

R' Yehoshua ben Chananiah: Disputes and Power Dynamics in the Study Hall

Source sheet by Mindy Schwartz Zolty

Background of R' Yehoshua

1. Pirkei Avot 2:8

Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai had five disciples and they were these: Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah, Rabbi Yose, the priest, Rabbi Shimon ben Nethaneel and Rabbi Eleazar ben Arach. He [Rabbi Johanan] used to list their outstanding virtues: Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus is a plastered cistern that loses not a drop; **Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah happy is the woman that gave birth to him**; Rabbi Yose, the priest, is a pious man; Rabbi Simeon ben Nethaneel is one that fears sin, And Rabbi Eleazar ben Arach is like a spring that [ever] gathers force.

חמשה תלמידים היו לו לרבן יוחנן בן זכאי, ואליהן, רבי אליעזר בן הורקנוס, ורבי יהושע בן חנניה, ורבי יוסי הכהן, ורבי שמעון בן נתנאל, ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה. הוא היה מונה שבחן. רבי אליעזר בן הורקנוס, בור סוד שאינו מאבד טפה. **רבי יהושע בן חנניה, אשרי יולדתו.** רבי יוסי הכהן, חסיד. רבי שמעון בן נתנאל, ירא חטא. ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה, מעין המתגבר.

2. Yerushalmi Yevamot 1:6

[R' Dosa ben Hyrkanos] said, lift my eyelids so I can see the Sages of Israel. He saw Rabbi Joshua and said to him: "To whom will one teach knowledge [to whom impart understanding, to those weaned from milk, removed from the breasts]" (Is. 28:9). **I remember that his mother brought his crib to the Synagogue so that his ears should cling to the words of the Torah.**

תלון עיני דניחמי לחכמי ישראל. ראה את רבי יהושע. וקרא עליו את מי יורה דיעה. **זכור אני שהייתה אמו מולכת עריסתו לבית הכנסת בשביל שיתדבקו אזניו בדברי תורה**

3. Avot d'Rabbi Natan 14:3

Rabban Yohanan Ben Zakkai had five students, and he had a name for each of them. He called Eliezer ben Hyrcanus "the Plastered Pit," because it never loses a drop, and "the Sealed Bottle," because it keeps all of its wine. **He called Yehoshua ben Hananya "the Triple Knot," which cannot be severed easily.** He called Yosei HaKohen "the Saint of the Generation." He called Yishmael ben Hananya "the Oasis in the Desert," which holds on to its water. (Happy is the student whose teacher praises him and speaks of his virtues!) He called Elazar ben Arach "the Flowing Stream" and "the Bubbling Brook," for its waters overflow and go out into the world, as it says (Proverbs 5:16), "Your wellsprings will burst forth, and the streams will spill out onto the streets."

חמשה תלמידים היו לו לרבן יוחנן בן זכאי לכולן קרא להן שמות. לאליעזר בן הורקנוס קרא בור סיד שאינו מאבד טיפה קנקן זפותה שמשמרת את יינה. **ליהושע בן חנניה קרא לו חוט המשולש לא במהרה ינתק.** וליוסי הכהן קרא לו חסיד שבדור. ולישמעאל בן חנניה קרא לו גרוע במדבר שמחזקת מימיה (אשרי תלמיד שרבו מודה לו ומעיד עליו). ולאליעזר בן ערך קרא לו נחל שוטף ומעין המתגבר שמימיו מתגברין ויוצאין לחוץ לקיים מה שנא' (משלי ה' ט"ז) יפוצו מעינותיך חוצה ברחובות פלגי מים:

4. Ma'aser Sheni 5:9

One whose produce is far away from him, he must call it by name. Once it happened that Rabban Gamaliel and the elders were traveling by ship, and **Rabban Gamaliel said: "The tithe which I shall measure out in the future is given to Joshua,** and the place which it is in is leased to him. The other tithe which I shall measure out in the future is given to Akiva ben Joseph that he may hold it for the poor, and the place which it is in is leased to him." Rabbi Joshua said: "The tithe [taken from terumah] which I shall measure out is given to Elazar ben Azariah, and the place which it is in is leased to him," and they each received rent one from another.

מי שהיה פרותיו רחוקים ממנו, צריך לקרוא להם שם. מעשה ברבן גמליאל והזקנים שהיו באין בספינה, **אמר רבן גמליאל, עשור שאני עתיד למוד, נתון ליהושע, ומקומו משכר לו.** עשור אחר שאני עתיד למוד, נתון לעקיבא בן יוסף שיזכה בו לעניים, ומקומו משכר לו. **אמר רבי יהושע, עשור שאני עתיד למוד נתון לאלעזר בן עזריה, ומקומו משכר לו.** ונתקבלו זה מזה שכר:

5. Bartenura on Ma'aser Sheni 5:9

[It is given to] Joshua. He was a levite.	נתון ליהושע. לוי היה.
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6. Archin 11b

It is taught in a baraita: There was an incident involving Rabbi Yehoshua bar Ḥananya [a Levite] who went to Rabbi Yoḥanan ben Gudgeda [also a Levite] in order to assist in closing the doors [of the Temple]. Rabbi Yoḥanan ben Gudgeda said to him: My son, go back, as you are among the singers and not among the gatekeepers.	דתניא מעשה בר' יהושע בר חנניה שהלך לסייע בהגפת דלתות אצל ר' יוחנן בן גודגדא אמר לו בני חזור לאחוריך שאתה מן המשוררים ולא מן המשוערים
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7. Sanhedrin 32b

...The Sages taught: "Justice, justice, shall you follow." Follow the Sages to the academy [where they are found. For example,] follow after Rabbi Eliezer to Lod, after Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai to Beror Ḥayil, after Rabbi Yehoshua to Peki'in , after Rabban Gamliel to Yavne, after Rabbi Akiva to Bnei Brak, after Rabbi Matya to Rome, after Rabbi Ḥananya ben Teradyon to Sikhnei, after Rabbi Yosei to Tzipori, after Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira to Netzivin, after Rabbi Yehoshua to the exile [gola], after Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi to Beit She'arim, and after the Sages [in the time of the Temple] to the Chamber of Hewn Stone.	...ת"ר צדק צדק תרדף הלך אחר חכמים לשיבה אחר ר' אליעזר ללוד אחר רבן יוחנן בן זכאי לברור חיל אחר רבי יהושע לפקיעין אחר רבן גמליאל ליבנא אחר רבי עקיבא לבני ברק אחר רבי מתיא לרומי אחר רבי חנניא בן תרדיון לסיכני אחר ר' יוסי לציפורי אחר רבי יהודה בן בתירה לנציבין אחר רבי יהושע לגולה אחר רבי לבית שערים אחר חכמים ללשכת הגזית:
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8. Yerushalmi Berachot 7d

[Rabban Gamliel] came to Rabbi Joshua and found him occupied with the making of needles	אזל גבי רבי יהושע אשכחיה יתיב עבד מחטין.
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9. Berachot 28a

When [Rabban Gamliel] reached Rabbi Yehoshua's house, he saw that the walls of his house were black. Rabban Gamliel said to Rabbi Yehoshua: From the walls of your house it is apparent that you are a blacksmith.	כי מטא לביתיה, חזינהו לאשיתא דביתיה דמשחרן. אמר ליה: מכותלי ביתך אתה ניכר שפחמי אתה.
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R' Yehoshua and R' Eliezer: Dispute in the Study Hall

10. Sanhedrin 32b

The Sages taught: "Justice, justice, shall you follow" (Deut. 16:20). Follow the best court [of the generation. For example,] follow after Rabbi Eliezer to Lod , after Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai to Beror Ḥayil...	ת"ר צדק צדק תרדף הלך אחר ב"ד יפה אחר רבי אליעזר ללוד אחר רבן יוחנן בן זכאי לברור חיל...
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11. Pirkei Avot 2:8

He [Rabbi Yohanan] used to say: if all the sages of Israel were on one scale of the balance and Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus on the other scale, he would outweigh them all. Abba Shaul said in his name: if all the sages of Israel were on one scale of the balance, and Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus also with them, and Rabbi Eleazar ben Arach on the other scale, he would outweigh them all.	הוא היה אומר, אם יהיו כל חכמי ישראל בכף מאזנים, ואליעזר בן הורקנוס בכף שניה, מכריע את כלם. אבא שאול אומר משמו, אם יהיו כל חכמי ישראל בכף מאזנים ורבי אליעזר בן הורקנוס אף עמיהם, ורבי אלעזר בן ערר בכף שניה, מכריע את כלם:
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12. Yerushalmi Chagigah 2:1

And [Elisha said] this incident happened to me: Avuyah, my father, was one of the great men of Jerusalem. On the day that he was to circumcise me, he called all of the great [ie. important or wealthy] men of Jerusalem to one house and **R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua to another house. When they had eaten and drunk, [the great men] began clapping and dancing. R' Eliezer said to R' Yehoshua: While they are occupied with theirs, let us occupy ourselves with ours.** And they sat and occupied themselves with words of Torah, from the Torah to the Prophets, and from the Prophets to the Writings. **And fire came down from heaven and surrounded them.**

Avuyah said to them: My masters, have you come to burn my house upon me?! They said to him: God forbid, rather we were sitting and going over words of Torah, from the Torah to the Prophets, and from the Prophets to the Writings, **And the words were joyful as when they were given at Sinai, and fire was lapping at them as it lapped at them at Sinai—Were [these words] not originally given at Sinai in fire?**—“And the mountain blazed with fire to the heart of the heavens” (Deut. 4:11). Avuyah, my father, said to them: My masters, if thus is the power of Torah, if this child survives, I dedicate him to Torah. Because his intention was not for the sake of heaven, therefore they were not maintained in that man [ie. in his child, Elisha].

...And all this, how did it [i.e. his heresy] come upon [Elisha]?...And some say: His mother, when she was pregnant with him, would pass by houses of idolatry and she smelled of that thing, and that smell penetrated her body like the venom of a snake.

ובי היה המעשה: אבויא אבא מגדולי ירושלם היה. ביום שבא למוהליני קרא לכל גדולי ירושלם והושיבן בבית אחד ולר' אליעזר ולר' יהושע בבית אחר. מן דאכלון ושתון שרון מטפחין ומרקדין. א"ר ליעזר לר' יהושע עד דאינון עסיקין בדידון נעסוק אנן בדידן. וישבו ונתעסקו בדברי תורה מן התורה לנביאים ומן הנביאי' לכתובים וירדה אש מן השמים והקיפה אותם.

אמר להן אבויא רבותי מה באתם לשרוף את ביתי עלי?! אמרו לו חס ושלום, אלא יושבין היינו וחוזרין בדברי תור' מן התורה לנביאים ומן הנביאים לכתובים, והיו הדברים שמיחים כנתינתן מסיני והית' האש מלחכ' אותן כלחיתתן מסיני—ועיקר נתינתן מסיני לא ניתנו אלא באש?—וההר בוער באש עד לב השמים (דברים ד:יא). אמ' להן אבויא אבא רבותי אם כך היא כוחה של תורה אם נתקיים לי בן הזה לתורה אני מפרישו. לפי שלא היתה כוונתו לשם שמים לפיכך לא נתקיימו באותו האיש.

...כל דא מן הן אתת ליה?...ויש אומרים אמו כשהיתה מעוברת בו היתה עוברת על בתי עבודה זרה והריחה מאותו המין, והיה אותו הריח מפעפע בגופה כאירסה של חכינה.

13. Gittin 56a

Abba Sikkara was the leader of the zealots [biryonei] of Jerusalem and the son of the sister of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai. Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai sent a message to him: Come to me in secret. He came, and Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai said to him: Until when will you do this and kill everyone through starvation? Abba Sikkara said to him: What can I do, for if I say something to them they will kill me. Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai said to him: Show me a method so that I will be able to leave the city, and it is possible that through this there will be some small salvation.

Abba Sikkara said to him: Pretend to be sick, and have everyone come and ask [about your welfare, so that word will spread about your ailing condition. Afterward] bring something putrid and place it near you, so that people will say that you have died [and are decomposing]. And then, have your students enter [to bring you to burial], and let no one else come in so that [the zealots] not notice that you are [still] light. As [the zealots] know that a living person is lighter than a dead person.

Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai did this. Rabbi Eliezer entered from one side and Rabbi Yehoshua from the other side [to take him out]. When they arrived at the

אבא סקרא ריש בריוני דירושלים בר אַחתיא דרבן יוחנן בן זכאי הוה שלח ליה תא בציןעא לגבאי אַתא אַמר ליה עד אימת עבדיתו הכי וקטליתו ליה לעלמא בכפנא אַמר ליה מאי איעביד דאי אמינא להו מידי קטלו לי אַמר ליה חזי לי תקנתא לדידי דאיפוק אפשר דהוי הצלה פורתא

אַמר ליה נקוט נפשא בקצירי וליתו כולי עלמא ולישיליו בך ואייתי מידי סריא ואגני גבך ולימרו דנח נפשא וליעיליו בך תלמידך ולא ליעול בך איניש אחרנא דלא לרגשון בך דקליל את דאינוהו ידעי דחייא קליל ממינתא

עביד הכי נכנס בו רבי אליעזר מצד אחד ורבי יהושע מצד אחר כי מטו לפיתחא בעו למדקריה אַמר להו יאמרו רבן

entrance [of the city on the inside, the guards, who were of the faction of the zealots,] wanted to pierce him [with their swords in order to ascertain that he was actually dead.]. Abba Sikkara said to them: [The Romans] will say that they pierce [even] their teacher. [The guards then] wanted [at least] to push him [to see whether he was still alive, in which case he would cry out on account of the pushing.] Abba Sikkara said to them: They will say that they push even their teacher. The guards then opened the gate and he was taken out.

...[Vespasian then] said to Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai: I will be going [to Rome to accept my new position], and I will send someone else [in my place to continue besieging the city and waging war against it]. But [before I leave], ask something of me that I can give you. **Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai said to him: Give me Yavne and its Sages [and do not destroy it], and the dynasty of Rabban Gamliel [and do not kill them],** and doctors to heal Rabbi Tzadok.

דָּקְרוּ בָּעוֹ לְמִדְחָפִיָּה אָמַר לָהּ יֹאמְרוּ רַבֵּן דְּחָפּוּ פִתְחוּ לִי
בָּבָא נִפְקָא

....אָמַר לִי מִיִּזְל אֲזִילָנָא וְאִינֵשׁ אַחֲרִינָא מְשַׁדְרָנָא אֱלָא בְּעִי
מִינָאִי מִיִּדֵּי דְאַתָּן לָךְ אָמַר לִי תַן לִי יְבִנָּה וְחֻכְמָיָה
וְשׁוֹשִׁילָתָא דְרַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל וְאַסּוּוֹתָא דְמַסְיִין לִי לְרַבִּי צְדוֹק

14. Bava Metzia 59b

Apropos the topic of verbal mistreatment,] we learned in a mishna there (Kelim 5:10): If one cut an earthenware oven widthwise into segments, and placed sand between each and every segment, Rabbi Eliezer deems it ritually pure. [Because of the sand, its legal status is not that of a complete vessel, and therefore it is not susceptible to ritual impurity]. And the Rabbis deem it ritually impure, [as it is functionally a complete oven].

And this is known as the oven of Akhnai. The Gemara asks: What is the relevance of Akhnai [a snake]? Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: the Rabbis surrounded it with their statements like this snake, and deemed it impure. The Sages taught: On that day, when they discussed this matter, Rabbi Eliezer answered all possible answers in the world to support his opinion, but the Rabbis did not accept his explanations from him.

Rabbi Eliezer said to them: If the halakha is in accordance with my opinion, this carob tree will prove it. **The carob tree was uprooted from its place one hundred cubits, and some say four hundred cubits.** The Rabbis said to him: One does not cite halakhic proof from the carob tree. Rabbi Eliezer then said to them: If the halakha is in accordance with my opinion, the stream will prove it. **The water in the stream turned backward and began flowing in the opposite direction.** They said to him: One does not cite halakhic proof from a stream.

Rabbi Eliezer then said to them: If the halakha is in accordance with my opinion, the walls of the study hall will prove it. **The walls of the study hall leaned [inward and began] to fall.** Rabbi Yehoshua scolded the walls and said to them: If Torah scholars are contending with each other in matters of halakha, what is the nature of your [involvement in this dispute]? **The walls did not fall because of the deference due Rabbi Yehoshua, but they**

תַּנן הֵתָם חֲתָכוּ חוֹלוֹת וְנָתַן חוֹל בֵּין חוֹלִיא לְחוֹלִיא ר"א מִטְהַר
וְחֻכְמִים מִטְמְאִין

זֶה הוּא תִנּוּר שֶׁל עֵכָנָא מֵאִי עֵכָנָא אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר
שְׁמוּאֵל שֶׁהִקִּיפוּ דְבָרִים כַּעֲכָנָא זֶה וְטִמְאוּהוּ תֵּנָא בְּאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם
הַשִּׁיב רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר כָּל תְּשׁוּבוֹת שֶׁבַעוּלָם וְלֹא קִיבְלוּ הַיָּמָנוּ

אָמַר לָהֶם אִם הִלְכָה כְּמוֹתִי חֲרוּב זֶה יוֹכִיחַ נַעֲקֵר חֲרוּב
מִמְקוֹמוֹ מֵאֵה אֵמָה וְאֵמָרִי לֵה אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אֵמָה אָמְרוּ לוֹ
אֵין מִבִּיאִין רֵאִיָּה מִן הַחֲרוּב חֲזַר וְאָמַר לָהֶם אִם הִלְכָה כְּמוֹתִי
אֵמֶת הַמַּיִם יוֹכִיחוּ חֲזַרוּ אֵמֶת הַמַּיִם לְאַחֲרֵיהֶם אָמְרוּ לוֹ אֵין
מִבִּיאִין רֵאִיָּה מֵאֵמֶת הַמַּיִם

חֲזַר וְאָמַר לָהֶם אִם הִלְכָה כְּמוֹתִי כוֹתְלֵי בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ יוֹכִיחוּ
הֵטוּ כוֹתְלֵי בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ לִיפּוֹל גַּעַר בָּהֶם רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אָמַר
לָהֶם אִם תִּלְמִידֵי חֻכְמִים מִנְצִחִים זֶה אֵת זֶה בִּהְלָכָה אַתֶּם
מֵה טִיבְכֶם לֹא נִפְלוּ מִפְּנֵי כְבוֹדוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְלֹא זָקְפוּ
מִפְּנֵי כְבוֹדוֹ שֶׁל ר"א וְעַדִּין מִטִּין וְעוֹמְדִין

did not straighten because of the deference due Rabbi Eliezer, and they still remain leaning.

Rabbi Eliezer then said to them: If the halakha is in accordance with my opinion, Heaven will prove it. **A Divine Voice emerged from Heaven and said: Why are you differing with Rabbi Eliezer, as the halakha is in accordance with his opinion in every place that he expresses an opinion!**

Rabbi Yehoshua stood on his feet and said: It is written: "It is not in heaven" (Deuteronomy 30:12). What is the relevance of the phrase "It is not in heaven" in this context? Rabbi Yirmeya says: Since the Torah was already given at Mount Sinai, we do not regard a Divine Voice, as You already wrote at Mount Sinai, in the Torah: "After a majority to incline" (Exodus 23:2). Years after, Rabbi Natan encountered Elijah the prophet and said to him: What did the Holy One, Blessed be He, do at that time, when Rabbi Yehoshua issued his declaration? Elijah said to him: The Holy One, Blessed be He, **smiled and said: My children have triumphed over Me; My children have triumphed over Me**

The Sages said: On that day, the Sages brought all the ritually pure items deemed pure by the ruling of Rabbi Eliezer and **burned them in fire, and the Sages reached a consensus in his regard and ostracized him.** And the Sages said: Who will go and inform him of his ostracism? Rabbi Akiva said to them: I will go, lest an unseemly person go and **he would thereby destroy the entire world.**

What did Rabbi Akiva do? He wore black and wrapped himself in black and sat before Rabbi Eliezer at a distance of four cubits, [which is the distance that one must maintain from an ostracized individual]. Rabbi Eliezer said to him: Akiva, what is different about today from other days? Rabbi Akiva said to him: My teacher, it appears to me that your colleagues are distancing themselves from you. Rabbi Eliezer too rent his garments and removed his shoes, [as is the custom of an ostracized person,] and he dropped from his seat and sat upon the ground.

His eyes shed tears, and as a result the entire world was afflicted: One-third of its olives were afflicted, and one-third of its wheat, and one-third of its barley. And some say that even dough kneaded in a woman's hands spoiled. The Sages taught: There was great anger on that day, as any place that Rabbi Eliezer fixed his gaze was burned.

And even Rabban Gamliel, [the Nasi of the Sanhedrin at Yavne, the head of the Sages who were responsible for the decision to ostracize Rabbi Eliezer,] was coming on a boat at the time, and a large wave swelled over him and threatened to drown him. Rabban Gamliel said: It seems to me that this is only for the sake of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, [as God punishes those who mistreat others]. **Rabban Gamliel stood on his feet and said: Master of the Universe, it is revealed and known before You that neither was it for my honor that I acted when ostracizing him, nor was it**

חזר ואמר להם אם הלכה כמותי מן השמים יוכיחו יצאתה בת קול ואמרה מה לכם אצל ר"א שהלכה כמותו בכ"מ

עמד רבי יהושע על רגליו ואמר (דברים ל, יב) לא בשמים היא מאי לא בשמים היא אמר רבי ירמיה שכבר נתנה תורה מהר סיני אין אנו משגיחין בבת קול שכבר כתבת בהר סיני בתורה (שמות כג, ב) אחרי רבים להטות אשכחיה רבי נתן לאליהו א"ל מאי עביד קוב"ה בההיא שעתא א"ל קא חייך ואמר נצחוני בני נצחוני בני

אמרו אותו היום הביאו כל טהרות שטיהר ר"א ושרפום באש ונמנו עליו וברכוהו ואמרו מי ילך ויודיעו אמר להם ר"ע אני אלך שמא ילך אדם שאינו הגון ויודיעו ונמצא מחריב את כל העולם כולו

מה עשה ר"ע לבש שחורים ונתעטף שחורים וישב לפניו ברחוק ארבע אמות אמר לו ר"א עקיבא מה יום מיומים אמר לו רבי כמדומה לי שחבירים בדילים ממך אף הוא קרע בגדיו וחלץ מנעליו ונשמט וישב על גבי קרקע

זלגו עיניו דמעות לקה העולם שליש בזיתים ושליש בחטים ושליש בשעורים ויש אומרים אף בצק שבידי אשה טפח תנא אך גדול היה באותו היום שבכל מקום שנתן בו עיניו ר"א נשרף

ואף ר"ג היה בא בספינה עמד עליו נחשול לטבעו אמר כמדומה לי שאין זה אלא בשביל ר"א בן הורקנוס עמד על רגליו ואמר רבונו של עולם גלוי וידוע לפניך שלא לכבודי עשיתי ולא לכבוד בית אבא עשיתי אלא לכבודך שלא ירבו מחלוקות בישראל נח הים מזעפו

for the honor of the house of my father that I acted; rather, it was for Your honor, so that disputes will not proliferate in Israel. In response, the sea calmed from its raging.

Imma Shalom, the wife of Rabbi Eliezer, was the sister of Rabban Gamliel. From that incident forward, she would not allow Rabbi Eliezer to lower his head [and recite the tahananun prayer, which includes supplication and entreaties. She feared that were her husband to bemoan his fate her brother would be punished]. A certain day was around the day of the New Moon, and she inadvertently substituted a full thirty-day month for a deficient twenty-nine-day month, [i.e., she thought that it was the New Moon, when one does not lower his head in supplication, but it was not.] Some say that a pauper came and stood at the door, and she took bread out to him.

When she returned, she found him and saw that he had lowered his head in prayer. She said to him: Arise, you already killed my brother. Meanwhile, the sound of a shofar emerged from the house of Rabban Gamliel to announce that the Nasi had died. Rabbi Eliezer said to her: From where did you know [that your brother would die]? She said to him: This is the tradition that I received from the house of the father of my father: All the gates of Heaven are apt to be locked, except for the gates of prayer for victims of verbal mistreatment.

אימא שלום דביתהו דר"א אחתיה דר"ג הואי מההוא מעשה ואילך לא הוה שבעה ליה לר"א למיפל על אפיה ההוא יומא ריש ירחא הוה ואיחלף לה בין מלא לחסר איכא דאמרי אתא עניא וקאי אבבא אפיקא ליה ריפתא

אשכחתינה דנפל על אנפיה אמרה ליה קום קטלית לאחי אדהכי נפק שיפורא מבית רבן גמליאל דשכיב אמר לה מנא ידעת אמרה ליה כך מקובלני מבית אבי אבא כל השערים ננעלים חוץ משערי אונאה

15. Sanhedrin 101a

The Sages taught in a baraita: When Rabbi Eliezer fell ill, four Sages entered to visit him: Rabbi Tarfon, and Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, and Rabbi Akiva.

Rabbi Tarfon responded [to the situation with words of encouragement] and said: You are better for the Jewish people than a drop of rain, as a drop of rain [provides benefit] in this world, and my teacher [provides them benefit] in this world and in the World-to-Come.

Rabbi Yehoshua responded and said: You are better for the Jewish people than the sphere of the sun, as the sphere of the sun [provides benefit] in this world, and my teacher [provides benefit] in this world and in the World-to-Come.

Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya responded and said: You are better for the Jewish people than a father and mother, as a father and mother [provide benefit] in this world, and my teacher [provides benefit] in this world and in the World-to-Come.

Rabbi Akiva responded and said: Afflictions are cherished. [When Rabbi Eliezer heard this he said: Support me [so I can sit] and hear the statement of Akiva my student, who said: Afflictions are cherished.

ת"ר כשחלה ר' אליעזר נכנסו ארבעה זקנים לבקרו ר' טרפון ור' יהושע ור' אלעזר בן עזריה ור' עקיבא

נענה ר' טרפון ואמר טוב אתה לישראל מטיפה של גשמים שטיפה של גשמים בעולם הזה ורבי בעולם הזה ובעולם הבא

נענה ר' יהושע ואמר טוב אתה לישראל יותר מגלגל חמה שגלגל חמה בעולם הזה ורבי בעולם הזה ובעולם הבא

נענה רבי אלעזר בן עזריה ואמר טוב אתה לישראל יותר מאב ואם שאב ואם בעולם הזה ורבי בעולם הזה ובעולם הבא

נענה רבי עקיבא ואמר חביבין יסורין אמר להם סמכוני ואשמעה דברי עקיבא תלמידי שאמר חביבין יסורין

16. Sanhedrin 68a

When Rabbi Eliezer took ill, Rabbi Akiva and his colleagues came to visit him. He was sitting on his canopied bed [bekinof], and they were sitting in his parlor.

And that day was Shabbat eve, and Rabbi Eliezer's son Hyrcanus entered to remove his phylacteries. His father berated him, and he left reprimanded. Hyrcanus said to his father's colleagues: It appears to me that father went insane, [since he berated me for no reason]. Rabbi Eliezer heard this and said to them: He, Hyrcanus, and his mother went insane. How can they neglect [Shabbat preparations with regard to] prohibitions punishable by stoning, [such as lighting the candles and preparing hot food,] and engage in [preparations concerning] prohibitions by rabbinic decree, [such as wearing phylacteries on Shabbat!]

Since the Sages perceived from this retort that his mind was stable, they entered and sat before him at a distance of four cubits, [as he was ostracized.]

Rabbi Eliezer said to them: **Why have you come? They said to him: We have come to study Torah. Rabbi Eliezer said to them: And why have you not come until now? They said to him: We did not have spare time. Rabbi Eliezer said to them: I would be surprised if these Sages die their own** [natural] death. [Rather, they will be tortured to death by the Romans]. Rabbi Akiva said to him: How will my [death come about]? Rabbi Eliezer said to him: Your death will be worse than theirs.

Rabbi Eliezer raised his two arms and placed them on his heart, and he said: **Woe to you, my two arms, as they are like two Torah scrolls that are now being rolled up, [and will never be opened again].** I have learned much Torah, and I have taught much Torah. I have learned much Torah, and I have not taken away from my teachers, even like a dog lapping from the sea. I have taught much Torah, and my students have taken away from me only like [a tiny amount that] a paintbrush removes from a tube [of paint]...

The Sages asked him [questions of halakha]: What is [the halakha, with regard to ritual impurity], of a ball [made of leather and stuffed with rags], and likewise a last, [the frame on which a shoe is fashioned, which is made of leather and stuffed with rags], and likewise an amulet [wrapped in leather], and a pouch for pearls, [wrapped in leather], and a small weight, [which is wrapped in leather]? Rabbi Eliezer said to them: They are susceptible to impurity, and their purification is [affected by immersing them in a ritual bath] as they are, [as there is no need to open them up].

They asked him further: What is the halakha with regard to a shoe that is on a last? [Is it considered a complete vessel, which needs no further preparation, and is therefore susceptible to impurity]? **Rabbi Eliezer said to them: It is pure, and with this word, his soul left him in purity. Rabbi Yehoshua stood on his feet and said: The vow is permitted; the vow is permitted.**

והתניא כשחלה ר' אליעזר נכנסו ר' עקיבא וחביריו לבקרו
הוא יושב בקינוף שלו והן יושבין בטרקלין שלו

ואותו היום ע"ש היה ונכנס הורקנוס בנו לחלוץ תפליו גער בו
ויצא בנזיפה אמר להן לחביריו כמדומה אני שדעתו של אבא
נטרפה אמר להן דעתו ודעת אמו נטרפה היאך מניחין איסור
סקילה ועוסקין באיסור שבות

כיון שראו חכמים שדעתו מיושבת עליו נכנסו וישבו לפניו
מרחוק ד' אמות

א"ל למה באתם א"ל ללמוד תורה באנו א"ל ועד עכשיו
למה לא באתם א"ל לא היה לנו פנאי אמר להן תמיה אני
אם ימותו מיתת עצמן אמר לו ר' עקיבא שלי מהו אמר לו
שלך קשה משלהן

נטל שתי זרועותיו והניחן על לבו אמר **אוי לכם שתי**
זרועותיי שהן כשתי ספרי תורה שנגללין הרבה תורה
לימדתי והרבה תורה לימדתי הרבה תורה לימדתי ולא חסרתי
מרבותי אפילו ככלב המלקק מן הים הרבה תורה לימדתי
ולא חסרוני תלמידי אלא כמכחול בשפופרת

...

מדני עקירתן אמרתי דבר אחד נתקבצו כולן למקום אחד
אמרו לו הכדור והאמוס והקמיע וצרור המרגליות ומשקולת
קטנה מהו אמר להן הן טמאין וטהרתן במה שהן

מנעל שעל גבי האמוס מהו אמר להן הוא טהור ויצאה
נשמתו בטהרה עמד רבי יהושע על רגליו ואמר הותר
הנדר הותר הנדר

17. Gittin 83a

<p>The Sages taught (Tosefta 9:1): After the death of Rabbi Eliezer, four Sages entered the discussion to refute his statement. They were: Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, Rabbi Tarfon, Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, and Rabbi Akiva....</p> <p>...Rabbi Yehoshua said to them: [Even though your objections are valid], one does not refute the opinion of a lion after his death.</p>	<p>תנו רבנן לאחר פטירתו של רבי אליעזר נכנסו ארבעה זקנים להשיב על דבריו אלו הן רבי יוסי הגלילי ורבי טרפון ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי עקיבא...</p> <p>אמר להן רבי יהושע אין משיבין את הארי לאחר מיתתו</p>
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18. Rashi on Gittin 83a

<p>one does not refute the opinion of a lion after his death - if he was alive then perhaps he would have a satisfactory response [to all your challenges]</p>	<p>אין משיבין את הארי לאחר מיתתו - אם היה קיים שמא יחזיר לכם תשובה:</p>
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R' Yehoshua and Rabban Gamliel: Power Dynamics in the Study Hall

19. Rosh Hashanah 24b-25a

<p>MISHNA: There was an incident in which two [witnesses] came [to testify about the new moon,] and they said: We saw [the waning moon] in the morning in the east, and [that same day we saw the new moon] in the evening in the west. Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri said: They are false witnesses, [as it is impossible to see the new moon so soon after the last sighting of the waning moon. However,] when they arrived in Yavne, Rabban Gamliel accepted them [as witnesses without concern.]</p> <p>And there was another incident in which two [witnesses] came and said: We saw [the new moon] at its [anticipated] time, [i.e., on the night of the thirtieth day of the previous month; however,] on the [following] night, [i.e., the start of the thirty-first, which is often the determinant of] a full, [thirty-day month], it was not seen. And [nevertheless] Rabban Gamliel accepted their [testimony and established the New Moon on the thirtieth day.]</p> <p>Rabbi Dosa ben Horkinas [disagreed and] said: They are false witnesses; how can [witnesses] testify that a woman gave birth and the next day her belly is between her teeth, [i.e., she is obviously still pregnant? If the new moon was already visible at its anticipated time, how could it not be seen a day later?] Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: I see the logic of your statement; [the New Moon must be established a day later. Upon hearing that Rabbi Yehoshua had challenged his ruling,] Rabban Gamliel sent a message to him: I decree against you that you must appear before me with your staff and with your money on the day on which Yom Kippur occurs according to your calculation; [according to my calculation, that day is the eleventh of Tishrei, the day after Yom Kippur.]</p> <p>Rabbi Akiva went and found [Rabbi Yehoshua] distressed [that the head of the Great Sanhedrin was forcing him to desecrate the day that he maintained was Yom Kippur. In an attempt to console him, Rabbi Akiva] said to Rabbi Yehoshua: I can learn [from a verse] that everything that Rabban Gamliel did [in sanctifying the month] is done, [i.e., it is valid]. As it is stated: "These are the appointed seasons of</p>	<p>מתני' מעשה שבאו שנים ואמרו: ראינוהו שחרית במזרח, וערבית במערב. אמר רבי יוחנן בן נורי: עדי שקר הם. נשבאו לרבנן קיבלן רבן גמליאל.</p> <p>ועוד, באו שנים ואמרו: ראינוהו בזמנו, ובלייל עיבורו לא נראה, וקיבלן רבן גמליאל.</p> <p>אמר רבי דוסא בן הורקנס: עדי שקר הן, היאך מעידים על האשה שילדה ולמחר כריסה בין שיניה? אמר לו רבי יהושע: רואה אני את דבריך. שלח לו רבן גמליאל: גוזרני עליך שתבא אצלי במקלך ובמעוטיך ביום הכפורים שחל להיות בחשבונך.</p> <p>הלך ומצאו רבי עקיבא מיצר, אמר לו: יש לי ללמוד שכל מה שעשה רבן גמליאל עשוי, שנאמר: "אלה מועדי ה' מקראי קדש אשר תקראו אתם", בין בזמן בין שלא בזמן — אין לי מועדות אלא אלו.</p>
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the Lord, sacred convocations, which you shall proclaim [in their season] (Leviticus 23:4). [This verse indicates that] whether [you have proclaimed them] at their [proper] time or whether [you have declared them] not at their [proper time, I have only these Festivals [as established by the representatives of the Jewish people.]

[Rabbi Yehoshua then] came to Rabbi Dosa ben Horkinas, who said to him: If we come to debate [and question the rulings of] the court of Rabban Gamliel, we must debate [and question the rulings] of every court that has stood from the days of Moses until now. As it is stated: "Then Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadav and Avihu, and seventy of the Elders of Israel" (Exodus 24:9). But why were the names of these [seventy] Elders not specified? Rather, [this comes] to teach that every [set of] three [judges] that stands as a court over the Jewish people [has the same status] as the court of Moses. [Since it is not revealed who sat on that court, apparently it is enough that they were official judges in a Jewish court.]

[When Rabbi Yehoshua heard that even Rabbi Dosa ben Horkinas maintained that they must submit to Rabban Gamliel's decision,] he took his staff and his money in his hand, and went to Yavne to Rabban Gamliel on the day on which Yom Kippur occurred according to his [own] calculation. [Upon seeing him,] **Rabban Gamliel stood up and kissed him on his head. He said to him: Come in peace, my teacher and my student. You are my teacher in wisdom, [as Rabbi Yehoshua was wiser than anyone else in his generation], and you are my student, as you accepted my statement, [despite your disagreement.]**

Gemara:..[The mishna taught that] Rabbi Akiva went and found him distressed [that the head of the Great Sanhedrin was forcing him to desecrate the day that he maintained was Yom Kippur.] A dilemma was raised before [the Sages]: Who was distressed? Was Rabbi Akiva distressed or was Rabbi Yehoshua distressed? Come and hear, as it is taught in a baraita: Rabbi Akiva went and found Rabbi Yehoshua in a state of distress, and he said to him: My teacher, for what reason are you distressed? Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Rabbi Akiva, **it is fitting for one to fall [sick] in bed for twelve months, rather than to have this decree issued against him [that he should have to desecrate Yom Kippur.]**

Rabbi Akiva said to him: My teacher, allow me to say before you one matter that you yourself once taught me. He said to him: Speak. He said to him: It states [with respect to the Festivals: "The appointed seasons of the Lord, which you shall proclaim] them [otam] [to be sacred convocations (Leviticus 23:2). And it is written: "These are the appointed seasons of the Lord, sacred convocations; you shall proclaim] them [otam] [in their season" (Leviticus 23:4). And it is written: "These are the appointed seasons of the Lord; you shall proclaim] them [otam] [to be sacred convocations" (Leviticus 23:37)]. Three times [the verses use the term: Them [otam], which can also be read as you [atem], in plural.]

בא לו אצל רבי דוסא בן הורקנס, אמר לו: אם באין אנו לדון אחר בית דינו של רבן גמליאל, צריכין אנו לדון אחר כל בית דין ובית דין שעמד מימות משה ועד עכשיו. שנאמר: "ויעל משה ואהרן נדב ואביהוא ושבעים מזקני ישראל", ולמה לא נתפרשו שמותן של זקנים? אלא ללמד שכל שלשה ושלשה שעמדו בית דין על ישראל — הרי הוא כבית דינו של משה.

נטל מקלו ומעותיו בידו, והלך ליבנה אצל רבן גמליאל ביום שחל יום הכפורים להיות בחשבון. עמד רבן גמליאל ונשקו על ראשו, אמר לו: בוא בשלום רבי ותלמידי! רבי — בחכמה, ותלמידי — שקבלת את דברי.

גמ'. הלך רבי עקיבא ומצאו מיצר כו'. איבעיא להו: מי מיצר? רבי עקיבא מיצר, או רבי יהושע מיצר? תא שמע, דתניא: הלך רבי עקיבא ומצאו לרבי יהושע קשהוא מיצר, אמר לו: [רבי] מפני מה אתה מיצר? אמר לו: רבי עקיבא, ראוי לו שיפול למטה שנים עשר חדש, ואל יגזור עליו גזירה זו.

אמר לו: רבי, תרשיני לומר לפניך דבר אחד שלמדתי. אמר לו: אומר. אמר לו: הרי הוא אומר "אתם" "אתם" "אתם" שלש פעמים.

[This comes to teach:] You [atem] [are authorized to determine the date of the new month,] even if you unwittingly [establish the New Moon on the wrong day;] you, even [if you do so] intentionally; you, even if you are misled [by false witnesses. In all cases, once the court establishes the day as the New Moon, it is sanctified, and God grants His consent. After hearing this, Rabbi Yehoshua] said to him in these words: Akiva, you have consoled me; you have consoled me...

[The mishna taught]: Rabbi Yehoshua took his staff and his money in his hand, [and appeared before Rabban Gamliel on the day on which Yom Kippur occurred according to his calculation, as Rabban Gamliel had ordered him to do.] The Sages taught in a baraita: When Rabban Gamliel saw Rabbi Yehoshua, he rose from his chair and kissed him on his head and said to him: Peace be on you, my teacher and my student. My teacher, as you have taught me Torah in public, and my student, as I issue a decree against you and you fulfill it like a student of mine. Fortunate is the generation in which the greater heed the lesser, and it is an a fortiori [inference that the generation in which] the lesser heed the greater [is certainly fortunate as well.]

[The Gemara questions this last point: Is this derived by] an a fortiori [inference? This is incorrect, as] it is an obligation [for the lesser to heed those who are greater than them]. Rather, [Rabbi Gamliel meant the following]: Since the greater heed the lesser, the lesser apply an a fortiori inference to themselves [and heed the leaders of the generation.]

“אתם” — אפילו שוגגין, “אתם” — אפילו מזידין,
“אתם” — אפילו מוטעין. בלשון הזה אמר לו: עקיבא
נחמתני, נחמתני.

...נטל מקלו ומעותיו בידו. תנו רבנן: כיון שראה אותו, עמד
מכסאו ונשקו על ראשו, אמר לו: שלום עליך רבי ותלמיד!
רבי — שלמדתני תורה ברבים, ותלמיד — שאני גוזר עליך
גזירה ואתה מקיימה כתלמיד. אשרי הדור שהגדולים
נשמעים לקטנים, קל וחומר קטנים לגדולים.

קל וחומר?! חייבא הוא! אלא: מתוך שהגדולים נשמעים
לקטנים — נושאים קטנים קל וחומר בעצמן.

20. Berachot 27b-28a

[We learned in the mishna:] The evening prayer [may be recited throughout the night and] is not fixed [to a specific hour]. What is the meaning of is not fixed? If you say that if one wishes, he may pray throughout the night, then let the mishna teach: The evening prayer may be recited throughout the night. Rather, what is the meaning of not fixed?

It is in accordance with the opinion of the one who said: The evening prayer is optional. As Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said with regard to the evening prayer. Rabban Gamliel says: It is obligatory. Rabbi Yehoshua says: It is optional. Abaye said: The halakha is in accordance with the statement of the one who said: [The evening prayer is] obligatory. Rava said: The halakha is in accordance with the statement of the one who said: [The evening prayer is] optional.

The Sages taught: There was an incident involving a student, who came before Rabbi Yehoshua. The student said to him: Is the evening prayer optional or obligatory? Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Optional.

[The same student] came before Rabban Gamliel and said to him: Is the evening prayer optional or obligatory? Rabban Gamliel said to him: Obligatory. The student said to Rabban Gamliel: But didn't Rabbi Yehoshua tell me [that the evening prayer is] optional? Rabban Gamliel said to the student: Wait

תפלת הערב אין לה קבע. מאי אין לה קבע? אילימא דאי
בעי מצלי כוליה ליליא, ליתני “תפלת הערב כל הלילה”! אלא
מאי אין לה קבע —

כמאן דאמר, תפלת ערבית רשות. דאמר רב יהודה אמר
שמואל: תפלת ערבית: רבן גמליאל אומר חובה, רבי יהושע
אומר רשות. אמר אביי: הלכה כדברי האומר חובה. ורבא
אמר: הלכה כדברי האומר רשות.

תנו רבנן: מעשה בתלמיד אחד שבא לפני רבי יהושע. אמר
לו: תפלת ערבית רשות או חובה? אמר ליה: רשות.

בא לפני רבן גמליאל, אמר לו: תפלת ערבית רשות או
חובה? אמר לו: חובה. אמר לו: והלא רבי יהושע אמר לי
רשות?! אמר לו: המתן עד שיכנסו בעלי תריסין לבית
המדרש.

until the “masters of the shields,” [a reference to the Torah scholars who battle in the war of Torah], enter the study hall, [at which point we will discuss this issue.]

When the masters of the shields entered, the questioner stood [before everyone present] and asked: Is the evening prayer optional or obligatory? Rabban Gamliel said to him: Obligatory. [In order to ascertain whether or not Rabbi Yehoshua still maintained his opinion], **Rabban Gamliel said to the Sages: Is there any person who disputes this matter? Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: No. Rabban Gamliel said to Rabbi Yehoshua: But was it not in your name that they told me [that the evening prayer is] optional?**

Rabban Gamliel said to Rabbi Yehoshua: Yehoshua, stand on your feet and they will testify against you. Rabbi Yehoshua stood on his feet and said: If I were alive and [the student] were dead, the living can contradict the dead, [and I could deny issuing that ruling]. Now that I am alive and he is alive, how can the living contradict the living?

[In the meantime,] Rabban Gamliel, [as the Nasi,] was sitting and lecturing, and **Rabbi Yehoshua [all the while] was standing on his feet**, [because Rabban Gamliel did not instruct him to sit. This continued for some time, until it aroused great resentment against Rabban Gamliel, and] all of the people [assembled began] murmuring and said to Hutzpit the disseminator: Stop [conveying Rabban Gamliel's lecture]. And he stopped.

[The assembled people] said: How long will Rabban Gamliel continue afflicting him? Last year on Rosh HaShana, he afflicted him; [Rabban Gamliel ordered Rabbi Yehoshua to come to him carrying his staff and bag, on the day on which Yom Kippur occurred, according to Rabbi Yehoshua's calculations.] Regarding the firstborn, in the incident [involving the question] of Rabbi Tzadok, he afflicted him [just as he did now, and forced him to remain standing as punishment for his failure to defend his differing opinion]. **Here too, he is afflicting him. Let us remove him [from his position as Nasi.]**

[But] who shall we establish [in his place? **Shall we] establish Rabbi Yehoshua [in his place? The Sages rejected that option because Rabbi Yehoshua] was party to the incident [for which Rabban Gamliel was deposed.] Shall we establish Rabbi Akiva [in his place? The Sages rejected that option because Rabbi Akiva, who descended from a family of converts, would be vulnerable.] Perhaps [due to Rabban Gamliel's resentment he] would cause him [to be divinely] punished as he lacks the merit of his ancestors [to protect him.]**

Rather let us establish Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya for he is wise, rich, and a tenth [generation descendant] of Ezra. He is wise, so if [Rabban Gamliel raises a] challenge [in matters of Torah], he will answer it. **And he is rich, so if the need arises to pay homage to the Caesar's court [and serve as a representative of Israel to lobby and negotiate, he**

קִשְׁנִכְסוּ בְּעֵלֵי תְּרִיסִין, עֶמֶד הַשּׁוֹאֵל וְשָׂאֵל: תִּפְּלֵת עֶרְבִית רְשׁוּת אִו חֻבָּה? אָמַר לוֹ רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: חֻבָּה. אָמַר לָהֶם רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל לַחֲכָמִים: כָּלוּם יֵשׁ אָדָם שְׁחוּלֵק בְּדָבָר זֶה? אָמַר לִיה רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: לֹא. אָמַר לוֹ: וְהֵלֵא מִשְׁמַךְ אֲמָרוֹ לִי רְשׁוּת!

אָמַר לִיה: יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, עֶמֶד עַל רַגְלֶיךָ וְיַעֲיֶדוּ בָּךְ. עֶמֶד רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עַל רַגְלָיו וְאָמַר אֶלְמָלָא אֲנִי חֵי וְהוּא מֵת — יָכוֹל הַחַי לְהַכְחִישׁ אֶת הַמֵּת. וְעַכְשֵׁי שְׂאֲנִי חֵי וְהוּא חֵי — הֵיֵאָר יָכוֹל הַחַי לְהַכְחִישׁ אֶת הַחַי?

הָיָה רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל יוֹשֵׁב וְדוֹרֵשׁ וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עוֹמֵד עַל רַגְלָיו, עַד שֶׁרָּגְנוּ כָּל הָעָם וְאָמְרוּ לְחוּצְפִית הַתּוֹרְגָמֵן: עֶמֶד! וְעֶמֶד.

אָמְרֵי: עַד כַּמָּה נִצְעָרִיה וְנִזְזִיל, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה אֲשֶׁתִּקֵּד צַעֲרִיה. בְּכֹחוֹת בְּמַעֲשֵׂה דְרַבִּי צְדוֹק צַעֲרִיה. הֲכָא נִמִּי צַעֲרִיה, תָּא וְנַעֲבְרִיה!

מֵאן נֹקִים לִיה? נֹקְמִיה לְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ — בְּעַל מַעֲשֵׂה הוּא. נֹקְמִיה לְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא — דִּילְמָא עֲנִישׁ לִיה, דְּלִית לִיה זְכוּת אָבוֹת.

אֵלָא נֹקְמִיה לְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה, דְּהוּא חָכֵם, וְהוּא עָשִׁיר, וְהוּא עָשִׁיר לְעֶזְרָא. הוּא חָכֵם — דְּאִי מַקְשִׁי לִיה, מְפָרֵק לִיה. וְהוּא עָשִׁיר — דְּאִי אֵית לִיה לְפִלּוּחֵי לְבֵי קִיסָר, אִף הוּא

has sufficient wealth to cover the costs of the long journeys, taxes, and gifts, so] he too is able to go and pay homage. And he is a tenth [generation descendant] of Ezra, so he has the merit of his ancestors, and Rabban Gamliel will be unable to cause him to be punished.

...It was taught: On that day they dismissed the guard at the door and permission was granted to the students to enter. [Instead of Rabban Gamliel's selective approach that asserted that the students must be screened before accepting them into the study hall, the new approach asserted that anyone who seeks to study should be given opportunity to do so.] As Rabban Gamliel would proclaim and say: Any student whose inside, [his thoughts and feelings], are not like his outside, [i.e., his conduct and his character traits are lacking,] will not enter the study hall.

On that day several benches were added [to the study hall to accommodate the numerous students.] Rabbi Yohanan said: Abba Yosef ben Dostai and the Rabbis disputed this [matter]. One said: Four hundred benches were added [to the study hall]. And one said: Seven hundred benches were added [to the study hall. When he saw the tremendous growth in the number of students,] Rabban Gamliel was disheartened. He said: Perhaps, Heaven forbid, I prevented Israel from engaging in Torah study. They showed him in his dream white jugs filled with ashes [alluding to the fact that the additional students were worthless idlers]. That is not [the case, but] that [dream] was shown to him to ease his mind [so that he would not feel bad.]

It was taught: [There is a tradition that tractate] *Eduyyot* was taught that day. And everywhere [in the Mishna or in a *baraita*] that they say: On that day, it is [referring to] that day. There was no *halakha* whose ruling was pending in the study hall that they did not explain [and arrive at a practical halakhic conclusion]. And even Rabban Gamliel did not avoid the study hall for even one moment.

As we learned [in a mishna]: On that day, Yehuda, the Ammonite convert, came before [the students in the study hall] and he said to them: What is my [legal status in terms of] entering into the congregation [of Israel, i.e., to marry a Jewish woman]?

Rabban Gamliel said to him: You are forbidden to enter into the congregation. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: You are permitted to enter into the congregation. Rabban Gamliel said to Rabbi Yehoshua: Wasn't it already stated: "An Ammonite and a Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; [even to the tenth generation shall none of them enter into the congregation of the Lord forever] (Deuteronomy 23:4)? Rabbi Yehoshua said to Rabban Gamliel: Do Ammon and Moab reside in their place? Sennacherib already came and, [through his policy of population transfer,] scrambled all the nations [and settled other nations in place of Ammon. Consequently, the current residents of Ammon and Moab are not ethnic Ammonites and Moabites], as it is stated in [reference to Sennacherib]: "I

אָזל ופּלח. וְהוּא עֲשִׂירִי לַעֲזָרָא — דָּאִית לִיה זְכוּת אָבוֹת, וְלֹא מִצִּי עֲנִישׁ לִיה.

...תָּנָא אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם, סִלְקוּהוּ לְשׁוּמֵר הַפֶּתַח וְנִתְּנָה לֵהֶם רְשׁוּת לְתַלְמִידִים לִכְנֹס. שְׁהִיה רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל מְכַרִּיז וְאוֹמֵר: כָּל תַּלְמִיד שֶׁאֵין תּוֹכוֹ כְּבֵרוֹ, לֹא יִכְנֹס לְבֵית הַמִּדְרָשׁ.

הוּא יוֹמָא אַתּוּסְפוּ כְּמָה סַפְסָלִי. אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: פְּלִיגִי בֵּה אַבָּא יוֹסֵף בֶּן דּוֹסְתַּאי וְרַבָּנִן. חַד אָמַר: אַתּוּסְפוּ אַרְבַּע מָאָה סַפְסָלִי. וְחַד אָמַר: שְׁבַע מָאָה סַפְסָלִי. הָוָה קָא חֲלָשָׁה דַּעֲתִיָּה דְרַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל, אָמַר: דְּלִמָּא חֹס וְשְׁלוֹם מְנַעַתִּי תוֹרָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל. אַחֲזוּ לִיה בְּחִלְמִיה חֲצָבִי חִיּוּרִי דְּמַלְיִין קִטְמָא. וְלֹא הִיא, הִיא לִיתוּבִי דַּעֲתִיָּה, הוּא דְאַחֲזוּ לִיה.

תָּנָא: עֲדִיּוֹת בּו בֵּיּוֹם נִשְׁנִית. וְכָל הֵיכָא דְאַמְרִין "בּו בֵּיּוֹם", הוּא יוֹמָא הָוָה. וְלֹא הִיְתָה הִלְכָה שְׁהִיְתָה תְּלוּיָה בְּבֵית הַמִּדְרָשׁ שְׁלֹא פִּירְשׁוּהָ. וְאַף רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל לֹא מְנַע עֲצָמוּ מִבֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ אֲפִילוּ שְׁעָה אַחַת.

דִּתְנִן: בּו בֵּיּוֹם בָּא יְהוּדָה גֵּר עַמּוּנִי לְפָנֵיהֶם בְּבֵית הַמִּדְרָשׁ. אָמַר לֵהֶם: מָה אֲנִי לְבֹא בִּקְהָל?

אָמַר לוֹ רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: אֲסוּר אַתָּה לְבֹא בִּקְהָל. אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ: מוֹתֵר אַתָּה לְבֹא בִּקְהָל. אָמַר לוֹ רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: וְהִלָּא כְּבֵר נֶאֱמַר "לֹא יֵבֵא עַמּוּנִי וּמוֹאָבִי בִּקְהָל ה'?" אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ: וְכִי עַמּוֹן וּמוֹאָב בְּמִקּוֹמָן הֵן יוֹשְׁבִין? כְּבֵר עָלָה סִנְחֵרִיב מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר וּבִלְבָּל אֶת כָּל הָאוּמוֹת, שְׁנֶאֱמַר: "וְאֲסִיר גְּבֻלוֹת עַמִּים וְעַתִּידוֹתֵיהֶם שׁוֹשֵׁתִי וְאוֹרִיד כְּבִיר יוֹשְׁבֵיהֶם", וְכָל דְּפָרִישׁ — מֵרֹבָא פְּרִישׁ.

have removed the bounds of the peoples, and have robbed their treasures, and have brought down as one mighty the inhabitants" (Isaiah 10:13). And [although it is conceivable that this particular convert is an ethnic Ammonite, nevertheless, there is no need for concern due to the halakhic principle]: Anything that parts from a group parts from the majority, [and the assumption is that he is from the majority of nations whose members are permitted to enter the congregation.]

Rabban Gamliel said to Rabbi Yehoshua: But wasn't it already stated: "But afterward I will bring back the captivity of the children of Ammon, says the Lord" (Jeremiah 49:6) and they have already returned[to their land? Therefore, he is an ethnic Ammonite and he may not convert.]

Rabbi Yehoshua said to Rabban Gamliel: Wasn't it already stated [in another prophecy]: "And I will turn the captivity of My people Israel [and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them" (Amos 9:14),] and they have not yet returned? [In rendering the ruling, only proven facts may be taken into consideration.] **They immediately permitted him to enter the congregation.**

Rabban Gamliel said [to himself:] Since this is [the situation, that the people are following Rabbi Yehoshua, it would be appropriate for me to] go and appease Rabbi Yehoshua. When he reached Rabbi Yehoshua's house, he saw that the walls of his house were black. Rabban Gamliel said to Rabbi Yehoshua: From the walls of your house it is apparent that you are a blacksmith! **Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Woe unto a generation that you are its leader as you are unaware of the difficulties of Torah scholars, how they make a living and how they feed themselves.**

Rabban Gamliel said to him: I insulted you, forgive me. Rabbi Yehoshua paid him no attention [and did not forgive him. He asked him again]: **Do it in deference to my father, [Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, who was one of the leaders of Israel at the time of the destruction of the Temple]. He was appeased.**

[Now that Rabbi Yehoshua was no longer offended, it was only natural that Rabban Gamliel would be restored to his position]. They said: Who will go and inform the Sages? This launderer said to them: I will go. Rabbi Yehoshua sent him to the study hall [to say]: The one who wears the uniform will [continue] to wear the uniform, so that the one who did not wear the uniform will not say to the one who wears the uniform, remove your uniform and I will wear it. Rabbi Akiva said to the Sages: **Lock the gates so that Rabban Gamliel's servants will not come and disturb the Sages.**

[When he heard what happened], Rabbi Yehoshua said: It is best if I go to them. He came and knocked on the door. He said to them: **One who sprinkles [pure water on those who are ritually impure], son of one who sprinkles [water] shall [continue] to sprinkle [water. And it is**

אמר לו רבן גמליאל: והלא כבר נאמר "ואחרי כן אשיב את שבות בני עמון נאם ה'", וכבר שבו!

אמר לו רבי יהושע: והלא כבר נאמר "ושבתתי את שבות עמי ישראל", ועדיין לא שבו. מיד התירוהו לבא בקהל.

אמר רבן גמליאל: הואיל והכי הוה, איזיל ואפייסיה לרבי יהושע. כי מטא לביתיה, חזינהו לאשיתא דביתיה דמשחרן. אמר ליה: מכותלי ביתך אתה ניכר שפחמי אתה. אמר לו: אוי לו לדור שאתה פרנסו, שאי אתה יודע בצערן של תלמידי חכמים, במה הם מתפרנסים ובמה הם נזונים.

אמר לו: נענית לך מחול לי. לא אשגח ביה: עשה בשביל כבוד אבא. פייס.

אמרו: מאן ניזיל ולימא להו לרבנן. אמר להו ההוא כובס: אנא אזילנא. שלח להו רבי יהושע לבי מדרשא: מאן דלביש מדא — ילבש מדא, ומאן דלא לביש מדא ימר ליה למאן דלביש מדא: שלח מדר ואנא אלבשיה? אמר להו רבי עקיבא לרבנן: טרוקו גלי דלא ליתו עבדי דרבן גמליאל ולצערו לרבנן.

אמר רבי יהושע: מוטב דאיקום ואיזיל אנא לגבייהו. אתא טרף אבבא. אמר להו: מזה בן מזה יזה. ושאינו לא מזה ולא בן מזה יאמר למזה בן מזה מימין מי מערה ואפרך אפר מקלה

inappropriate that he who is] neither one who sprinkles nor son of one who sprinkles will say to one who sprinkles son of one who sprinkles: Your water is cave water [and not the running water required to purify one exposed to ritual impurity imparted by a corpse] and your ashes are burnt ashes [and not the ashes of a red heifer.

Rabbi Akiva said to him: Rabbi Yehoshua, have you been appeased? Everything we did was to [defend] your honor. [If you have forgiven him, none of us is opposed]. Early tomorrow you and I will go to [Rabban Gamliel's] doorway [and offer to restore him to his position as Nasi.]

אמר לו רבי עקיבא: רבי יהושע, נתפייסת? כלום עשינו
אלא בשביל כבודך, למחר אני ואתה נשכים לפתחו.

21. Moed Katan 27a

The Sages taught the following baraita: From when do [the mourners] overturn their beds? 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.

There was an incident in which [the Nasi] Rabban Gamliel the Elder 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.]**

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

מעשה שמת רבן גמליאל הזקן, כיון שיצא מפתח ביתו אמר
להם רבי אליעזר: כפו מטותיכם. וכיון שנסתם הגולל, אמר
להם רבי יהושע: כפו מטותיכם. אמרו לו: כבר כפינו על פי
זקנו.

22. Eruvin 41a

And it was taught in a related baraita: Following the death of Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Yehoshua entered [the study hall] to annul [Rabban Gamliel's] statement [with regard to fasts]. **Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri stood on his feet and said: I see that [the appropriate policy is that] the body must follow the head, [i.e., we must follow the statements of the earlier authorities and not deviate from established halakha]. All of Rabban Gamliel's life we established the halakha in accordance with his opinion, and now you seek to annul his statement? Yehoshua, we do not listen to you, as the halakha has already been established in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Gamliel.** And there was no one who disputed this statement in any way. [Therefore, this baraita demonstrates that when the Ninth of Av occurs on Shabbat eve, one must observe the fast but not complete it, and this was the accepted practice.]

[Actually], in the generation of Rabban Gamliel they acted in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Gamliel, but in the generation of Rabbi Yosei they acted in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosei [that you do complete the fast on Shabbat eve, and from then on, the halakha follows his view.]

ותנא: לאחר פטירתו של רבן גמליאל, נכנס רבי יהושע
להפר את דבריו. עמד רבי יוחנן בן נורי על רגליו ואמר:
חזי אנא דבית רישא גופא אזיל. כל ימיו של רבן גמליאל
קבענו הלכה כמותו, עכשיו אתה מבקש לבטל דבריו?
יהושע, אין שומעין לך, שכבר נקבעה הלכה כרבן גמליאל,
ולא היה אדם שערער בדבר כלום.

בדורו של רבן גמליאל עבוד כרבן גמליאל, בדורו של רבי יוסי
עבוד כרבי יוסי.