world and seized souls from it, and He rejoices over them when they come to Him like a new bride. God who rides upon the clouds is joyous and happy when an innocent and righteous soul comes to Him.

בִּי נַח נִמְשִׁיָה דְרַבִּינָא פָּתַח עֲלֵיהֶו הֵהוּא סְפָדָא: "תְּמָרִים הִנֵּיעוּ רֹאשׁ עַל צַדִּיק בְּתַמְר, נָשִׁים לֵילוֹת כְּיָמִים" – עַל מְשִׁים לֵילוֹת כְּיָמִים.

§ The Gemara continues recounting other famous eulogies. When Ravina^P passed away, a certain eulogizer opened his eulogy for him with the following words: Date-palms, hang your heads in sadness over the righteous man who may be likened to a date-palm. Women, make your nights like days in weeping, over a man who made his nights like days studying the Torah.

NOTES

By law [*dina hu*], etc. – דִּינָא הוּא וְכוּ': Most versions of the talmudic text read: In my judgment [*bedina didi*], i.e., in my opinion, the great man who is also the son of a great man should go in front, before Rav Hamnuna who was not the son of a great man. This Arab was punished because it was not appropriate for him to offer his opinion on the issue, especially since there were people far more learned than him present at the time (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

The curses of the pelican and the bittern have been doubled [*hukhpalu*] – קָאָת וְקִפּוּד הוֹכְפָלוּ: Several explanations are offered for this poetic expression. Rashi explains that the

pelican and bittern are mentioned as signs of a curse, and therefore this means that the curse was doubled, as two great people died. Some explain that *hukhpalu* should be related to as an Aramaic word, meaning to strive. According to this, the expression means that even these birds made an effort to attend the funeral of the righteous men (*Arukh*; Rabbeinu Gershom Meor HaGola; Commentary on *Moed Katan*; Ran). Some understand this as a reference to the Arabs who joined them on the funeral procession (*Maharsha*). The Meiri explains that the pelican and bittern are symbolic and allude to the increase of weeping and eulogies.

LANGUAGE

Arab [*Tayya'a*] – טַיִיעָא: The origin of this word appears to be the name of a specific Arab tribe called الطائي, *al-tāī*. The Arab tribes that resided in the desert area between Arabia and Babylonia would come to trade even as far as Babylonia.

PERSONALITIES

Ravina – רַבִּינָא: Ravina was a sixth generation Babylonian sage, whose major work was assisting Rav Ashi in editing the Babylonian Talmud. In his youth he studied under the direction of Rava. He passed away in the year 422. Ravina and Rav Ashi discuss matters of *halakha* in many places throughout the Talmud.

On that day what will you say – יהוא יומא מאי אמרת? – מה יעשו איובי קרי, לוינתן בתכה הועלה – מה יעשו דגי רקק, בנחל שוטף נפלה חכה – מה יעשו מי גבים.

Rav Ashi was offended by them – חלש דעתיה עליהו: According to those who understand this to be describing a eulogy for Ravina, the reason that he was offended is because the eulogizer implied that all other Sages, including Rav Ashi himself, were of lesser stature than Ravina.

Those who understand this to be a description of the eulogy for Rav Ashi explain that the wording of the eulogy made it seem as though the death of the righteous person was an accident, and not the result of Divine providence (see Maharsha). Rabbi Shlomo ben HaYatom explains simply that Rav Ashi was insulted because they should have first reassured him that he will live for a very long time, so that it would not appear as though they were already ready to eulogize him.

When Rava once came to the Tigris – רבא כי הוה אתא – לדיגלת: Most of the early authorities explain that this prayer was said when the Tigris River began to overflow (Rashi). According to other versions of the text, Rava requested that bar Avin pray that he would not drown in the river (see Commentary on *Moed Katan* in the *Ein Ya'akov* and Rashi there).

Most of the third has come – באו רוב שלישי: As the verse says: “And Israel shall be the third [*shelishiyyal*]” (Isaiah 19:24), some explain that the term third, *shelishit*, refers to the Jewish people (Rashi; Rashi, from manuscript). Others explain that this term refers to the settled third of the world, and the flood was threatening to overtake a portion of the settled region. Alternatively, it is possible that the Tigris River itself is called the third because it is the third river listed in Genesis, chapter 2. The prayer means that this third river threatens to flood everything with its water (Ran).

Joy and suffering have become joined together – ששון ויגון נדבקו: The Maharsha writes that the days of celebration over the birth of the child were exactly the same as the days of mourning over the father. The day of Rav Hanin's death was the day that the child was born, the day of his circumcision was on the seventh day of mourning, counting from the day of the funeral. The redemption of the firstborn was at the end of the thirty-day mourning period for Rav Hanin.

אמר ליה רב אשי לבר קיפוק: ההוא יומא מאי אמרת? אמר ליה, אמניא: אם בארוזים נפלה שלהבת – מה יעשו איובי קרי, לוינתן בתכה הועלה – מה יעשו דגי רקק, בנחל שוטף נפלה חכה – מה יעשו מי גבים.

אמר ליה בר אבין: חס ושלום דחכה ושלבת בצדיקי אמניא. ומאי אמרת? אמניא: בכו לאבלים ולא לאבדא, שהיא למנוחה ואנו לאנחה.

חלש דעתיה עליהו, ואתהפוך ברעיהו. ההוא יומא לא אתו לאספודיה. והיינו דאמר רב אשי: לא בר קיפוק חליץ, ולא בר אבין חליץ.

רבא, כי הוה אתא לדיגלת אמר ליה לבר אבין: קים אימא מילתא. קאי ואמר: באו רוב שלישיית במים, זכור ורחם. תעינו מאחרין באשה מבעלה, אל תנחננו באות מי מרה.

תנין יוחנן וירא אבא יעקב ויסי שמואל תימא מנחם – סימן.

רבי תנין חתניה דבי נשיא דהוה. לא קא הוה ליה בני, בעא רחמי והוה ליה. ההוא יומא דהוה ליה – נח נפשיה. פתח עליה ההוא ספדנא: “שמחה לתוגה נהפכה, ששון ויגון נדבקו, בעת שמחתו נאנת, בעת חנינתו אבד חנינו.” אסיקו ליה חנן על שמיה.

The Gemara relates that prior to Ravina's death, Rav Ashi^p said to bar Kippok, who was a famous eulogizer: **On that day when Ravina will die, what will you say?** He said to him: **I shall begin my eulogy and say as follows: If the cedars went up in flame, what shall the hyssop of the wall do? If the leviathan was lifted by a hook, what shall the tiny fish of the marsh do? If a fish hook was cast into the flowing river, what can the water of the puddles do?**

Bar Avin, who was also a eulogizer, said to him: **God forbid that the words hook and flame should be said with regard to the righteous, as these are not expressions of honor.** Rav Ashi asked him: **And what will you say?** He said to him: **I shall say: Cry for the mourners and not for that which was lost, as that which was lost, i.e., the soul of Ravina, has gone to its eternal rest, while we, the mourners, are left with our sighs.**

Rav Ashi was offended by them,ⁿ as their words of praise for Ravina might have been understood as a show of disrespect to Rav Ashi, since they likened Ravina to a cedar and the other Sages, Rav Ashi included, to hyssops of the wall. Due to Rav Ashi's anger, **their feet turned inward and became crooked. On that day when Ravina actually died, neither of them came to eulogize him. This is what Rav Ashi said using a metaphor to describe this incident: Neither bar Kippok can perform *halitza*, nor can bar Avin perform *halitza*, because their feet are crooked and so their shoes cannot be removed from their feet in the proper manner.**

When Rava once came to the Tigrisⁿ River, and he was concerned that he might be swept away by the water, **he said to bar Avin: Rise and say a prayer on our behalf. He rose and said: Most of the third, a poetic reference to the Jewish people (Isaiah 19:24), has comeⁿ in the water, implying that Rava was equal in importance to the majority of the Jewish people. Remember then and have mercy on us. Although we have strayed from you like an unfaithful woman strays from her husband, do not forsake and punish us like the sign of the bitter water, with which a woman suspected of adultery is tested. That is to say, do not punish us with water.**

Apropos eulogies for righteous men, the Gemara presents the names: Hanin, Yohanan, Zeira, Abba, Ya'akov, Yosei, Shmuel, Hiyya, and Menaḥem; this is a mnemonic device for the stories that follow.

It was related that Rabbi Hanin was a son-in-law in the house of the *Nasi*. At first he did not have any children, but he prayed that God have mercy on him, and then had a child. On the same day that a son was born to him, he himself passed away. A certain eulogizer opened his eulogy for him with the following words: **Happiness has been turned into sorrow; joy and suffering have become joined together.ⁿ At the moment of his happiness he sighed his dying breath. At the moment he was graced with a son, his own grace was lost. And they named the child Hanan after his father.**

PERSONALITIES

Rav Ashi – רב אשי: Rav Ashi was a sixth generation Babylonian sage whose major work was editing the Babylonian Talmud, together with Ravina. He was born in the year 352 and studied with Rav Kahana. Rav Ashi reestablished the academy in Sura, which had not functioned since the days of Rav Hīsa, and he led that yeshiva for sixty years.

Rav Ashi and Ravina were not the first ones to edit the oral traditions, as there are many discussions in the Talmud whose language and style show that they were prepared long before Rav Ashi. Rav Ashi arranged the material that he received from previous generations, which emanated from different academies and was written in different styles, to produce an organized and uniform Talmud.

Various factors helped Rav Ashi undertake this great project, which ultimately was completed over a period of several hundred years. It is likely that Rav Ashi was assisted by a committee of scholars who gathered in the academy in Sura. It was due to the unique political environment and economic conditions at that time that a mission of this scope could be launched. The Babylonian king Yazdegerd I treated all of his citizens fairly and showed particular interest in the Jewish community, whose Sages he respected. Under his reign, the economic situation of the Jews of Babylonia was excellent, and they enjoyed relative freedom. These conditions allowed the Babylonian Sages to commit themselves to this the vast enterprise of redacting the Gemara.

כי נח נפשיה דרבי יוחנן פתח עליה רבי יצחק בן אלעזר: קשה היום לישׂראל כיום בא השמש בצהרים, דכתוב: "והיה ביום ההוא והבאתי השמש בצהרים". ואמר רבי יוחנן: זה יומו של יאשיהו.

When Rabbi Yoḥanan passed away, Rabbi Yitzḥak ben Elazar opened his eulogy for him as follows: Today is as difficult for the Jewish people as the day that the sun set at noon, as it is written: "And it shall come to pass on that day, says the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning for an only son, and its end like a bitter day" (Amos 8:9–10). And Rabbi Yoḥanan said: This was the day on which King Josiah was killed (see 11 Chronicles 35:20–24). This demonstrates that the most righteous person of the generation is described as the sun.

כי נח נפשיה דרבי יוחנן יתיב רבי אמר שבעה ושלשים. אמר רבי אבא בריה דרבי חייא בר אבא: רבי אמר דעבד – לגרמיה הוא דעבד. דהכי אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אמר רבי יוחנן: אמילו רבו שלימדו חכמה – אינו יושב עליו אלא יום אחד.

It was further related that when Rabbi Yoḥanan passed away, Rabbi Ami sat in mourning for him for seven days and for thirty days as though he had lost a close relative. Rabbi Abba, son of Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba, said: What Rabbi Ami did, he did on his own, but this practice does not reflect the *halakha*. For Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said as follows: Even for the death of his teacher who taught him wisdom, one sits in mourning over him for only one day and no more.⁴

כי נח נפשיה דרבי יזרא. פתח עליה ההוא ספדנא: "ארץ שנער הרה וולדה ארץ צבי גידלה שעשועיה. אוי נא לה אמרה רקת. כי אבדה כלי חמדתה".

The Gemara tells of another incident about a eulogy: When Rabbi Zeira died, a certain eulogizer opened his eulogy for him saying: The land of Shinar conceived and gave birth to him, as he was originally Babylonian, but the land of beauty, i.e., Eretz Yisrael, raised the darling of Babylonia, as he later moved to Eretz Yisrael and grew up there. Woe to her, said Rakkath, a poetic name for Tiberias, for her dearest vessel has been lost.

כי נח נפשיה דרבי אבהו אחיתו עמודי דקסרי מיא; דרבי יוסי – שפעו מרובי דציפורי דמא; דרבי יעקב – אתחמיאו כוכבי ביממא; דרבי אסי – איעקרו כל אילניא; דרבי חייא – נחיתו ביפי דנורא מרקיעא; דרבי מנחם ברבי יוסי – אישטעו צלמנייא והו ל מחלציא.

The Gemara continues to discuss the death of the righteous: When Rabbi Abbahu passed away, the pillars of Caesarea, his city, ran with water⁵ as if they were shedding tears over him. When Rabbi Yosei passed away, the gutters of Tzippori, his city, flowed with blood. When Rabbi Ya'akov passed away, the stars were visible during the day. When Rabbi Asi passed away, all the trees were uprooted in a storm. When Rabbi Ḥiyya passed away, fiery stones fell from the sky. When Rabbi Menaḥem, son of Rabbi Yosei, passed away, the faces of the statues became smooth as if they had been smoothed with a plasterer's trowel [*mehlatzaya*].⁶

דרבי תנחום בר חייא – איתקצצו כל אנדרטיא; דרבי אלשיב – איתתרו שבעין מחתרתא בנהרדעא; דרב המנונא – נחיתו ביפי דברדא מרקיעא; דרבה ורב יוסף – נשוק ביפי דפרת אהדדי; דאבוי ורבא – נשוק ביפי דדגלת אהדדי; כי נח נפשיה דרבי משרשיא טעון דיקלי שיצי.

When Rabbi Tanḥum bar Ḥiyya passed away, every statue [*andartaya*]⁷ of the king were mutilated. When Rabbi Elyashiv passed away, seventy tunnels of thieves were dug⁸ in Neharde'a, because as long as he was alive there were no thieves in the town due to his merit. When Rav Hammuna passed away, hail stones fell from the sky. When Rabba and Rav Yosef passed away, the tops of the bridges of the Euphrates collapsed and touched each other. When Abaye and Rava passed away, the tops of the bridges of the Tigris collapsed and touched each other. When Rabbi Mesharshiyya passed away, the palm trees became laden with thorns [*shitzei*].⁹

תנו רבנן:

§ The Gemara returns to the subject of tearing garments in mourning: The Sages taught the following *baraita*:

HALAKHA

Mourning over the death of a teacher – אבל על מות הרב – One rends all of his garments in mourning when his primary Torah teacher dies. Similarly, a convert rends his garments over the death of the rabbi who accepted him as a convert (*Pitḥei Teshuva*, citing *Sha'arei Efrayim*). Some say that he rends only

one handbreadth of his garment, but he may never mend this tear. In addition he should practice all the customs of mourning for a portion of the day on the day of death or the day on which he receives news of the death (*Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 242:25).

אחיתו עמודי – דקסרי מיא: Rav Hai Gaon writes that the events described here were miraculous occurrences that happened in those days so that everyone would recognize what was lost when the righteous person passed away. However, the Meiri explains that all of these statements do not refer to actual events and instead are portions of eulogies, with each description being a colorful explanation of mourning for the death (see Ran). In any event, there is a relationship between what is stated here and the personalities of those who passed away. For example, for Rabbi Abbahu, who was the leader of the Jewish people and based in Caesarea, even the pillars of Caesarea shed tears. When the stars were visible during the day it was because the sky became dark in the middle of the day. When the faces of the statues were smoothed it was because Rabbi Menaḥem bar Yosei would not look at any image, even if there was only a slight concern that it was used for idol worship. Similarly, when the bridges collapsed, it was because bridges represent something that holds a community together.

אחתרו...מחתרתא – Some explain that this means that the number of thieves increased greatly, as during his life they were kept in check due to his merit. Others explain that these tunnels were holes that opened by themselves in the ground, alluding to the same idea (*Commentary on Moed Katan*).

LANGUAGE

Plasterer's trowel [*mehlatzaya*] – מחלציא: Some explain that this word means plasterer's trowel, and in this context it means that the statues' faces were so smooth it was as though they had been smoothed over with a trowel. Others explain that the word means reed mats [*mahatzalat*], and in this case the statues' faces were covered by mats. This also appears to be the meaning in other, parallel, sources.

Statue [*andartaya*] – אנדרטיא: Apparently from the Greek ἀνδριάντος, *andriantos*, meaning a statue of a person.

Thorns [*shitzei*] – שיצי: This Aramaic word is ordinarily used to describe the hardened branches of a palm tree, which become quite sharp and thorny after several years.



Thorny palm branch

HALAKHA

קריעה על – Rending garments over one's teacher
רבו: If one's teacher dies, from whom he had learned the majority of his Torah, whether it be Bible, Mishna, or Gemara, he must rend his garments until his heart is revealed, and some say that he is required to rend only one handbreadth of his garments. These tears may never be sewn, even if they were made upon hearing of the death only some time later. However, if one did not acquire most of his knowledge from this teacher, then he rends his garment over his death as he would over other relatives for whom he is required to mourn. Even if one learned only one thing from his teacher, he should rend his garments over this teacher's death. Some say that even a tear made over a teacher who was not one's primary teacher may not be sewn (Rema). Some say that colleagues who study with each other treat each other as their primary teacher, and some say that they treat each other like other teachers. There are also those who say that rending garments over a colleague or over a teacher from whom one learned a single thing is merely a stringency. Therefore, the common practice is to be lenient (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:8*).

קריעה על – Rending garments over bad tidings
שמועות רעות: Upon hearing bad tidings, e.g., a large part of the community went out to war, one makes a tear that may never be mended, even if only a few people died or were taken captive (Rema). In addition, this tear may be tacked only on the day following hearing the news (*Shakh, citing Beit Yosef*). This ruling is in accordance with the *baraita* and the Gemara's conclusion (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:36*).

ואלו קרעין שאין מתאחין: הקורע על אביו ועל אמו ועל רבו שלימדו תורה, ועל נשיא ועל אב בית דין, ועל שמועות הרעות, ועל ברכת השם, ועל ספר תורה שנשרף, ועל ערי יהודה, ועל המקדש, ועל ירושלים, וקורע על מקדש ומוסיף על ירושלים.

אביו ואמו ורבו שלימדו תורה מנלן? דכתב: "ואלישע ראה והוא מצעק אביו אבי רכב ישראל ופרשו". "אבי אבי" – זה אביו ואמו; "רכב ישראל ופרשו" – זה רבו שלימדו תורה.

מאי משמע? כדמתרגם רב יוסף: רבי רבי, דטב להון לישראל בצלותיה מרתכין ופרשו.

ולא מתאחין מנלן? דכתב: "ויחזק בבגדיו ויקרעם לשנים קרעים". ממשמע שנאמר "ויקרעם" איני יודע שלשנים! אלא, מלמד שקרועים ועומדים לשנים לעולם.

אמר ליה ריש לקיש לרבי יוחנן: אליהו חי הוא! אמר ליה: בין דכתב: "ולא ראהו עוד" – לגבי דידיה כמת דמי.

נשיא ואב בית דין ושמועות הרעות מנלן? דכתב: "ויחזק דוד בבגדיו ויקרעם, וגם כל האנשים אשר אתו. ויסקדו ויבכו ויצומו עד הערב על שאול ועל יהונתן בנו ועל עם ה' ועל בית ישראל, כי נפלו בחרב".

"שואל" – זה נשיא; "יהונתן" – זה אב בית דין; "על עם ה' ועל בית ישראל" – אלו שמועות הרעות.

And these are the rents of mourning that may never be properly mended: One who rends his garments for the death his father, or for his mother, or for his teacher who taught him Torah, or for the *Nasi*, or for the president of the court; or upon hearing evil tidings; or hearing God's name being blessed, which is a euphemism for hearing God's name being cursed; or when a Torah scroll has been burned; or upon seeing the cities of Judea that were destroyed or the destroyed Temple or Jerusalem in ruins. This is the way one conducts himself when approaching Jerusalem when it lies in ruin: He first rends his garments for the Temple and then extends the rent for Jerusalem.

The Gemara elaborates upon the *halakhot* mentioned in this *baraita*: From where do we derive that one must rend his clothing for his father, his mother, and his teacher who taught him Torah?¹⁴ As it is written with regard to the prophet Elijah, when he ascended to Heaven in a tempest: "And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen" (II Kings 2:12). The Gemara interprets this verse as follows: "My father, my father"; this comes to teach that one must rend his garments for the death of his father or mother. "The chariots of Israel and their horsemen"; this comes to include also one's teacher who taught him Torah.

The Gemara asks: From where may it be inferred that this is referring to one's teacher? The Gemara explains: As the verse was translated by Rav Yosef:¹⁵ My teacher, my teacher, who was better for the protection of the Jewish people with his prayers than an army with chariots and horsemen.

And from where do we derive that these rents are never to be properly mended? As it is written: "And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces" (II Kings 2:12). From the fact that it is stated: "And he rent them," do I not know that he rent them in two pieces? Rather, when the verse adds that they were torn into two pieces, it teaches that they must remain torn in two pieces forever. Accordingly, this rent must never be properly mended.

Reish Lakish said to Rabbi Yohanan: But isn't Elijah still alive? Why, then, did Elisha rend his garments for him? He said to him: Since it is written: "And he saw him no more" (II Kings 2:12), Elijah was considered dead from Elisha's perspective, and so Elisha rend his clothing for him.

§ From where do we derive that one must rend his clothing for the death of the *Nasi* or the president of the court and upon hearing evil bad tidings?¹⁶ As it is written, when David heard about the defeat of Israel and the death of Saul and his sons: "Then David took hold of his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him: And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until evening, for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword" (II Samuel 1:11–12).

The Gemara explains how the aforementioned *halakhot* are derived from the verse: "Saul"; this is a reference to the *Nasi*, as Saul was king of Israel. "Jonathan"; this is a reference to the president of the court. "For the people of the Lord, and for the house of the Israel"; these are a reference to evil tidings.

NOTES

As it was translated by Rav Yosef, etc. – כדמתרגם רב יוסף וכו'. – Elijah was a prophet. We learn from this translation that Elisha rent his garments over him because Elijah was his teacher (Ritva). This explanation is necessary because without it we would think that Elisha rent his garments over the death of Elijah because

Mezigat – מְזִיגַת: The variation *mezigat* appears to be preferable, as it means passage or path and is similar to the Arabic *majāz*, مَجَاز.

BACKGROUND

שָׁבוֹר מַלְכָא וּמְזִיגַת – King Shapur and Mezigat Caesarea: The King Shapur mentioned here refers to the king of Persia, Shahpuhr the first, who ruled from 241–272 CE. He had especially close ties with the Sage Shmuel. King Shapur was the founder of the great Sassanid Empire, and he expanded its borders while waging numerous wars against the Romans. Through wartime journeys, he reached Anatolia and even Syria. Mezigat Caesarea appears to be the city of Kayseri in modern day Turkey, which was the capital of Cappadocia in that time. The residents of this place, including the Jewish residents, rebelled against the king. During the ensuing battle, the area changed hands many times. Due to the strategic importance of this area, this rebellion had an extremely great influence, and consequently, they said in an exaggerated manner that the walls of Laodicea, which was hundreds of kilometers away, shook due to this rebellion. Because of its strategic importance, the rebellion was strongly crushed by King Shapur, even though he ordinarily had warm relations with the Jews.



Bas-relief sculpture depicting the triumph of Shapur I over the Roman emperor Valerian

NOTES

From where do we upon hearing God's name being blessed, i.e., cursed – על ברכת השם מנלן – Although it is not explicitly stated that God's name was cursed, Rab-Shakeh's statement implied disrespect toward God, for he compared the Holy One, Blessed be He, to the gods of others nations, and this is considered to be like a curse (Rashi on II Kings 18:37; see Maharsha).

And from where do we derive that these rents may not be properly mended – וְלֹא מְתַאֲחִין מְנִיין – The Rosh disagrees with this derivation by means of verbal analogy. He prefers a textual variation mentioned by the Ra'avad: It is stated: "With torn garments" (II Kings 18:37). It is derived from this statement that the garments must remain torn forever.

אָמַר לִיָּה רַב בַּר שָׁבָא לְרַב כַּהֲנָא: וְאִמְרָא עַד דְּהוּוּ בּוֹלְהוּ! אָמַר לִיָּה: "עַל" "עַל" הַפְּסִיק הַעֲנִין.

Rav bar Shaba said to Rav Kahana: But perhaps you can say that one need not rend his clothing until all these calamities occur together, and that rending clothing is performed only over a tragedy of this magnitude. He said to him: The repetition of the word "for": "For Saul," "for Jonathan," and "for the people of the Lord" divides the matter and teaches that each individual misfortune is sufficient cause to rend one's garments.

וּמִי קָרְעִינָא אֲשֶׁמוּעוֹת הָרַעוֹת? וְהָא אָמְרוּ לִיָּה לְשִׁמוּאֵל: קָטַל שָׁבוֹר מַלְכָא תְּרִיסָר אֲלָפֵי יְהוּדָאִי בְּמִזִּיגַת קֶסְרִי, וְלֹא קָרְעוּ לֹא אָמְרוּ אֲלָא בְּרֹב צַבוּר, וּכְמַעֲשֵׂה שְׁהִיָּה.

The Gemara asks: But do we actually rend our clothing upon hearing evil tidings? But didn't they say to Shmuel: King Shapur killed twelve thousand Jews in Mezigat¹ Caesarea,⁶ and Shmuel did not rend his clothing? The Gemara answers: They said that one must rend his clothing upon hearing evil tidings only in a case where the calamity involved the majority of the community of Israel and resembles the incident that occurred when Saul was killed and the entire nation of Israel suffered defeat.

וּמִי קָטַל שָׁבוֹר מַלְכָא יְהוּדָאִי? וְהָא אָמַר לִיָּה שָׁבוֹר מַלְכָא לְשִׁמוּאֵל: תִּיתִי לִי, דְּלֹא קָטַלִי יְהוּדֵי מַעוֹלָם! הֲתָם אֵינְהוּ גְרָמִי לְנַפְשִׁי הוּוּ. דְּאָמַר רַבִּי אָמִי: לְקַל יְתִירִי דְּמִזִּיגַת קֶסְרִי פִּקַּע שׁוּרָא דְּלוּדְקָא.

The Gemara tangentially asks: Did King Shapur really kill Jews? But didn't King Shapur say to Shmuel: I have a blessing coming to me, for I have never killed a Jew? The Gemara answers: King Shapur never instigated the killing of Jews; there, however, they brought it upon themselves, as Rabbi Ami said in an exaggerated manner: Due to the noise of the harp strings of Mezigat Caesarea, the walls of Laodicea were breached, for the residents of the city celebrated when they rebelled against King Shapur. Because they rebelled against him and threatened his rule, he was forced to kill them.

עַל בְּרַכַּת הַשֵּׁם מִנְלָן? דְּבִתְבִיב: "וַיִּבֵּא אֱלִיָּקִים בֶּן חִלְקִיָּה אֲשֶׁר עַל הַבַּיִת וְשִׁבְנָא הַסּוֹפֵר וַיּוֹאֲחַ בֶּן אֲסָף הַמּוֹכֵר אֶל חִזְקִיָּהוּ קְרוּעֵי בְּגָדֵים".

§ The Gemara continues its analysis of the *baraita*: From where do we derive that one must rend his garments upon hearing God's name being blessed, i.e., cursed?^{NIH} As it is written with regard to the blasphemous words said by Rab-shakeh: "Then came Eliakim, son of Hilkiya, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent" (II Kings 18:37).

תְּנוּ רַבְנֵי: אֲחָד הַשּׁוֹמְעֵי וְאֲחָד הַשּׁוֹמְעֵי מִפִּי הַשּׁוֹמְעֵי חַיִּיב לְקָרְעַ, וְהַעֲדִים אֵינָן חַיִּיבִין לְקָרְעַ, שְׂבָבָר קָרְעוּ בְּשָׂעָה שְׂשֻׁמְעוּ.

The Sages taught a *baraita* with regard to this issue: Both one who actually hears the curse and one who hears from the mouth of the one who heard the curse are obligated to rend their garments. But the witnesses who testify against the person who uttered the blasphemy are not obligated to rend their clothing when they testify as to what they heard because they already rend their clothing when they heard the curse the first time.

בְּשָׂעָה שְׂשֻׁמְעוּ מֵאִי הוּוּ? הָא קָא שְׂמַעֵי הַשְּׂתָא! לֹא סְלָקָא דְּעַתָּךְ, דְּבִתְבִיב: "וַיְהִי כְּשִׁמוּעַ הַמֶּלֶךְ חִזְקִיָּהוּ וַיִּקְרַע אֶת בְּגָדָיו" – הַמֶּלֶךְ קָרַע, וְהֵם לֹא קָרְעוּ.

The Gemara asks: What difference does it make that they rent their garments when they heard the curse the first time? Didn't they hear it again now? The Gemara rejects this argument: This will not enter your mind, as it is written: "And it came to pass, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes" (II Kings 19:1). This indicates that the king rent his garments, but those who reported the blasphemy to him did not rend theirs, as they had already rent their garments the first time.

וְלֹא מְתַאֲחִין מִנְלָן? אֲתֵיָא קְרוּעָה קְרוּעָה.

And from where do we derive that these rents may not be properly mended?^N This is derived by way of a verbal analogy between the verb *rending* used here with regard to Hezekiah and the verb *rending* used in the case of Elijah and Elisha.

HALAKHA

Rending garments over the cursing of God's name – קְרוּעָה: One who hears a Jew curse God's name, even if the blasphemer uses another term to refer to God or speaks in a foreign language (Rema), is required to rend his garments. One who hears the Tetragrammaton being cursed is required to rend his garments, even if it is uttered by a gentile (*Shakh*, citing Ramban). However, one is not required to rend his garments upon hearing a gentile curse God's name generally. Some say that today an apostate is considered to be like a gentile in this regard

(Rema). If a Jew came and said that he heard a certain curse, then one who hears this report is required to rend his garments. Even when one hears from the witnesses in court who testify that so-and-so cursed God's name, he is required to rend his garments. Some say that if the witnesses do not explicitly state the curse, then one is not required to rend their garments (*Pithei Teshuva*, citing Rambam and *Semag*). The witnesses themselves, who have already rend their garments, are not required to do so a second time (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 340:37).

קריעה – Rending garments over the burning of the Torah – על שריפת התורה: One is required to rend his garments twice upon seeing a Torah scroll, phylacteries, or even a scroll of Prophets or Writings being burned, erased, or torn by force, in order to destroy it (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 340:37).

NOTES

For the Lord has afflicted her [*hoga*] – כי ה' הוגה: Some explain that the word *hoga* can be read as *haga*, uttered, meaning that it was the Lord who said this (Rashi, from manuscript).

By inference they were required to rend their clothing – מכלל דבעו למיקרע: The Rosh comments that the derivation mentioned here does not imply that it is prohibited to mend a tear made for a burned Torah scroll. Instead, he holds that it is possible to derive this through an *a fortiori* inference. If one rends his garments and may never mend them over the deaths of those who study the Torah, i.e., one's teachers, shouldn't this be the case all the more for the Torah itself?

Sitting before Rabbi Abba – יתבי קמיה דרבי אבא: Some change the text of the Gemara, removing the phrase: Were sitting before, as how could Rabbi Abba sit before himself? Rav Betzalel Ronsburg explains that there is no need to alter the text, for there were several *amora'im* known as Rabbi Abba.

By force and it resembles the incident that occurred – ביוזע וכמעשה שהיה: Some explain that this term means specifically with violence and not by accident. One rends his garments only when the destruction occurs through human action and in a situation where the person seeing the burning cannot prevent it. However, one is not required to rend his garments if it occurred through an accident (Rashi, from manuscript). Some say that this applies only when the tearing was specifically done in order to anger God. Some of the later authorities suggest that one is required to rend his garments only when the act is performed by a Jew by force, as was the case with Jehoiakim (see *Tal Hayyim*).

ספר תורה שנשרף מנלן? דכתוב: ויהי בקרא יהודי שלש דלתות וארבעה ויקרעה בתער הסופר והשלך אל האש אשר אל האח וגו'. מאי שלש דלתות וארבעה?

אמרו ליה ליהויקים: כתב ירמיה ספר קינות. אמר להו: מה כתוב ביה? איכה ישבה בדד. אמר להו: אנא מלכא. אמר ליה: בכה תבכה בלילה. אנא מלכא. גלתה יהודה מעוני – אנא מלכא. דרכי ציון אבלות – אנא מלכא.

היו צריה לראש – אמר להו: מאן אמרה? בני ה' הוגה על רוב פשעיה. מיד קדר כל אוזרות שבה ושרפן באש. והיינו דכתוב: ולא פחדו ולא קרעו את בגדיהם, מכלל דבעו למיקרע.

אמר ליה רב פפא לאביי: אימר משום שמועות הרעות! אמר ליה: שמועות רעות בההיא שעתא מי הוו?

אמר רבי חלבו אמר רב הונא: הרואה ספר תורה שנקרע חייב לקרוע שתי קריעות: אחד על הגויל ואחד על הכתב. שנאמר: אחרי שרוף המלך את המגלה ואת הדברים.

רבי אבא ורב הונא בר תיאא הוו יתבי קמיה דרבי אבא. בעא לאפנויי, שקליה לטוטפתיה אחתיה אבי סדיא. אתאי בת נעמי תא בעא למיבלעיה.

אמר: השתא איתייבין לי שתי קריעות, אמר ליה: מנא לך הא? והא בדידי הוה עובדא, ואתאי לקמיה דרב מתנה ולא הוה בידיה, אתאי לקמיה דרב יהודה, ואמר לי: הכי אמר שמואל, לא אמרו אלא ביוזע וכמעשה שהיה.

§ From where do we derive that one must rend his garments when a Torah scroll has been burned? As it is written: “And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he would cut it with a penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brazier” (Jeremiah 36:23). With regard to the verse itself the Gemara asks: What is meant by “three or four leaves,” and why did he cut the book only at that point?

The Gemara explains: They said to Jehoiakim: Jeremiah has written a book of Lamentations over the future downfall and destruction of Jerusalem. He said to them: What is written in it? They read him the first verse: “How does the city sit solitary” (Lamentations 1:1). He said to them: I am king, and this does not apply to me. They read him the second verse: “She weeps sore in the night” (Lamentations 1:2). He said to them: I am king, and this does not apply to me. They read him the third verse: “Judah is gone into exile due to affliction” (Lamentations 1:3). He said to them: I am king. They read to him: “The ways of Zion do mourn” (Lamentations 1:4). He said to them: I am king. These are the four leaves, or verses, that he read first.

They read him an additional verse: “Her adversaries have become the chief” (Lamentations 1:5), i.e., the reigning king will be removed from power. Once he heard this, he said to them: Who said this? They said to him: This is the continuation of the verse: “For the Lord has afflicted herⁿ for the multitude of her transgressions” (Lamentations 1:5). Immediately, he cut out all the names of God from the book and burned them in fire. This is as it is written: “Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words” (Jeremiah 36:24). By inference, this shows that they were required to rend their clothingⁿ when they saw this.

Rav Pappa said to Abaye: Perhaps you can say that they should have rent their garments due to the evil tidings contained in the scroll and not because of the destruction of the book? Abaye said to him: Were they evil tidings at that time? This was a prophecy and not an account of current events.

Rabbi Helbo said that Rav Huna said: One who sees a Torah scroll that was torn is obligated to make two rents, one for the parchment that was damaged and one for the writing, as it is stated: “Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, after the king had burned the scroll and the words” (Jeremiah 36:27). This implies that a separate rent must be made for each of them, both the parchment and the writing.

It was related that Rabbi Abba and Rav Huna bar Hiyya were sitting before Rabbi Abba.ⁿ Rabbi Abba needed to relieve himself. He removed his phylacteries from his head and placed them on the cushion on which he was sitting. An ostrich⁸ came and wanted to swallow the phylacteries.

He said: Now, had it succeeded to swallow it, I would have been obligated to make two rents. He said to him: From where do you derive this? There was an incident in which I was involved and I came before Rav Mattana asking what to do, but he did not have an answer readily available. I then came before Rav Yehuda, and he said to me: Shmuel said as follows: They said that one is obligated to rend his clothing only when a Torah scroll or some other sacred book is torn by force, and it resembles the incident that occurredⁿ with Jehoiakim.

BACKGROUND

Ostrich – בת נעמי תא: The bird mentioned here is among those ordinarily found in the desert. However, elsewhere ostriches were also raised domestically, apparently for their feathers. These birds are well known for their inclination to swallow almost anything, even objects normally considered to be inedible.

Tzofim – צופים: Some people explain that the word *tzofim* refers to a specific place, perhaps what is referred to today as Mount Scopus, from which one could see Jerusalem and the Temple. Others say that *tzofim* more generally refers to any place from which one can see the city of Jerusalem.

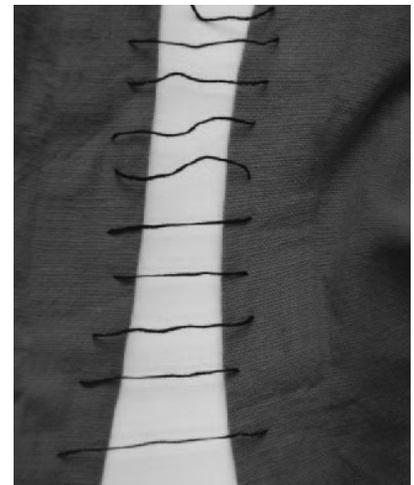


View of Jerusalem from Mount Scopus



View of Mount Scopus from Jerusalem

במין סולמות – Connecting a tear with parallel stitches creates a ladder-like form



Ladder-like stitching

ערי יהודה מנלן? דכתבי: "וּבְאוּ אֲנָשִׁים מִשֶּׁכֶם מְשִׁילוּ וּמְשַׁמְרוֹן שְׂמוֹנִים אִישׁ מְגוּלְחֵי זָקָן וְקְרוּעֵי בְּגָדִים וּמִתְגַּדְּדִים וּמִנְחָה וּלְבוּנָה בְּיָדָם לְהַבִּיא בֵּית ה' וְגו'.

§ From where do we derive that one must rend his garments upon seeing the cities of Judea in ruin?^{NH} As it is written: "There came certain men from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, eighty people, their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring to the house of the Lord" (Jeremiah 41:5). This indicates that they rent their garments upon seeing the destruction.

אמר רבי חלבו אמר עולא ביראה אמר רבי אלעזר, הוואה ערי יהודה בחורבנן – אומר: "ערי קדשך היו מדבר", וקורע, ירושלים בחורבנה – אומר: "ציון מדבר היתה ירושלים שממה", וקורע. בית המקדש בחורבנו – אומר "בית קדשנו ותפארתנו אשר הללוך אבותינו היה לשריפת איש וכל מחמדיו היה לתרבה", וקורע.

Rabbi Helbo said that Ulla Bira'a said that Rabbi Elazar said: One who sees the cities of Judea in their desolation says: "Your sacred cities are become a wilderness" (Isaiah 64:9), and then rends his garments. One who sees Jerusalem in its desolation says: "Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation" (Isaiah 64:9), and then rends his garments. One who sees the Temple in its desolation says: "Our sacred and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised You, is burned with fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste" (Isaiah 64:10), and then rends his garments.

"קורע על מקדש ומוסיף על ירושלים." ורמניה: אחד השומע ואחד הרואה, בין שהגיע לצופים – קורע, וקורע על מקדש בפני עצמו ועל ירושלים בפני עצמה!

It was taught in the *baraita*: He first rends his garments for the Temple and then extends the rent for Jerusalem. And they raise a contradiction from another *baraita* that states: Both one who hears that Jerusalem is in ruin and one who sees the destruction, once he reaches Mount Scopus [*Tzofim*],^B rends his garments. And he rends his garments for the Temple separately and for Jerusalem separately.

לא קשיא: הא – דפגע במקדש ברישא, הא – דפגע בירושלים ברישא.

The Gemara answers: This is not difficult. This *baraita*, which states that instead of making a separate rent for Jerusalem one may extend the first rent that he had made for the Temple, is referring to the case where one reached the Temple first, before seeing the rest of Jerusalem, and saw it in ruin. That *baraita*, which states that one must make separate rents for Jerusalem and for the Temple, is referring to the case where one reached Jerusalem first, and only afterward the Temple.

תנו רבנן: וכולן רשאין לשוללן, ולמוללן, וללוקטן ולעשותן במין סולמות, אביל לא לאחותן.

§ The Sages taught the following *baraita*: And all of these rents, one may tack them together with loose stitches,^A and hem them,^N and gather them, and fix them with imprecise ladder-like stitches.^B But one may not mend them with precise stitches.

Rav Hisda said:

NOTES

From where do we derive that one must rend his garments upon seeing the cities of Judea in ruin – ערי יהודה מנלן: The Gemara does not mention the cities of the kingdom of Israel is because in Judah it was known which cities had always been Jewish. However, in the Galilee, which was only partially settled by those who returned from Babylonia, they were unsure which cities were considered to be Jewish cities (Maharsha).

of these actions. Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel explains that the words *shelila* and *melila* refer to types of tying without the use of a needle. However, when the Gemara refers to gathering them and fixing them with ladder-like stitches it means using an imprecise type of stitch, which does not fall into the category of sewing. Rashi explains that *sholelan* refers to tacking with wide stitches, *molelan* refers to binding the two edges of a tear together with two stitches, and gathering [*lokatan*] refers to sewing a tear from top to bottom with proper stitching (Rashi, from manuscript).

לשוללן – Tack them [*sholelan*] and hem them [*molelan*], etc. – ולמוללן: Several explanations are offered with regard to the details

HALAKHA

Rending garments over the cities of Israel and the Temple – קריעה על ערי ישראל והמקדש: If one sees the cities of Judea in their destroyed state, as he approaches he says: "Your sacred cities have become a wilderness" (Isaiah 64:9), and rends his garments. Even if the cities are inhabited by Jews, they are still considered to be destroyed as long as they are under foreign, gentile rule. As one approaches Jerusalem and reaches Mount Scopus [*Tzofim*], he recites the verse: "Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation" (Isaiah 64:9), and rends his garments. Some say that *tzofim* refers to a specific place, while others understand it to be any place from which Jerusalem is visible (see *Magen Avraham*). Practically speaking, since the area surrounding Jerusalem is built up one does not rend his garments before seeing the walls of the Old City (*Kaf HaHayyim*). Afterward, when he sees the site where the Temple stood, he says: "Our holy and our beautiful

Temple, where our fathers praised You, is burned with fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste" (Isaiah 64:10), and he rends his garments a second time. These tears should be at least one handbreadth in length. If one arrives from the east and sees the ruins of the Temple first, then he should rend his garments over the Temple and extend this tear over Jerusalem. Anyone who has not seen the destroyed cities or the ruins of the Temple for thirty days must rend his garments again (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 561:1–2 and Rema).

Tacking the tears – לְשׁוּלֵל הַקְּרָעִים: Tears made over the death of one's father or Torah teacher, bad tidings, the burning of the Torah, the cities of Judea, or the Temple may never be sewn. However, they may be tacked and closed up in a different manner on the following day (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 340:39).

BACKGROUND

Alexandrian mending – איחוי אלכסנדרי: This refers to the city of Alexandria in Egypt. In ancient times, it was the center of science and technology in the Middle East, and perhaps in the entire world. Items of high quality were named for the city, and consequently the highest quality of sewing is referred to as Alexandrian sewing.

NOTES

Alexandrian mending – איחוי אלכסנדרי: Some say that this refers to precise sewing, in which the stitching is straight and smooth on the outer side of the garment, although it protrudes from the inner side of the garment (Ra'avad; Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel). Others say that this refers to a type of mending through which the torn threads are removed and replaced and new threads are woven into the garment (Rabbeinu Hananel; Ramban; see Jerusalem Talmud). The Ritva writes that since the definition of Alexandrian sewing disputed, one should act stringently in accordance with both opinions. Therefore, it is prohibited for a mourner to mend a garment from one side. Conversely, only a garment that is properly mended may be rent in mourning. Some write that Alexandrian sewing refers to strong stitching, as opposed to tacking, which is imprecise, temporary stitching (Commentary on *Moed Katan*; Rabbi Shlomo ben HaYatom; Meiri).

The initial rending is three fingerbreadths – תחילת קריעה – שלש אצבעות: *Tosafot* ask how this measure is derived. Earlier (22b) the Gemara cited the verse “and he took hold” (II Kings 2:12) as a source. Some explain that this does not refer to holding with the entire hand, as it would then be a handbreadth; rather, it refers to the way people ordinarily hold a garment, with three fingers (Ritva).

ובאיחוי אלכסנדרי.

תנו רבנן: הקורע מתוך השלל, מתוך המלל, מתוך הלקט, מתוך הסולמות – לא יצא. מתוך האיחוי – יצא. אמר רב חסדא: ובאיחוי אלכסנדרי.

תנו רבנן: רשאי להפכו ולמטה ולאחורו. רבי שמעון בן אלעזר אוסר לאחורו. ובקשם שהמוכר אוסר לאחורו – כך הלוקח אוסר לאחורו. ולפיכך מוכר צריך להודיעו ללוקח.

תנו רבנן: תחילת קריעה טפח, ותוספת שלש אצבעות, דברי רבי מאיר. רבי יהודה אומר: תחילת קריעה שלש אצבעות, ותוספת כל שהו.

אמר עולא: הלכה כרבי מאיר בקריעה, והלכה כרבי יהודה בתוספת. תניא נמי הכי, רבי יוסי אומר: תחילת קריעה טפח ותוספת כל שהו.

And the reference here is to the **Alexandrian method of mending**,^{BNH} a type of sewing performed in Alexandria, which is considered to be of exceptional quality and after which the tear is no longer visible.

The Sages taught the following *baraita*: **One who rends his garment in a place that had been loosely tacked together, or from the hem of the garment,¹¹ or on the gathering, or on the ladder-like stiches has not fulfilled his obligation to rend it.** But if he rends it in a place that had been carefully mended, he has fulfilled his obligation, because such a garment is regarded as whole. **Rav Hisda said: And here, too, the reference is to the Alexandrian method of mending and not to ordinary sewing.**

The Sages taught another *baraita*: One is permitted to turn a garment that was rent on the upper edge **upside down and then mend it in a precise fashion.** **Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar prohibits careful mending in this case as well.** And if one wishes to sell a garment that he had previously rent in mourning, just as the seller, who had rent the garment, is prohibited from carefully mending the garment, so too the buyer, who purchases it from him, is prohibited from mending it. **The seller must therefore inform the buyer that the rent was made on account of mourning and may not be mended.¹²**

The Sages taught a *baraita*: **The initial rending is a handbreadth in length, and the extension, if one is obligated to rend his garment for other deceased relatives and he wishes to use the same rent for this purpose, is three fingerbreadths; this is the statement of Rabbi Meir.** **Rabbi Yehuda says: The initial rending is three fingerbreadths^N in length, and its extension is any amount, with no minimum measure.¹³**

Ulla said: **The halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Meir that the initial rending is one handbreadth in length, and the halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda that an extension can be any length.** The Gemara comments: **That is also taught in a baraita: Rabbi Yosei says: The initial rending is one handbreadth, and the size of the extension is any minimal amount.** By tradition, the *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosei when he disagrees with any one of his colleagues.

HALAKHA

With Alexandrian mending – באיחוי אלכסנדרי: If a tear may not be mended, this prohibition includes Alexandrian sewing, in accordance with the opinion of Rav Hisda (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim*, *Hilkhat Evel* 9:3).

One who rends...from the hem, etc. – הקורע מתוך המלל – וכו': One who rends his garment in mourning from within a hem, or in a similar manner, does not fulfill his obligation to rend his garment. However, if he rends something that was attached with Alexandrian sewing, i.e., stitching that is not noticeable from the outside, then he fulfills his obligation in accordance with the opinion of Rav Hisda (*Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh De'a* 340:20).

Tears that may not be sewn – קריעים שאינם מתאימים – All tears in this category may never be sewn, even if one turns the garment upside down so that the torn portion is on the bottom.

Similarly, it is prohibited to purchase such a garment in order to sew it; therefore, one who sells a garment that was rent in mourning must inform the buyer (*Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh De'a* 340:19).

The measure of the tear – שיעור קריעה – One must tear his garment one handbreadth as a sign of mourning. If his garment was already torn and he heard within seven days of the death that another family member died, then he extends this tear one handbreadth. If the second death occurred more than seven days after the first death, then he may add any amount to the first tear. This ruling is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosei. However, it applies only to mourning over other relatives; for a father and mother, one is required to rend his garment until he reaches the point in the garment that covers his heart (*Shulhan Arukh*, *Yoreh De'a* 340:3).

תנו רבנן: אמרו לו מת אביו, וקרע, מין בנו, והוסף, תחתון מתאחה, עליון אינו מתאחה.

The Sages taught the following *baraita*: If they first said to a person that **his father died, and he rent** his garment, and afterward they told him that **his son died, and he added** to the same rent, in such a case the **lower** portion of the rent that had been made for his son **may be mended**. The is because, after completing the period of mourning, one is permitted to mend a rent made for relatives other than one's parents. However, the **upper** portion of the rent **may not be mended**, as a tear made for one's father may never be carefully sewn back together.

מת בנו וקרע, מת אביו והוסף, עליון מתאחה, תחתון אינו מתאחה.

If, on the other hand, they said to him first that **his son died, and he rent** his garment, and afterward they told him that **his father died, and he added** to the same rent, then in that case the **upper** portion of the rent, which that had been made for his son, **may be mended**, but the **lower** portion of the rent, which had been made for his father, **may not be mended**.

מת אביו, מת אמו, מת אחיו, מתה אחותו, קורע קרע אחד לכולן. רבי יהודה בן בתירה אומר: על פולן קרע אחד, על אביו ואמו קרע אחד, לפי שאין מוסיפין על קרע אביו ואמו.

If they said to him all at one time that **his father died, his mother died, his brother died, and his sister died**, then he may make **one rent for all of them**. Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira says: **For all of his other relatives he makes one rent, and for his father and mother he makes another rent, as one must not add to a rent made for his father and mother.**^h

מאי טעמא? אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: לפי שאינו בתוספת.

The Gemara asks: **What is the reason** for Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira's opinion that one may not add to the rent torn for a mother or father? Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: **Because they cannot be added;**^m one has only one father and one mother and cannot add others.

אמר שמואל: הלכה כרבי יהודה בן בתירה. ומי אמר שמואל הכי והאמר שמואל: הלכה כדברי המיקל באבל! אבילות לחוד, קריעה לחוד.

Shmuel said: **The halakha is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira**. The Gemara asks: **And did Shmuel actually say this? But didn't Shmuel say the principle is that the halakha is in accordance with the statement of the lenient Sage with regard to mourning; yet here he rules in accordance with the more stringent opinion.** The Gemara answers: **The halakhot of mourning are discrete** and the **halakhot of rending are discrete,**ⁿ and it is only with regard to the **halakhot** of mourning that Shmuel rules consistently in accordance with the lenient opinion.

עד היכן קורע? עד טיבורו, ויש אומרים: עד לבו. אף על פי שאין ראיה לדבר – וכן לדבר, שנאמר: "וקרעו לבבכם ואל בגדיכם".

It was taught in a *baraita*: **Until where may he rend** his garment,^h if he continues to rend the same garment for additional relatives? He may continue rending **until** the point where the garment covers **his navel**. **Some say: Until** the point where the garment covers **his heart**. **Although there is no absolute proof for the matter** that one may rend the garment until this point, there is **an allusion to this matter, as it is stated: "And rend your hearts, and not your garments"** (Joel 2:13), thereby intimating that one may extend the rent in his garment only until he reaches the point where the garment covers his heart.

NOTES

^h לפי שאינו בתוספת – Because they cannot be added – Some explain that due to the honor one must show toward his parents, it is not appropriate for him to extend the tear rent over them as mourning for another relative (see Rashi). Others explain that because a mourner must make a longer tear for his father and mother, with no maximum size, any extension will not be noticeable (Ra'avad; Rid; Rosh). Rabbi Yitzhak ibn Giat explains that one is required to rend his garment for his father and mother until he reaches the point on the garment which covers his navel, and since one may not tear below this, it is impossible to extend the tear (see Ramban and Ritva).

There are also those who understand this not as a halakhic statement but as a moral explanation for this ruling. One will never have another father or mother, and therefore it is not appropriate to add to the tear made as a sign of mourning for one's parents (*Tal Torah*). One may, however, have relatives in

other categories in the future, e.g., children or even half siblings from his surviving parent.

ⁿ Halakhot of mourning are discrete and halakhot of rending are discrete – אבילות לחוד, קריעה לחוד – Some say that this is because rending garments is a Torah law, as derived from the verses concerning the sons of Aaron, while the *halakhot* of mourning are of rabbinic origin (Ra'avad; see *Tosefot HaRosh*). The Ramban writes that the mitzva of rending is not itself a Torah law. Rather, it is a rabbinic law with supporting verses from the Torah. The *Nimmukei Yosef* writes simply that these two practices do not fall into the same category. Rending is performed before the mourning actually begins, and therefore Shmuel's principle that the *halakha* is ruled in accordance with the opinion of the lenient Sage with regard to mourning does not apply to it.

^m תוספת קריעה – Extending a tear – If one rends his garment in mourning over his mother or father, and after seven days another one of his relatives dies, and he extends this tear, then the upper portion of the tear may never be sewn but the lower portion may be sewn. However, if one rends his garment over one of his other relatives and afterward hears that his father or mother died, then he should make a new tear and not extend the first one. The latter ruling is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira (Ramban; Rabbeinu Yeruham; *Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 340:22).

ⁿ עד היכן קורע – Until where may he rend his garment – One who rends his garment in mourning and then extended this tear for other relatives may continue extending the tear until it reaches the point on the garment that covers his navel. If he becomes obligated to rend his garment again, then he must rend it from the edge of the garment three fingerbreadths away from the first tear. If the garment has tears in the front, then he may turn it around and rend it from the portion of the garment that is now in front of him. If the upper portion is torn, he may turn the garment over and rend what was formerly the bottom. If every portion of the garment is torn, then he is considered like one who has no garment and he does not rend it (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 340:21).

The High Priest may tear his garment at the bottom – **בְּהֵן גְדוּל פֹּרֶם מִלְמָטָה** – Although a High Priest is prohibited from rending his garment as a sign of grief (Leviticus 21:10), he may perform a symbolic act that does not fall into the category of actual rending (Rashi, from manuscript).

הַגִּיעַ לְטִיבוּרוֹ, מִרְחִיק שְׁלֹשׁ אַצְבָּעוֹת וְקוֹרֵעַ. נִתְמַלֵּא מִלְפָּנָיו – מִתְחִירוֹ לְאַחֲרָיו. נִתְמַלֵּא מִלְמַעְלָה – הוֹפְכוּ מִלְמָטָה. וְהִקְוִיעַ מִלְמָטָה וּמִן הַצִּדָּדִין לֹא יֵצֵא. אֵלֶּא שֶׁבִּהְיוּ גְדוּל פֹּרֶם מִלְמָטָה.

If he tore his garment until he reached the point where it covers his navel, he should not continue rending in the same place. Instead, he should move away a space of three fingerbreadths from the first rent and make a new rent. If the garment became full of rents in the front, he should turn the garment front to back and make a rent on the other side. If it became full of rents above, he should turn it top to bottom and make a rent on what used to be the bottom. But one who rends his garment at the bottom or at the sides has not fulfilled his obligation, as rending may be done only at the top of the garment.^h The High Priest, however, who is prohibited from rending his garments in mourning, may tear his garment at the bottomⁿ to mark his mourning in a symbolic manner.^h

פְּלִיגוּ בֵּה רַב מִתְּנָה וּמַר עֻקְבָּא, וְתַרְוִיחֵהוּ מִשְׁמִימָה דְאַבוּהּ דְשִׁמְוֵאל וְלוֹי; חַד אָמַר: כָּל שִׁבְעָה קוֹרֵעַ, לְאַחַר שִׁבְעָה מוֹסִיף. וְחַד אָמַר: כָּל שְׁלֹשִׁים קוֹרֵעַ, לְאַחַר שְׁלֹשִׁים מוֹסִיף.

Rav Mattana and Mar Ukva disagreed about the following issue, and both of them stated their respective opinions in the name of Shmuel's father and Levi. One said: During all seven days of mourning, if the mourner hears that another relative of his passed away, he makes a new rent; after seven days of mourning he merely adds to the first one. And one said: During all of the first thirty days he makes a new rent; after thirty days he merely adds to the first one.

מִתְקִיף לָהּ רַבִּי זֵירָא: מֵאַן דְּאָמַר כָּל שִׁבְעָה קוֹרֵעַ, אִמְרֵי? דְּלֹא נִיתָן לְשׁוּלְלוֹ. אֵלֶּא הָא דְאָמַר מָר: הָאִשָּׁה שׁוּלְלָתוֹ לְאַלְתֵּר, הֲכִי נִמְי?

Rabbi Zeira strongly objects to this: According to the one who said that during all seven days of mourning he makes a new rent, why is it not enough to add to the first one? It is because he may not tack it until the end of the seven-day period of mourning, and therefore if he adds to the rent it will look like a continuation of the previous tear. But then, with regard to that which the Master said in the *baraita*: After a woman rends her garment, she may tack the tear immediately, would you say that here also she may add to the first rent for a new bereavement during the seven-day period of mourning?

הָתָם מִשּׁוֹם כְּבוֹד אִשָּׁה הוּא.

The Gemara answers: There the woman is permitted to tack the rent due to the woman's honor, as it would be dishonorable for her to be seen wearing torn garments. However, halakhically the rent is considered as if it still exists, and therefore she must make a new rent for a new bereavement and not merely add to the previous one.

מֵאַן דְּאָמַר כָּל שְׁלֹשִׁים קוֹרֵעַ, אִמְרֵי? דְּלֹא נִיתָן לְאַחֲרוֹתוֹ. אֵלֶּא לְאַבּוֹי וּלְאִמּוֹ, דְּלֹא נִיתָן לְאַחֲרוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם, הֲכִי נִמְי?

Rabbi Zeira asked further: According to the one who said that all thirty days of mourning one must make a new rent rather than add to the existing tear, why does he say this? It is because during the thirty days one is not given permission to properly mend the garment, and so it still appears to be torn. But then, in a case of a rent made for one's father or mother, for which he is not given permission to ever properly mend it, would you say that he should so too be forever barred from adding to the rent for a new bereavement and is instead obligated to make a new rent?

הָתָם מִשּׁוֹם כְּבוֹד אָבּוֹי וְאִמּוֹ הוּא.

The Gemara answers: There he may not properly mend the rent due to the honor due to his father and mother. Essentially, however, the tear is considered as if it had been sewn up after the thirty-day period, and therefore the son may extend it in the case of a new bereavement.

HALAKHA

The place of the rending – מְקוֹם הַקְּרִיעָה: Rending may be performed on any part of the front of a garment, from the neck. One who rends the garment from the bottom or from the sides does not fulfill his obligation. Others hold that one can fulfill his obligation by rending from the sides of the garment. It is customary to rely on this lenient opinion when rending over the dead to whom one is not related, e.g., when one is present at the time when the soul departs (*Shakh*). However, one who rends his

garment over relatives for whom he is required to rend it must do so from the neckline (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:2*, and in the comment of Rema).

Rending of a High Priest – קְרִיעַת בְּהֵן גְדוּל – A High Priest, who is prohibited from rending his garment, may tear the bottom of his garment near his feet (*Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Kelei HaMikdash 5:6*).

תנו רבנן: היוצא בבגד קרוע לפני המת הרי זה גזול את המתים ואת החיים.

The Sages taught the following *baraita*: One who goes out before the deceased in a rent garment that he had previously torn^h over another bereavement, thereby giving the appearance of having rent his garment for him, **steals from the dead,**ⁿ as he did not rend a garment for him. **And he similarly steals from the living,** who see him and think that he made the tear in honor of the deceased, when in reality he is deceiving them.

רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר, האומר לתבירו: "השאיילני חלוקך ואלך ואבקר את אבא שהוא חולה", והלך ומצאו שמת – קורע, ומאחו. וכשיבא לביתו מחזור לו חלוקך ונותן לו דמי קרעו. ואם לא הודיעו – הרי זה לא יגע בו.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: In the case of one who says to his fellow: **Lend me your cloak and I will go and visit my father because he is sick, and he goes and finds that his father has died, he rends the cloak and may then mend it in the proper manner. And when he returns home, he returns the cloak to his fellow and pays him the value of the rent, i.e., the depreciation in the value of the cloak that resulted from the tear.** The assumption is that the lender considered the possibility that the sick father might die, and lent the garment anyway, understanding that he might have to tear it. **But if one did not inform his fellow that he was going to visit his sick father, he must not touch it,** as he was not granted permission to tear the garment belonging to someone else.^h

תנו רבנן: חולה שמת לו מת – אין מודיעין אותו שמת, שפא תשרף דעתו עליו. ואין מקרעין בפניו, ומשתקין את הנשים מפניו.

The Sages taught the following *baraita*: When a relative of a sick person dies,^h those around him **do not inform him that this relative died, lest he lose control of his mind** due to his emotional state and his grief exacerbate his physical health. **And other people may not rend their garments in his presence,** so that he will not know that one of his relatives passed away. **And we silence the women who weep in his presence,** so that he will not know that his relative is no longer alive.

ומקרעין לקטן מפני עגמת נפש. וקורעין על חמו ועל חמותו מפני כבוד אשתו.

And the relatives **rend the garment of a minor child** when there is mourning in his family **in order to arouse grief.** Although a minor is not required to rend his garments, this will add to the grief of those who see that even the garments of children are rent. **And one rends his garment for his father-in-law or mother-in-law, although he is not required to mourn for them, due to the honor of his wife,** to show her that he joins in her mourning.^h

ואמר רב פפא, תנא באבא רבתי: אבל לא יניח תינוק ברוך חיקו מפני שמביאו לידו שחוק, ומצא מתגנה על הבריות.

And Rav Pappa said: A Sage taught in *Evel Rabbati*: **A mourner should not place a young child in his lap because the child will bring him to laughter, and he will be disgraced in the eyes of other people** because he laughed while in mourning.^h

״ואין מברין על מטות וקופות״. תנו רבנן: ההולך לבית האבל, אם היה לבו גם בו – יברוהו על מטות כפויות; ואם לאו – יברוהו על מטות וקופות.

§ The mishna taught: **And the consolers provide the first meal after the burial only while the mourner sits on an upright bed and not on one that is overturned.** The Sages taught in a *baraita*: With regard to **one who goes to the house of the mourner, if he is confidant in his friendship with himⁿ** because they are close friends, **they provide him with the meal of comfort while both he and the mourner sit on overturned beds. And if he is not confidant in his friendship with him, both he and the mourner should be fed on upright beds.**

רבא איתרע ביה מילתא. על לגביה אבא בר מרתא, דהוא אבא בר מנימי. רבא – זקין, אבא בר מרתא – כפי אמר: כמא לית ביה דעתא להאי צורבא מרבנן.

The Gemara relates that **something unpleasant happened to Rava, i.e., one of his close relatives died, and Abba bar Marta, who was also known as Abba bar Minyomi, entered to visit him. Rava stood the bed upright,** treating him like any other person who came to comfort him. **Abba bar Marta overturned the bed** because he saw himself as being on very familiar terms with Rava. **Rava said: How lacking in senseⁿ is this Torah scholar.** Rava had shown from the outset that he did not consider Abba bar Marta to be a close friend, yet the latter ignored this message and viewed himself as being exceptionally close to Rava.

תנו רבנן: ההולך ממקום למקום,

The Sages taught a *baraita*: **If one who was going from place to place^h** learned of the death of a close relative, so that he must now observe the rites of mourning,

One who goes out in a rent garment that he had previously torn – **היוצא בבגד קרוע** – One who goes out before the dead in a garment that was previously torn in order to make it appear as though he rent this garment in honor of the deceased is considered as though he has stolen both from the living and from the dead (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:33*).

Rending a borrowed garment – קריעת בגד שאול – One who is wearing a borrowed garment when one of his relatives dies may not rend it, and one who does rend such a garment does not fulfill his obligation (*Shakh*). However, if one told the lender that he was going to visit the sick relative, then the borrower may rend the borrowed garment and pay the owner for the damage, in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:34*).

When a relative of a sick person dies – חולה שמת לו מת – When the relative of a sick person's dies, even if it is not a close relative, he should not be informed of the death, lest his grief makes his condition worsen. Similarly, he does not rend his garment, and he is not told to rend it even if he knows about the death. Others should not cry or eulogize the deceased in his presence (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 337:1*, see *Shakh and Bah*).

One rends his garment for his father-in-law or mother-in-law – קורעין על חמו וחמותו – Both men and women should rend their garments over their father- and mother-in-law. However, the custom nowadays is not to rend the garment in such a case (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 340:4*, and in the comment of Rema).

A mourner is prohibited from being joyous – אבל אסור – A mourner should not place a child on his lap for all seven days of mourning, lest the child take his mind off of his mourning. When a mourner recites *havdala*, he should not recite the verses of joy. Rather, he should begin from the blessings (*Pithei Teshuva; Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 391:1*).

Who was going from place to place – ההולך ממקום למקום – With regard to one who was traveling when he heard news of a death, if he can entirely avoid doing business in that place then this is preferable. However, if business transactions are unavoidable because if he does not make a purchase there he will not be able to find food elsewhere, then he should purchase the minimal essentials for the rest of his journey (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 380:23*).

NOTES

Steals from the dead – גזול את המתים – If one was obligated to rend his garment and did not do so, he stole the honor due to the deceased (see Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel). Rav Hai Gaon writes, based on *Evel Rabbati*, that stealing from the dead is very serious because one cannot ask forgiveness from the deceased, as he can with a living person whom he has dishonored.

אם היה לבו גם בו – Some explain that this means that the mourner is close to the consoler. Since they are so familiar with each other the mourner does not need to honor the consoler. The mourner is not required to turn the bed upright as a sign of respect for the guest because he knows that the guest will not be offended (Ramban). Others write that the consoler might see sitting on an overturned bed as a bad omen, and if he is not a regular visitor to this place then the mourners must take care not to upset him (Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel; see *Nimmukei Yosef*).

Alternatively, this expression refers to the mourner. If the mourner is so friendly that he becomes happy, then the consolers must also overturn their beds in order to reach his heart and remind him of his mourning (Rashi, from manuscript).

How lacking in sense – כמא לית ביה דעתא – Some explain this to mean that Rava acted appropriately and stood up both beds, yet his guest overturned his own one. He thereby put Rava in an inappropriate situation where he, a mourner, was sitting on an upright bed while his guest was sitting on an overturned bed (Rabbi Shlomo ben HaYatom).

NOTES

He should reduce his business...and he may carry on with them – **ימעט בעסקו...ויגלגל עמהן**: Two explanations are offered for this expression. Some say that the phrase: He should reduce, means that he should not engage in business at all, and if he absolutely must do so he may purchase only the minimal amount to eat on the journey home (Rabbeinu Hananel; Rosh). Some explain the expression: He may carry on with them, to mean that he should not perform business on his own at all. Instead, he should join in partnership with others or others may engage in business on his behalf (Rashi; Rabbeinu Gershom Meor HaGola; Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel).

From when do they overturn their beds – מאימתי בופין את המטות: Overturning the bed signifies the beginning of all of the mourning practices. Since the activities of removing shoes or wrapping the head are not applicable to all, the Gemara referred to overturning the bed because it applies equally to all (*Tosefot HaRosh*).

Overturning of the bed – כפיית המיטה: The early authorities mention a statement in the Jerusalem Talmud that a guest in an inn does not overturn his bed because the gentiles there are likely to think that he is engaging in witchcraft. Based on this, they explain why it is no longer customary for a mourner to overturn his bed. When the Jewish people are in exile, it is as though they are always residing in temporary accommodations. Additionally, it is explained that modern beds have pieces that protrude upward, and overturning them would not be noticeable or practical; therefore, it became customary not to overturn one's bed at all (see Rosh).

All the beds he has – יגל מיטות שיש לו: Some of the early authorities explain that a mourner must overturn all of the beds in his house, whether they belong to him, to the members of his household, or to others. However, guests who are not mourners stand these beds upright when they wish to use them (Ramban). According to the Ra'avad, a mourner is required to overturn only the beds belonging to the members of his household (see Rosh).

And even if he has ten beds, etc. – ואפילו יש לו עשר: Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel writes that the principle behind this *halakha* is that the obligation to overturn one's bed does not apply specifically to the house where the person died. Rather, it is the obligation of every mourner. Therefore, if the mourner sleeps in several different places, he is required to overturn his bed in each place. Similarly, brothers who are each mourning in their own homes are required to overturn their beds.

BACKGROUND

Grave cover – גולל: The grave cover was a large stone that was rolled onto the grave to seal it. In burial caves, these stones, which cover the entrance to the cave, are considered like large stone wheels that are not susceptible to ritual impurity and that can be rolled away when people wish to enter the cave.



Stone used to seal a burial cave

אם יכול למעט בעסקו – ימעט; ואם לאו – יגלגל עמהן.

תנו רבנן: מאימתי בופין את המטות? משיצא מפתח ביתו, דברי רבי אליעזר. רבי יהושע אומר: משיסתם הגולל.

מעשה שמת רבן גמליאל הזקן. ביון שציצא מפתח ביתו אמר להם רבי אליעזר: כפו מטותיכם. וכיון שנסתם הגולל, אמר להם רבי יהושע: כפו מטותיכם. אמרו לו: כפר כפינו על פי זקן.

תנו רבנן: מאימתי זוקפין את המטות בערב שבת? מן המנחה ולמעלה. אמר רבה בר הונא: אף על פי כן אינו יושב עליה עד שתחשך. ולמוצאי שבת, אף על פי שאין לו לישוב אלא יום אחד – חוזר וכופה.

תנו רבנן: הכופה מטתו, לא מטתו בלבד הוא כופה, אלא כל מטות שיש לו בתוך ביתו הוא כופה. ואפילו יש לו עשר מטות בעשרה מקומות כופה את כולן. ואפילו חמשה אחין ומת אחד – כולן בופין.

if he can reduce his business, he should reduce it; and if not, he may carry on with them,^N i.e., his business partners. He may act in partnership with the members of the group with which he is traveling, but he may not engage in business independently.

§ The Sages taught the following *baraita*: From when do the mourners overturn their beds?^N From when the corpse is taken out of the opening of his house; this is the statement of Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Yehoshua says: From when the tomb is sealed with the grave cover.^{BH}

There was an incident in which the *Nasi* Rabban Gamliel the Elder^P died, and once his body left the opening of his house, Rabbi Eliezer said to the members of the household: Overturn your beds. And once the tomb was sealed with the grave cover, Rabbi Yehoshua said to them: Overturn your beds. They then said to him: We already overturned them in accordance with the Elder, i.e., Rabbi Eliezer.

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: From when do the mourners stand their beds upright on Friday;^H as the rites of mourning are not observed on Shabbat, and the beds must be returned to their ordinary position beforehand? From *minha* time onward. Rabba bar Huna said: Even so, one may not sit down on his upright bed immediately. Rather, he must wait until it becomes dark to do so. And at the conclusion of Shabbat, even if he has only one more day to sit in mourning, i.e., his period of mourning concludes on Sunday, he must once again overturn his bed.

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: With regard to one who is in mourning and must overturn his bed,^N he overturns not only his own bed, but rather he overturns all the beds he has^N in his house. And even if he has ten beds^N in ten different places, he overturns them all. And even if there are five brothers and one of them died, all of them overturn their beds wherever they live.^H

HALAKHA

When is the beginning of mourning – מאימתי תחילת אבילות: Mourning begins when the deceased is buried and the grave is covered with dirt, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua. At this point, the mourner is also required to wrap his head. However, he does not remove his shoes until he reaches his house. Nowadays, it is customary to remove one's shoes immediately after the grave has been sealed. If one thought that the grave had been sealed and he began mourning, and it later became known to him that he had made a mistake, then he should count his mourning period from the time of the actual burial (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 375:1*, and in the comment of Rema).

The time of the standing up of the bed – זמן זקיפת המיטה: A mourner stands his bed upright on Friday from the time of the afternoon prayer and onward. However, he should not sit on an

upright bed until it becomes dark. At the conclusion of Shabbat, he again overturns the bed, even if he has only one day of mourning left (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 400:1*).

Which beds are overturned – אלו מטות בופים: A mourner who is required to overturn his bed is required to overturn not only his own bed, but also all the beds in his house. If he has many houses in various places, then he must overturn all of the beds in each house. This obligation applies to all of the mourners. However, the obligation applies only to beds intended for lying on. A bed that has been designated for storing garments or for some other use need not be overturned. Similarly, a bed with large posts need not be overturned. With regard to a *dargash*, one should untie its loops rather than overturning it (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim, Hilkhot Evel 5:18*). Nowadays, the custom is not to overturn beds at all (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 387:2*).

PERSONALITIES

Rabban Gamliel the Elder – רבן גמליאל הזקן: Rabban Gamliel is referred to as the Elder to distinguish him from his grandson, whose name was also Rabban Gamliel, and who was referred to as Rabban Gamliel of Yavne. He was a grandson of Hillel the Elder and served as the head of the Sanhedrin for many years during the Temple period.

It seems that Rabban Gamliel was the first to receive the honorary title Rabban because he was accepted by all the Sages of the Jewish people. Many of his rulings were cited in subsequent generations. He enacted many important rulings, e.g., that a

woman may remarry based on the testimony of a single witness that her previous husband has died. He enacted other rulings as well, in order to improve public welfare. During his time, people would study Torah only while standing, but that practice ceased when he died. Therefore, it is said that when Rabban Gamliel died, honor for the Torah ceased (*Sota 49a*).

His son was Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, who led the Jewish people during the era of the Great Revolt and who was later executed by the Romans.

It is not necessary to overturn a *dargash* – דָּרְגָשׁ, אֵין: According to the Meiri, this is because it is not readily apparent if the *dargash* is overturned, since it is always low to the ground. The Ritva writes that because a *dargash* is made of expensive leather, there is concern that it will be damaged if it is overturned, and therefore it is sufficient to stand it on its side as a sign of mourning.

Whose posts extend – נִקְלִיטִין יוֹצְאִין: Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel writes that the posts are two poles that stick out from the middle of the ends of the bed. Therefore, it is impossible to overturn such a bed.

LANGUAGE

Loops [karbitin] – קַרְבִּיטִין: From the Greek κράββατος, *krabatos*, meaning mattress, cushion, or interlacing of the bed.

Posts [naklitin] – נִקְלִיטִין: Probably from the Greek ἀνάκλιτα, *anaklita*, or ἀνάκλιτος, *anaklitos*, meaning leaning back in a bed or chair.

HALAKHA

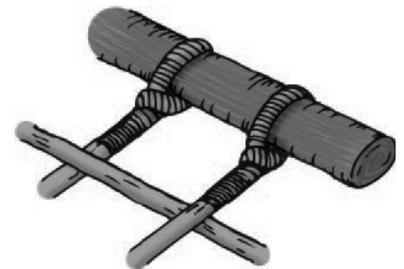
The first meal for a king after the burial – סְעֻדַת הַמֶּלֶךְ: When a king eats the first meal after the burial of his relative, everyone else sits on the ground and he sits on a *dargash* (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim*, *Hilkhot Evel* 7:8).

BACKGROUND

Interlacing from the inside – סִירוּגָה מִתּוֹכוֹ:



Interlacing from the outside – סִירוּגָה עַל גַּבָּהּ:



Bed and bedpost – מִטָּה וְנִקְלִיטִין: On the bed depicted in the image, the supports at the head and the foot, which may be the posts referred to by the Gemara, extend from the bed, and therefore it is difficult to overturn it. Furthermore, overturning it would not be immediately noticeable.



Ancient Roman bed from mishnaic period

ואם היתה מטה המיוחדת לבלים – אין צריך לכוףתה. דרגש – אין צריך לכופותו, אלא זקפו. רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר: דרגש, מתיר את קרביטיו והוא נופל מאיליו.

מאי דרגש? אמר עולא: ערסא דגדא.

אמר ליה רבה: אלא מעתה גבי מלך, דתנן: כל העם מסובים על הארץ והוא מיסב על הדרגש, מי איכא מידי דעד האידינא לא אוכליניה – והשתא מותבין ליה?

מתקיף לה רב אשי: מאי קשיא? מידי דהוה אאכילה ושתיה, דעד האידינא – לא אוכליניה ולא אשקיניה, השתא – אוכליניה ואשקיניה!

אלא, אי קשיא – הא קשיא: דתנן: דרגש אינו צריך לכופותו אלא זקפו. ואי ערסא דגדא – אמאי אינו צריך לכופותו? הא תנן: הכופה משתו – לא משתו בלבד הוא כופה, אלא כל משות שיש לו בתוך ביתו כופה!

ומאי קשיא? מידי דהוה אמטה המיוחדת לבלים, דתנא: אם היתה מטה המיוחדת לבלים – אינו צריך לכופותה!

אלא, אי קשיא הא קשיא: רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר: דרגש, מתיר קרביטיו והוא נופל מאיליו. ואי סלקא דעתך ערסא דגדא – מאי קרביטין אית ליה?

כי אתא רבין אמר ליה ההוא מרבנן, ורב תחיליפא בר מערבא שמייה, דהוה שכיח בשוקא דגילדאי. מאי דרגש? ערסא דצלא.

איתמר נמי, אמר רבי ירמיה: דרגש – סירוגו מתוכו, מטה – סירוגה על גבה.

אמר רבי יעקב בר אחא אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: הלכה ברבן שמעון בן גמליאל. איתמר נמי, אמר רבי יעקב בר אחא אמר רבי אסי: מטה שנקליטין יוצאין – זקפה, ודיו.

If, however, it is a bed designated for the storage of garments and not for sleeping, he is not required to overturn it. It is also not necessary to overturn a *dargash*,ⁿ but rather he stands it upright. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: With regard to a *dargash*, one loosens its loops [karbitav],^l which hold up the pillows, and it falls on its own.

The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of the word *dargash*? Ulla said: It is a good-luck [gada] bed, as it was common to have ornamental beds for good luck, which were not used for sleeping.

Rabba said to him: However, if that is so, then the following statement with regard to a king is difficult, as we learned in a mishna (*Sanhedrin* 20a): When the mourner's meal is served to the king and his family, all the people recline on the ground, and he, the king, due to his honor, reclines on a *dargash*.^h Is there anything upon which we would not have seated him until now, when he was not a mourner, but now, specifically during the mourning period, we seat him on it?

Rav Ashi strongly objects to this: What is the difficulty raised by Rabba? One can answer: The *halakha* is just as it is in the case of eating and drinking, that until now, before one became a mourner, we did not feed him or give him drink, but now that he is a mourner we feed him and give him drink during the first meal after the burial.

Rather, if it is difficult, this is difficult, as we learned in a *baraita*: It is not necessary to overturn a *dargash*, but rather he stands it upright. But if it is a good-luck bed, why is it not necessary to overturn it? Didn't we learn: One who is in mourning and must overturn his bed overturns not only his own bed, but rather he overturns all the beds in his house, including this good luck bed?

The Gemara rejects this: And what is difficult in this? One can answer: The *halakha* is just as it is in the case of a bed designated for the storage of garments, as it is taught in a *baraita*: If it is a bed designated for the storage of garments, and not for sleeping, one is not required to overturn it. So too, one is not required to overturn a *dargash*, as it is a bed that is not used for sleeping.

Rather if it is difficult, this is the difficulty: It was taught in a *baraita*: Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: With regard to a *dargash*, one loosens the loops that hold up the pillows, and it falls on its own. And if it enters your mind to say that a *dargash* is a good-luck bed, it is like other beds, so what loops does it have?

When Ravin came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, one of the Sages, whose name was Rav Tahalifa from the West, and who was frequently found in the market of leather workers, said to him: What is a *dargash*? It is a leather bed.

It was also stated that Rabbi Yirmeya said: A *dargash* has its interlacing from the inside,^b i.e., attached to loops that go through holes that are made in the bed frame itself; whereas a bed has its interlacing from the outside,^b i.e., the strapping itself is looped around the wood of the frame, and therefore it cannot be loosened.

Rabbi Ya'akov bar Aha said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: The *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel with regard to a *dargash*. It was also stated that Rabbi Ya'akov bar Aha said in the name of Rabbi Asi: A bed whose posts [naklitin]^{nlb} extend, meaning that they are very long so that the bed will remain high off the ground even if it is overturned, may be stood upright and that is sufficient. That is to say, one is not required to overturn such a bed.

Sleeping on an overturned bed – שינה על מיטה כפוייה – It is not enough for a mourner to overturn his bed; he must sleep on it overturned as well (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim, Hilkhot Evel* 5:18).

Sweep and sprinkle water – מכבדין ומרביצין – It is permitted to sweep and sprinkle water on the dirt floor in a mourners' house. Similarly, one may wash dishes there as well. However, one should not bring any type of fragrant spices there. Spices may be taken into a house in which a dead body is present, but one does not recite a blessing over those spices (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'ea* 378:7).

Customs of mourning during the intermediate days of the Festival – מנהגי אבלות במועד – The mourners' blessing is not recited in open areas during the intermediate days of a Festival. However, the consolers stand in a line and the mourners dismiss the masses (*Tur, Yoreh De'ea* 401).

Placing a bier during the intermediate days of the Festival – הנחת המיטה במועד – The bier is not placed in the street during the intermediate days of a Festival, so as not to encourage eulogizing at that time. On these days, eulogies are given only in honor of a Torah scholar. A bier is not taken for burial during the intermediate days of the Festival until the grave has already been prepared (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'ea* 401:1).

LANGUAGE

Tray [tavla] – טבלא – From the Greek *τάβλα, tabla*, which is borrowed from the Latin *tabula*. Ordinarily, it refers to a tablet that was used for writing or on which objects were placed. By extension, the word is used here in reference to a flat tray that is similar to a tablet. See also LANGUAGE, p. 54.

Bowl [iskutla] – אסקוטלא – From the Latin *scutella*, meaning flat dish.

Narrow-mouthed basket [kanon] – קנון – From the Greek *κάθεον, kaneon*, or *κανών, kanon*, meaning breadbasket, or a basket in which items were taken as gifts or to be sacrificed as offerings. According to the description in the Talmud, this basket had a narrow opening.

תנו רבנן: ישן על גבי כסא, על גבי אודיני גדולה, על גבי קרקע – לא יצא ידיו חזבתו. אמר רבי יוחנן: שלא קיים כפיית המטה.

תנו רבנן: מכבדין ומרביצין בבית האבל, ומדיחין קערות וכוסות וצלוחיות וקיתונות בבית האבל, ואין מביאין את המוגמר ואת הבשמים לבית האבל.

איני: והא תני בר קפרא: אין מברכין לא על המוגמר ולא על הבשמים בבית האבל. ברובי הוא דלא מברכין, הא אתווי – מייתני!

לא קשיא: הא – בבית האבל, הא – בבית המנחמין.

מתני' אין מוליכין לבית האבל לא בטבלא ולא באסקוטלא ולא בקנון, אלא בסלים. ואין אומרים ברפת אבלים במועד, אבל עומדין בשורה, ומנחמין, ופותרין את הרבים.

אין מניחין את המטה ברחוב שלא להרגיל את ההספד. ולא של נשים לעולם. מפני הקבדו.

The Sages taught the following *baraita*: If the mourner sleeps on a chair, or on a large overturned mortar, or on the ground, he does not fulfill his obligation, even though he is uncomfortable while sleeping. Rabbi Yohanan said: This is because he did not fulfill the mitzva of overturning the bed.¹⁴

The Sages taught another *baraita*: One may sweep and sprinkle water¹⁵ on a dirt floor in the house of a mourner, and one may wash bowls, cups, jugs, and pitchers in the house of a mourner. But one may not bring incense or fragrant spices into the house of a mourner.

The Gemara asks: Is that so? But doesn't bar Kappara teach the following *baraita*: One may not recite a blessing either over incense or over fragrant spices in the house of a mourner? From this one may infer that one may not recite a blessing over these incense or spices, but one may bring them into the house of the mourner. This appears to contradict the previous *baraita*.

The Gemara explains: It is not difficult. Here, the *baraita* is referring to the house of a mourner, into which spices should not be taken; there, the *baraita* that states that one may not recite a blessing over them, is referring to the house of the consolers, his relatives, into which spices may be brought.¹⁶

MISHNA One does not bring¹⁷ the first meal after the burial to the house of mourning on a small tray [tavla],¹⁸ in a bowl [iskutla],¹⁹ or in a narrow-mouthed basket [kanon],²⁰ but rather in ordinary baskets. And the mourners' blessing is not recited on the intermediate days of a Festival, but the consolers may stand in a row when the mourners leave the cemetery and console them. And the mourners dismiss the many consolers,²¹ by telling them that they may return home after they have fulfilled the mitzva of consoling the mourners.²²

The bier of the deceased is not set down in the street during the intermediate days of a Festival²³ so as not to encourage eulogies. On an ordinary weekday, people would gather in the street around the bier to eulogize the deceased, but this should be avoided during the intermediate days of the Festival. And the biers of women are never set down, even if it is not the intermediate days of a Festival, due to their honor. Blood might drip from their bodies, and it would cause them dishonor if their blood stained the street.

NOTES

The house of the mourner and the house of the consolers – בית האבל ובית המנחמין: The authorities disagree with regard to the meaning of the expression: House of the mourner. Some say that the house of the mourner refers to a house where the mourner alone is present, and the house of the consolers refers to the place where people come to comfort him (Ra'avad; Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel).

Others explain that the house of the mourner refers to a house that still contains the body of the deceased, and the more correct name would be the house of the mourning; whereas the house of the consolers is the room that no longer contains the body of the deceased, where others come to console the mourners (Rosh).

Similarly, there is a dispute with regard to the *halakha*, as there are those who say that it is permitted to bring fragrant spices into a house where the body of the deceased is present, to remove any unpleasant odor, however such spices may not be brought to a place where there is no dead body (Rabbi Yitzhak ibn Giat; Ritva; Meiri). Some say that in a house where only the mourner is present one may not bring fragrant spices because it is not appropriate for the mourner to take pleasure while he

is mourning. However, in honor of the consolers one may bring such spices (Rabbeinu Hananel).

One does not bring – אין מוליכין: Some say that this mishna refers to the intermediate days of the Festival. Despite the honor of the intermediate days of the Festival, one may not take food to the mourner's house in elaborately decorated vessels. This is all the more so prohibited on an ordinary weekday (Ritva).

In a bowl – באסקוטלא: Some explain that this refers to a type of large bowl (Rashi) or that it was a gold or silver bowl (*Arukh*). Others understand it to be a small table (Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel), or a fine tablecloth (Rabbi Shlomo ben HaYatom).

And dismiss the many consolers – ופותרים את הרבים: Some explain that the mourners would dismiss the consolers immediately, telling them that they have not fulfilled their obligation since they cannot recite the mourners' blessing (Rabbeinu Yehonatan of Lunel). Those who came to console were also exempt after the Festival from reciting the mourners' blessing (Ra'avad). Some say that in honor of the Festival it is permitted to tell the consolers: Go in peace (Ran).