GIVE ME YAVNEH: THE REBIRTH OF RABBINIC JUDAISM BY THE HANDS OF ONE MAN

> Rabbi Efrem Goldberg "The Jewish History Channel" reg@brsonline.org October 29, 2007

מ) [ער מוער זכמים עו: א"ל ל מון על זיה. הזני בר ברן עם מיני בר ברן שם מיני בר ברים ברן שם מיני ברים ברן שם מיני ברים ברן שם מיני ברים ברן אַני רָעי פּנדע פּנ יה שור גבנ מו ווכים - מנוקום

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ים ופין שהם" [ו] פו"ם ד):

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whenever he went there for an audience with the emperor. [26]

The narrative is continued:

חָד אָמֵר לְהוּ – One of these three rich men said to [the Rabbis], יוינַא לְהוּ בַּחִישֵּי וְשַׁעֵרי "I will sustain [the people] with wheat and barley." וְחֵר אָמֵר לְהוּ – And another one said to [the Rabbis], בְּדְחַמֶּרָא וּבְדְמֵלְחָא וּמְשִׁחָא – "I will supply them with wine, salt and oil." יְחֵד אָמֵר לְהוּ — And another one said to [the Rabbis], בדציבי – "I will supply them with wood." ר ושבחו רבון לדציבי – The Rabbis gave special praise to the one who promised wood. His pledge was the most generous, inasmuch as wood is required in greater quantity than other staples, as horne out by the following: דָרַב חַסָּדָא כָּל אַקְלִירַי הַנָּה מָסֵר לְשַׁמְעֵיה – Rav Chisda entrusted all his keys to his attendant, בָּר בדיבי – except for [the key] to his storehouse of wood. דָאָמֵר רַב חִסְדַּא – For Rav Chisda said: אַבְלְבֵי שִׁיתִּין אַכְלְבֵי דציבי – To bake a storehouse full of wheat into bread requires sixty storehouses of wood.

תָנה לְהוּ לְמֵיוַן עֶשְׂרִים וְחֵר שַׁתָּא – [These three men] had enough supplies to sustain the residents of Jerusalem for twenty-one years. קוו בְּהוּ בַּרְינֵי – However, there were these baryonei אָמְרוּ לְהוּ רַבָּנָן – The Rabbis had said to [the baryonei], נִיפוּק וְנַעַבִיד שָּׁלֶמָא בַּהַדֵייהוּ – "Let us go out and make peace with [the Romans]." - לא שַבקינהו [The baryonei] would not let them do so. אָמִרוּ לָהוּ – They said to [the Rabbis], נִיפוּק וְנַעֲבִיד קְרָבָא בָּהַדִייהוּ – "Let us go out and wage war against [the Romans]." אָמְרוּ לְהוּ רַבָּנָן The Rabbis said to them, לא מִסְהַיִּיצָא מִילְהָא – "It will not be successful." קלָנָהוּ לְהַנָּהוּ אַמְבְּרֵי דְּחִישֵּׁי וִשְּׁעֲרֵי – [The baryonei] arose and burned down those storehouses of wheat, barley and wood, נְהָנָה בַּפְנָא — and there was a famine in the city.[25]

The Gemara relates one of the tragic effects of the famine: מְרָתָא בָּת בַּייתוּס עַתִּירְתָּא דִּירוּשָׁלַיִּם חֲוָא – Martha the daughter of Boethus was the wealthiest woman in Jerusalem. שַּרַרְתָּה אַמְרָה וְאָמֶרָה לִיה – She sent out her agent, saying to him, יול אַייתי לי סמידא – "Go and bring me some bread made of fine flour." אַדְאָוַל אִיוְדַבּן – By the time he went, [the bread made of fine flour] had been sold. אָתָא אָמֶר לָה — He went back to Martha and told her, קמידָא לֵיכָא חִינַרְתָּא אִיכָּא – "There is no more bread made of fine flour, but there is white bread." יאָמְרָה לֵיה – She said to him, זיל אַייתִי לי – "Go and bring me some white bread." אַרָאָוַל איוָדַכּן – By the time he went, [the white bread] had been sold. אָתַא ואָמַר לַה — He went back to Martha and told her, הְינַרְתָּא לִיכָּא גּוּשְׁקָרָא אִיכָּא – "There is no more white bread, but there is coarse bread." אָמָרָה לִיה – She said to him: ייל אַייתִי לִי — "Go and bring me some coarse bread." אַדְאָוַל אָוְדָבּן By the time he went, [the coarse bread] had been sold. אָתָא וְאָמֵר לָה — He went back to Martha and told her, גּשְׁעַרֵי אִיכָּא - בּיִמֶּחָא דְשַׁעַרֵי אִיכָּא -"There is no more coarse bread, but there is barley flour." אָמְרָה לֵיה – She said to him: זיל אַייתִי לִי – "Go and bring me

some barley flour.'' אַדְאָוַל אִיוְדָבּן – By the time he went, [the barley flour] had been sold. הָוָה שְׁלִּיפָא מְסַאֲנָא אָמְרָה – הַוָּה שְׁלִיפָּא Although she was not wearing her shoes, she said: אַיבּוּק וְאָחַזוִי אי מַשְבַּחְנָא מִידִי לְמֵיבֵל – "I will go out and see whether I can find anything to eat." אַיתִיב לָה בַּרְתָא בְּבַרְעָא וֹמַתָה – Some animal dung stuck to her foot, she became nauseated and died. קרי עַלָה רָבָּן יוֹחָנָן בּן זַבָּאי – Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai recited the following verse about her: חָרָבָה בָּךְ וָהַעַנְגָה אֲשֵׁר, "לא־נְסְתַה כַּף־רַגְלָה – The delicate and pampered [woman] amongst you, who never ventured to set the sole of her foot upon the ground. [29]

An alternative version of the cause of Martha's death: אִיבָּא דְּאַמְרֵי – Some say: אָכְלָה – Se ate the dried figs of R' Tzadok, אַיתְניקא וּמֵתָה – became nauseated and died.

The reference to R' Tzadok is explained:

רָי צָרוֹק וָתִיב אַרְבָּעִין שְׁנִין בְּתַעַנִיתָא – For R' Tzadok fasted for forty years בלא לִיחֵרַב וְרוּשָׁלֵים – so that Jerusalem should not be destroyed.[20] בי הָנָה אָבוּל מִידִי — He was so thin that when he ate anything, בָּהָה מִיתְחַזַּי מַאַבְּרָאִי – it could be seen from the outside going down his throat. יכי הַנָה בָּרִיא – When he nourished himself after concluding his fasts, since he was not able to consume solids, מייתִי לִיהּ גָּרוֹגְרוֹת – they brought him dried figs; מִייץ מֵייהוּ וְשַׁרֵי לְהוּ he would suck out their moisture and then discard them.

The Gemara concludes the story of Martha the daughter of Boethus:

בּי הַוָה קא נִיחָא נַבְּשָׁה – As [Martha] was dying, אַפִּיקָהָה לְכָל ישַׁרְיתֵיה – she took out all her gold and silver שַּׁרְיתֵיה אמָרָה – and threw it into the marketplate. אַמְרָה – She said: הַאִי לְמַאי מִיבָּצֵי לִי – What do I need this for? וְהַיִּינוּ דְּבְתִיב – This is a fulfillment of that which is written: בְּסָפָם,, בחוצות ושליבויי – They will throw their silver into the streets.[31]

The Gemara returns to the central narrative:

אַבָּא סִיקָרָא רַישׁ בַּרִינֵי דִּיְרוּשָׁלַיִם בַּר אַחְתַיה דְּרַבָּן יוֹחָנַן בָּן זַבָּאי הֲנָה – אַבָּא סִיקָרָא רַישׁ בַּרִינֵי דִּיְרוּשָׁלַיִם בַּר אַחְתַיה דְּרַבָּן יוֹחָנַן בְּן זַבָּאי הֲנָה Abba Sikra, the head of the baryonei in Jerusalem, was the son of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai's sister.[32] – שֵׁלָח לָיה – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] sent the following message to him, בְּנִינְעָא לְנַבָּאִי – "Come to me in secret." אָהָא – אָהָא [Abba Sikra] came. אָמֵר לִיה – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] said to him, עָרְיִתּוּ הָכִי — "How long are you going to act in this way אָבְפָנָא בְּבַפְּנָא – and kill everyone through starvation?"[33] אָמֶר לִיהּ – [Abba Sikra] said to him, מאי אַיעַביד – "What can I do? דְאִי אַמִינָא לְהוּ םידי קטלו לי – If I say anything to [the baryonei] that is contrary to their agenda, they will kill me!" אָמֵר לֵיהּ – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] said to him, אָיפּוּק לְדִידִי דְאַיפּוּק – "Find a way for me to get out of the city, אָפְשֶׁר דַּהְוִי הַצֶּלֶה פּרְהַא – perhaps there will be a small measure of salvation." אָמֵר לֵיה – [Abba Sikra] said to him, אָמֵר לֵיה – נְקוֹט נַפְּשֶׁךְ בַּקְצִירָי "Make yourself out to be sick, בּן הַ וּלָיתֵי בּוּלָי עֻלְמָא וְלִישַיִּילוּ בָּךְ – וְלַיתִי בּוּלָי עֻלְמָא וְלִישַיִּילוּ בָּךְ

## NOTES

- 26. According to this explanation, "Ben Tzitzis" was his real name. "Hakeses" was added in recognition of his prestigious position
- 27. בריוני, baryonei (from the root בריוני, empty), were empty men, with a propensity to violence; i.e. ruffians (Rashi). [The reference is to the ardently nationalist group whom secular history knows as the Zealots. As the Gemara relates presently, they advocated the overthrow of Roman rule through war, and violently resisted any attempts at reconciliation.] 28. The intent of the baryonei was to give the populace no choice but to go out and fight the Romans.
- $29.\,Deuteronomy\,28:56.$  The verse appears in the context of the prophecy
- that foretells the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.
- 30. He responded to omens of the destruction that were visible forty years before it actually occurred (Maharsha; see Yoma 39b).
- 31. Ezekiel 7:19. The verse refers to the impending Destruction of
- 32. Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was the leading Rabbinic authority in Jerusalem at that time.
- 33. The baryonei did not allow anyone to leave the besieged city.
- 34. Put out word that you are sick (Rashi).



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ל) (ער מות' וכמס שו ה"ס סכל מחקון. ס, מ"ל של עיון, ז) כ"ל ניקוא ליה, ז) (ני משתון ערן לן ז כרים משפטת ו) סי ללה, ז'פ כמוד וכס סה. מוספת מוד וכס סה. מוספת מוד וכס סה. מוספת מוד מי מ"ד מוספת מוד של ז'ק.

לעוי רש"י

מיציה, מיות זהן (נש" הקלם כל, כן, כעין ירשה לה קרום המכבה לם לשניה מ. כנ ומנחות ישניה מ. כנ ומנחות שאונדייר. מיות מרכו"ל שאונדייר. מיות מרכו"ל קרב, לם מרכו כלים קרב, לם מרכו כמות במה דף קר מ"ב, ממות מקמם שליש יפה (נד" כמונח דף קר מ"ה "מ" ה" מ" ה" "" [ון מירם דו] and let everyone come and ask about you. מְּאַנִינְ מִידִּי בְּּבָּרְ וּאַנִי מִידִּי – Then take something that smells bad, such as the carcass of an animal, and lay it down next to you in your bed יְלִימְרוֹּ דְּנָחְ נַבְּּעָּרְ בְּנָחְ נַבְּעָּרְ בְּנָחְ בְּעָּתְרוֹּ בְּנָחְ בַּעָּתְרוֹּ בְּנָחְ בַּעָּתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעְתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעָתְרוֹ בְּעָתְרוֹ בְעָתְרוֹּ בְּעָתְרוֹ בְּעָתְרוֹ בְּעָתְרוֹ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעִיתְרוּ בְּעִירְ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעָתְרְּבְּעִירְ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעִירְ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעִירְ בְּעִירְ בְּעָתְרוּ בְּעִירְ בְּעִבּרְ בְּעָבְיִי בְּעִירִישׁ בְּעִירִי בְּעִירְ בְּעִירְ בְּעִבְּיִי בְּעִירְ בְּעִירְ בְּעִירְ בְּעִירְ בְּעִיּבְיִי בְּעִירְ בְּעִיּבְיִי בְּעִייִים בְּעִייִים בְּעִייִים בְּעִייִים בְּעִייִים בְּעִייִבְיּ בְּעִיבְּיִי בְּעִייִים בְּיִי בְּעִייִים בְּיִייִים בְּיִייִים בְּעִייִים בְּעִייִים בְּיִייִים בְּיִייִים בְּבְּיִי בְּבְּבְיּבְיִים בְּבְיּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיּיִים בְּבְּבְיּבְיּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיּיִים בְּבְיּיִיְ בְּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיִים בְּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיִים בְּבְּבְיִים בְּבְיּיִים בְּבְיּיִים בְּבְיּיִים בְּבְיּיִים בְּבְיִים בְּבְבְיּי

עביר הָבּי עביר הָבּי [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] did as he was advised. קבָנו בו רַבּי אֵלִיעָוֹר מִצֵּר אָחָר וְרָבִּי וְהוֹשָׁעַ מִצֵּר אָחָר P. Eliezer entered and took hold of his bed on one side and R. Yehoshua on the other side. They carried the bed to the gate of the city. [37] הַבָּי מְּעִוּ לְבִּיתְּחָא בְּעוּ לְמִרְקְרֵיה — When they reached the gate, [the baryonei] who were guarding the gate wanted to stab [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] with spears to make sure

he was really dead. אָמֵר לְהוּ – [Abba Sikra] said to [them], יאמרו רַבּן דָקרוי – "Shall [the Romans] say that [the Jews] stabbed their Rabbi?" בְּעוּ לְמִרְחָפֵיה – [The baryonei] wanted to shove [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] to see whether he would cry out. אָמֵר לְהוּ – [Abba Sikra] said to them, יאמרוּ יַבְּן דְּחֲפּוּ - "Shall they say that [the Jews] shoved their Rabbi?" פַּתְחוּ לֵיה בָּבָא נָפֵק – [The baryonei ] finally opened the gate for him, and he was carried out. פו מְטָא לְהָתֵם – When [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] reached [the Roman camp], אַמַר שָּלָמָא עַלָּךְ מֵלְכָּא שׁלָמָא עַלָּךְ מַלְכָּא שׁלָמָא בָּלָךְ מַלְכָּא – he said to Vespasian, "Peace be upon you, O king! Peace be upon you, O king!" אַמֵר לִיה – [Vespasian] said to him, אָמֶר הָטָלָא – "You are liable to death on two accounts. אַדָּה – First, דְּלַאוּ מֵלְבָּא קרית לי מַלבָּא – for I am not a king and you are mocking me by calling me a king, יחוּ – Furthermore, אִי מַלֹּכָּא אֲנָא – if I am a king, ער הָאִידְנָא אַמַאי לא אָתית לְנָבָאִי – why did you not come to me until today?" אָמֵר לִיהּ – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] said to him, דָקאָמֶרַתְּ לַאוּ מַלְבָּא אָנָא – "To that which you say, 'I am not a king,'

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NOTES

35. As if you were dying (Rashi).

36. [A living being automatically tends to balance its weight, making it easier to carry. A corpse (or inanimate object) of the same weight is harder to carry; hence the expression "dead weight."]

37. It is forbidden to bury a human corpse inside Jerusalem (Rambam,

Hil. Beis HaBechirah 7:14, from Tosefia Bava Basra 1:7 and Sifri 26:25). This custom was observed even during the siege of Jerusalem (see Rašhi to Leviticus 26:25) בייה ושלחהי ; see also Kli Chemdah there).

38. Literally: he went out.

39. Rashi; cf. Maharsha, Maharam Schif.

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אָרְבָרָא מֵלְבָּא אַתְ – the truth is that you are destined to be a king. דאי לאו מֵלְנָא דּ For if you were not destined to be a king, שלים בּנֶדְף – לא מִימְסְרָא יְרוּשֶׁלַיִּם בְּנֶדְף – Jerusalem would not have been de תְּהַלְבָנוֹן – For it is written: יְהַלְבָנוֹן,, יאַדיר יפּוליי – and Levanon shall fall to a mighty one.[2] וְאֵדִן אַלָּא מֶלֶךְ, — The term *a mighty one* is interpreted here as meaning nothing other than a king; בְּרָתִיב – as it is written elsewhere: מְּמָנּוּ וְגוּיִ יִּיְהָהָה And their mighty one shall be one of them, etc. [and their ruler shall emerge from their midst]. Scripture describes a ruler (i.e a king) as 'a mighty one.' וְאֵין ,,לְבָנון" אָלָא בַּית הַמְּקְדָּש – And the term Levanon is interpreted here as meaning nothing other than the Temple; אַמָּתְ – as it is stated elsewhere in reference to the Temple: (יוֹ ייָהָה הָּנְה הָּנְה הָנְה וְהַלְּבָנוֹן" – the fine mountain [the Temple Mount] $^{[s]}$  and the Levanon [the Temple]." $^{[s]}$  Thus, the verse, And Levanon shall fall to a mighty one, teaches that the Temple will be conquered by a king.

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai now responds to Vespasian's second accusation:

אָנְהָא אָנָא – "And to that which you asked me, אַנְּא אָנָא – וּדְּקָאָמְרָה בְּּוֹלְּהָא אָנָא – 'If I am a king, why did you not come to me until today?" the answer is: בּּרְיוּנֵי דְּאִית בָּן לא – The baryonei among us do not let us leave the city." – The baryonei among us do not let us leave the city." – (Vespasian) said to [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai], אָמֵר לְיוֹה – "If there was a keg of honey and a dangerous snake was pursuing it," איל הְּרֵין אָלִית – לֹא הָיוֹ שׁוֹבְּרִין אָת – would one not break the keg because of the snake, i.e. so that the snake will go away? Likewise, you should have destroyed the walls of your city so that the baryonei could be driven out!" אישָהִיק – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] was silent.

The Gemara comments on Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai's silence:

אקריגן אָרָה רָב יוסַף וְאִיהַימָא רָבּי עַקּיבּר Rav Yosef – or, as some say, R' Akiva – recited the following verse about [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai]: "עָּבְּי יַסְבַּלי - He [God] turns wise men backwards and makes their thinking foolish. איבָעי לִיהּ לְמִימֶר לִיהּ – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] should have answered [Vespasian]: "If a dangerous snake were in pursuit of a keg of honey, יַּבְּיִלְינָן לֵיהּ לְּדִרְקוּן – we would take tongs, grab hold of the snake and kill it; שְּבְּיִנִן לִיהְ בִּיִרְנִן לִיהּ בְּיִרְנִן לִיהּ בְּיִבְינִן לִיהְ בִּיִּרְנִן לִיהְ – and we would leave the keg intact." To Vespasian's argument that they should have destroyed the city

walls so that the baryonei could be expelled ("would one not break the keg?"), Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai should have responded that they were waiting for an opportunity to drive out the baryonei without having to destroy the city ("we would leave the keg").

The narrative is resumed:

אַלִיה מֵרומִי – In the meantime, a messenger for [Vespasian] arrived from Rome. אָמֵר לִיה – He said to [Vespasian], קים לְאוֹתִיכָּךְ הַנְּהוֹ חֲשׁיבִי דְרוֹמִי לְאוֹתִיכָּךְ ברישא - "Arise, for Caesar has died and the dignitaries of Rome said that they have decided to appoint you as the leader!" יהוה סוים חד מטאני – [Vespasian] was wearing only one of his shoes at the time. בָּטָא לִמְסַוִימָא לְאַחַרִינָא לא עַוִיל — He attempted to put on the other shoe, but it would not go on. בָּעָא He then attempted to take the other – לְמִשְׁלְפָא לְאִידָּךְ לֹא נָפַק shoe off, but it would not come off. אָמֶר – He asked [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai], מַאי הַאי – "What is this?" אָמֵר לִיה – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] answered him, לא תִצְטַעַר שמועה טובה אַתוָא לָך — "Do not be perturbed, your shoes do not fit because you received good tidings. The joy of hearing good news makes a person's body swell, בְּתִּיב – as it is written: "יםְצֶעֶר טובָה הְדַשָּׁן־עָצֶם, — Good tidings fatten the bones. [10] אָלָא מַאי תַּקְנְתַיה — So what is his [i.e. your] remedy? לַיֹתִי אִינִיש Let a man whom you dislike – דְּלֹא מְיַנְתְבָא דַּעְתָּךְ מִינַּיה וְלַחֲלִיף קַמֶּךְ come and pass in front of you. This will cause the swelling to subside, דְּכְתִּיב – as it is written: יוָרִּה תְּנָבָש־גָּרָם – as it is written: הָנָבָש־גָּרָם, a broken spirit dries the bones. [11] When your high spirits are broken by seeing this person, your feet will return to their normal size." עָבֶר הָבִי עַיִּיל – [Vespasian] did this, and [his shoe] went on. אָמֵר לִיה – [Vespasian] then said to [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai], ומאחר דחַכְמִיתוּ כּוּלֵי הַאי – "And since you are so wise, עַר הָאִידְנָא אַמַאי לא אַתיהּוּ לְנַבָּאִי — why did you not come to me until today?" אָמֵר לִיהּ – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] said to [Vespasian], יְלֹא אָמְרִי לָּךְ – "And did I not answer you this question before?"ינור אָמֶר לֵיה – [Vespasian] said to him, אָמָר "I also answered you!" אָמָר אָמָרי לָךְ – [Vespasian] said to him, מַוּלָנָא וְאִינַשׁ אַחַרִינָא – קשַׁדְרְנָא – "I am going back to Rome, and I will send another man to take my place. אָלָא בְּעֵי מִינָּאִי מִידִי דְּאָתַּן לֶּךְ — So ask me now for something I can give you." אָמֵר לִיהּ – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] said to him, מַן לִי יַבְנָה וַחֲכָמֵיהָ – "Give me the town of Yavneh and its Sages,ושושילהָא דְּרַבָּן נַמְלִיאַל – the family of Rabban Gamliel, וֹאַטְווֹתָא דְּמַסְיֵין לַיֹה לְרַבִּי

## NOTES

- 1. Jerusalem had not yet been conquered. However, since it had been besieged for three years, and famine was rampant in the city, its fate was already sealed (Tosafos אי דיה).
- 2. Isaiah 10:34. In context, the verse foretells the fall of Sancheriv and his army to an angel of God (see Rashi and Mahari Kara ibid.).
- 3. Jeremiah 30:21. God promises that when the Jews return from exile the king that rules over them will be a Jew (see Radak ibid.; Rashi ibid. vs. 5,7). The bracketed words are the translation of the continuation of the verse: במשְׁלוֹ מַקְרְבוֹ וַצֵּא
- 4. Deuteronomy 3:25.
- 5. The definite article [אָדֶה, "the" mountain] signifies that the reference is to the most special mountain viz. Har HaMoriah, on which the Temple was situated (Maharsha).
- 6. The Temple is referred to as לְבֵּון, Levanon from the root לָבָוּ, white because it is there that the Jewish nation finds atonement and the stain of their sins is whitened and cleansed (Rashi, from Yoma 39b).
- 7. Literally: wrapped around it. (Our translation follows Rashi; cf. Maharsha.)
- 8. Roman forces would be able to enter the city and expel the baryonei from its midst.

- 9. Isaiah 44:25. As punishment for the people's sins, God took away Rabban Yochanan's ability to answer (Maharsha).
- 10. Proverbs 15:30.
- 11. Ibid. 17:22.
- 12. When Vespasian asked earlier, "If I am king, why did you not come to me until today?" R' Yochanan answered, "The baryonei among us do not let us [leave the city]."
- 13. Vespasian had then responded to Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai, "If there was a keg of honey etc." [i.e. you should have broken down the walls of the city so that the baryonei could be driven out].
- 14. Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai requested that the Romans spare the town of Yavneh and the Sages who resided in it (Rashi).
- 15. Literally: and the [genealogical] chain of Rabban Gamliel.

Rabban Gamliel (the second) eventually became the Nasi (spiritual leader of Eretz Yisrael). Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai requested that Rabban Gamliel's family be spared, because he wished to preserve the royal line of the family of David. [The Nasi was a descendant of King David — Tosafos to Sanhedrin 5a ביה דוהכא (Rashi; see Beis Yosef Choshen Mishpat 3:12 and Knesses HaGedolah ibid.). By destroying Jerusalem and the Temple, the Romans thought they would break the back of the Jewish people. Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai, realizing that the Romans

ה) נלפי שהגלה אם ישראל מהב בספר הפקדים מהבניה), כן (כשמון שון שנ די מישה בשירא פי נכשוף), ו) מנהדרין קד: מ"ב, ה) [כלומר קודם שמינר למש נעשם רלש שלם יחמנו ביד חומה ספילה מכר אם בניו. כ"כ מוספום הנינה יג: ד"ה שלחן, כו (בפט"ו מ"ד דינמום כמנ התר"ט פל מברישים נפ"ה דשיחנין הנו לה מוצחי שם כנים פכיל נרמה שנה הים לפרו מה שמופם כם נמוספות דשירובין נ ד"ה ומיהו כמה בני לדם וכי כים וכי מוכי כיק נה דיה נפבד הוכי ובסים קנת. ד"ה ודלמה ומופר תולון מב: ד"ה נפכות ל. דים כדין.

> כינוי הנהות הנר"א נטיו

[א] גמ' אונקלום בר אונקלום בר אהתיה ראנדרייטם הוה בו' מ"ל:

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The Gemara comments on Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai's requests:

קרי צַלְיה רָב יוסף וְאִיתִּימָא רְבּי צַקּיבָּא – Rav Yosef – or, as some say, R' Akiva – recited the following verse about [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai]: קַשְׁיִב נְּדְעָהָב יְפָבּיב אָחור וְדְעָהָב יְפָבּליי, – He [God] turns wise men backwards and makes their thinking foolish. אִיבָּעִי לְמִימֵר לִיה – [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] should have said to [Vespasian]: לְשְׁבְּקִיְהוּ הָרָא יִיִּמְנָא – "Leave them alone this time!" That is, he should have beseeched Vespasian to spare Jerusalem.

The Gemara explains why Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai did not request the salvation of Jerusalem:

קבר – But [Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai] thought – וְהוּא טָבּר – that [Vespasian] might not fulfill so great a request, הְּצָּלָה פּוּרְתָא נַמִּי לֹא הָוִי – and then there will not be even a small measure of salvation. Therefore, he requested smaller favors which Vespasian would be more likely to grant.

One of the requests made by Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was for doctors to cure R' Tzadok. The Gemara relates how R' Tzadok was cured.

The Gemara returns to the central narrative:

לאַני שִּרְרִיה לְּטִיטּוּס (Vespasian) went to Rome, and he sent Titus to take charge of the military campaign against Jerusalem. וְאָמֵר אַי אֵלְהִימוֹ צוּר חָטִיוּ בוּיי – In this connection, Scripture states: And he shall say, "Where is their God, the rock in which they sought refuge?" שְּׁיִינִי הַיְשִׁי – This is a reference to the evil Titus, ווּבּי בְּעַבּי מַעְלָה – בְּיִה עָשִׁיר – who profaned and blasphemed the One above. שְׁהִירָ בְּעָשׁ וּנְה בְּיָרִ הַּבְּעִי תְּבְיַת בְּיִר תְּבְיַע וּנָה בְּיִר תְּבְיַשׁ וּנָה בְּיָר – He seized a harlot in his hand, וְּבַּיִ מַרְשִׁי – and entered the chamber of the Holy of Holies. וּשִּבֵּר עָלֵיהָ בְּיִר עָלִיהָ בִּיִר תְּבָּע הוּרָה בִּיִר הַיִּיִי עַבָּר תּוֹרָה בִּיִר הַיִּיִי עַבָּר תּוֹרָה וּצִיר הוֹרָה בִּיִר הַיִּיִי עַבָּר תּוֹרָה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תִּיִּיה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תּוֹרָה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תּוֹרָה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תְּיִיה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תּוֹרָה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תּוֹרָה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר תִּיִּיה הַיִּיה הַיִּיּי שִּרָּיה בְּיִר עָּיִיה בְּיִר עַיִּיִי עָּיִר תּוֹרָה – וּהַצִיע עַבָּר עִיִּיי עַבָּר עַיִּייִה בְּיִר עַיִּייִה בְּיִר עִיִּיִי עַבְּר עַיִּיִי עַּיִר עַּיִיי עַבְּר עַיִּייִ עַבְּר עַיִּיִי עַבְּר עַיִּיִי עַבְּר עַיִּיִי עַּיִר הִיִּי עַבָּר עַיִּיִי עַבְּר עַיִּיִי עַבְּר עִיִּייִ בּיִי עַיִּי בּיִי עַבְּר עַיִּיִי עִיּיִבּר עַיִּייִ בּיִיי בּיִייִי בּיִיי בְּיִיי בְּיִיי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִיי בְּיִר בְּיִיי בְּיִי בְּיִיי בְּיִי בְיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּי בְּיִי בּיי בִּיי בִּיּי בְּיִי בִּי עִייִי בִּי בְּיִי בִּי בְּיִיי בִּיִי בְּיִי בִּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בְּיִי בִּי

קנְטַל פַיִּיף וְגִידֵּר אָת. Then he took a sword and slashed the paroches. בּבִּרְכָּת – Then he took a sword and slashed the paroches. רְבַּעְשָׁה נִס – Then he took a sword and slashed the paroches. רְבַּעְשָׁה נַס – A miracle occurred, וְנַצְשָׁה נַס – and blood was seen bubbling out of the paroches. רְבַּיִּי הְרָג אָת – [Titus] thought that he had killed "himself", בּצְּמִי – [Titus] thought that he had killed "himself", בּצְּמִי – as it is stated: בְּעָבְּי בְּמִי בְּעָרְב מִוּעֲרָךְ שְׁמוּ אוֹתֹתְּם – Your [God's] enemies roared in the midst of Your meeting place; they established their signs as true signs. רְבַּיּוֹ Titus interpreted the bleeding as a sign that he had killed God.

The Sages comment on God's restraint in the face of Titus' unconscionable behavior:

אַבָּא חָנֵן אוֹמֵר — Abba Chanan says: "מִּי־כְּמוּךְ חָּטִין יָהִּיי , — Scripture states: Who is like you, O Strong One, God? מִי בְּמוּךְ חִייִּי בְּמוּךְ חִייִּי וְהַיּוּן אוֹמֵר בּמוּבְּאַר שִׁינְיִי בְּי וּשְׁרִי בְּמוּךְ בּמוּבְּאַר שִׁינְיִי בּי וּשְׁרִי בְּעִּר שִׁינִי בְּעִר בְּשִׁר שִׁינִי בּע בּמְבּה בְּעִל בְּיִרוּפוּ שֶׁל אוֹתוּ רְשָׁע וְשׁוּחָכִי – for you hear the insult and blasphemy of that evil man [Titus], and yet you remain silent? בְּבִי רְבִּי יִשְּׁמָעִאל הָּנָּאָ בִּי רְבִּי יִשְּׁמָעִאל הָּנָאָ בּע בּמְבָּה בָּאַלְם הִיי – Scripture states: Who is like You among the mighty ones, Hashem? בּי בְּמוּבָה בָּאַלְמִים בּי – Who is like You among the mute ones? In the face of Titus' blasphemy, You remained silent. [25]

The narrative is resumed:

עשה – What did [Titus] do next? בָּעל אָת הַפָּרוֹכָת – He took the paroches, [29] וַעַשָאוֹ כַמִין גַּרְגוּתְנִי – and formed it into the shape of a wine-carrier. וָהָבִיא כָּל בַלִּים שַׁבַּמִּקְדַשׁ וָהְנִּיחָן בָהָן – Then he brought all the utensils of the Temple, and put them in it. ן הושִׁיבָן בְּסִפִּינָה לַיִּלַךְ לְהַשְׁתַבַּהַ בְּעִירוּ — He put them on a ship, intending to go and be praised for his triumph in his city. אַנְאֵמֶר — As it is said: יְּשָׁנִים קְבָרִים וָבָאוּ — Then I saw wicked men who deserved to be buried; yet they came [to destroy the Temple], ימִמְקוֹם קרוֹשׁ יְהַלְכוּ - and then departed from that holy place. ייִנְשְׁתַּבְּחוּ בָּעִיר אֲשֶׁר בַּן־עָשׁוּי. – But eventually they will be forgotten in the city [Jerusalem] regarding that which they had indeed done in it. מל תִּיכְרָי – Do not read this as it is written "קברים", - buried. אָלָא -Rather, read it as though it were written קבצים – gathered. אַל תּיקרי – Furthermore, do not read this as it is written ייישתבחוי,, – and they will be forgotten. אָלָא – Rather, read it as though it were written, וְשְׁתֵּבְחוּ – and they were praised. With these two changes, the verse can be interpreted: Then I saw

NOTES

would not, in their fury, spare anything that might be construed as a source of authority for the Jewish people, asked for something whose value Vespasian would not perceive — the small town of Yavneh and its community of scholars. He also asked for Rabban Gamliel — the young son of the previous Nasi — to be spared. The Nasi had to this point in history not served as a political leader but merely as head of the Sanhedrin. By saving the scholars and Nasi of the Sanhedrin, R' Yochanan ben Zakkai was able to reconstitute under the very eyes of the Romans the true heart and soul of the Jewish people — the Torah authority as represented by Sanhedrin — shortly after the destruction of the Temple. In the course of a generation, the Sanhedrin at Yavneh succeeded in revitalizing the broken and dispersed Jewish nation (Doros HaRishonim).

- 16. R' Tzadok had fasted for forty years in an attempt to avert the destruction of the Temple (see above, 56a). His intestines had shrunk to such a degree that he was unable to digest solid food (Rashi).
- 17. Deuteronomy 32:37.
- 18. The verse refers to the incident, recorded below, in which Titus came to believe that he had killed God (Maharsha).
- 19. The Holy of Holies was the most sacred part of the Temple.
- 20. [He had intimate relations with the harlot.]
- 21. The בְּרוּכָת, paroches, is the curtain that separates the Holy of Holies

from the chamber known as the Holy.

- 22. God performed this miracle to demonstrate how deeply He was pained by the destruction of the Temple (Tosafos העשה).
- 23. This is a euphemistic reference to God (Rashi). [Because of the derogatory nature of this statement, the Gemara disguises its true meaning.]

Titus reasoned: "Whose blood is this, if not God's?" (Rashi).

- 24. Psalms 74:4.
- 25. Ibid. 89:9.
- 26. Exodus 15:11
- 27. In this verse, אָלִם, the mighty ones, is written without a yud, so it can be read אַאָר, which means mute (Maharam Schif).
- 28. God is lenient with the wicked in this world. He rewards them for their few good deeds so that they will receive their full punishment in the World to Come (see *Maharsha* and *Bava Kamma* 50a-b).
- 29. He specifically took the *paroches* so that he could display its blood stains as evidence for his belief that he had killed God (*Maharsha*; cf. *Maharam Schif*).
- 30. Ecclesiastes 8:10. Our translation of the verse follows Rashi ibid. The Gemara proceeds to interpret it homiletically.

הנהות הנר"א

[א] נכי אונקלום בר אונקלום בר אהתיה ראנדריינום הוה כר כנ"ל:

יַעַר הַבָּצִיר״ – זָה לְדֵשׁ הַקְּדְשִׁים; ״לְּוֹל יִלְלַת הָוֹעִים כִּי ״הֵילֵילוּ אַלוֹנֵי בְשָׁן״ – וָה משָׁה אַהֵּוֹן וּמִרְיָם; ״כִּי יָבַד בֵּית־הַמָּקְדָשׁ; "אֲשֶׁר אַדִּרִים שֻׁדְּדרִ" – אֵלרּ יִשְׂרָאֵל. יִּצְׁתָּק וְיַצְּקֹב וּשְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר שְׁבָּטִים; ״כִּי נָפַל אָנֶז״ – זָה אֶרֶז אֲשֶׁר אַדִּרִים שְׁדָּדוּ״. ״הֵילֵל בְּרוֹשׁ״ – וָה אַבְּרָהָם וְצוֹעֲקֵין וְסוֹפְיִין וְאוֹמְרִים (שם): ""הֵילֵל בְּרוֹשׁ כִּי נְפַל אַבְנָהָם יִצְּחָק וְיַצָּלִב וּשְׁנִים־עָשָׂר שְׁבָטִים הָיוּ בוֹכָן יְהוּ הַמֵּפְתְּחוֹת מְסוּרוֹת לְךּ, וְהֵם קְפְצוּ וְנָפְלוּ לְתוֹךְ הָאוּר. לַצֵּשוֹת מְלֵאבֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ וְלָאֱכֹל מִשֵּׁלְתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ – עַּלְשָׁוּ מַפְּהְחוֹתֶיךְ שֶׁמְּסַרְהָּ לָנוּ, הוֹאִיל וְלֹא הָיִינוּ גִּוְבָּרִין נְאֵלֶנִין נוֹטְלִים מַפְּתְּחוֹתֵיהֶן בְּיָדָן יְוִזוֹרְקִין כְּלַפֵּי מַעְּלָה וְאוֹמְרִים לְפְנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ־בָּרוּדְ־הוּא: וְבּוֹנוֹ־שֶׁל־עוֹלָם, הֵילֶדְּ אִשׁ בַּאַרְוֶיף" – אַלּוּ כֹּחֲנִים גְּרוֹלִים שֶׁהָיוּ בַּפְּקְדָּשׁ, שֶׁהָיוּ יא): "פְתַח לְבָנוֹן דְּלָתֵיף" – זֶה בֵּית־הַמְּקְדָּשׁ, "וְתֹאכֵל בִּית־הַמְּקְדָישׁ בָּאִשׁ, קרַע בְּנָדְיוּ, וְקֹרְעוּ תַלְמִידִיוּ אֶת בִּגְדֵיהֶם, וְהָינּ בוֹכִין וְצוֹעֲקִין וְסוֹפְדִין, וְאוֹמְרִים (זכריה רַבָּן יוֹחָנָן בֶּן־זַכַּאי שֶׁהָחֲרִיב אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם וְשָׂרַף אֶת קְצַפֶּה, כִּי הָיָה לְבּוֹ חָרֵד עַל אֲרוֹן הָאֵלֹהִים״. כֵּיוָן שְׁשָׁמַע שֶׁבָּאָמַר (שמואל־א ד): ״וְהָבָּה עֵלִי ישֵׁב עַל הַבָּפָא יַד דֶּרֶךְּ יושֵׁב וּמְצַפֶּה וְחָרֵד, כְּשֵׁם שֶׁהָיָה עֵלִי יוֹשֵׁב וּמְצַפָּה, בְאוֹמָה שָׁעָה נִלְכְּדָה יְרוּשָׁלָיִם. וְמָיָה רַבָּן יוֹחָנָן בָּן־וַבַּאי שֶׁל יְרוּשָׁלָים. הַבִּיאוּ לוֹ נְפָרִים שֶׁל אֶנֶז, וְנְתַּן לְתוֹךְ קֵשֶׁת פִּרְצָה. הַבִּיאוּ רֹאשׁ חֲזִיר וְנָתְנוּ לְתוֹךְ קְשֶׁת שֶׁל זִירִים, שָׁל זִירִים, וְדָיָה מַבֶּה בְּהֶן עַל הַחוֹמָה עַר שֶׁפּוֹרֵץ בּוֹ וְהָיָה מַשְׁלִיךְּ מֹחוֹ כְּלַפֵּי אֵיבָוִים שֶׁעַל־גַּבֵּי חַמִּוְבָּחַ. בַּמַלְכוּת. הַבִּיאוּ לוֹ קֵשֶׁת שֶׁל זִירִים, וְשָׂמָה בְּנָגֶד הַחוֹמָה שֶׁבֶּא אֵלָיו דְּיוֹפּוֹלִי מֵרוֹמִי שֶׁמֵת קִיפָר, וְנְמְנוּ עָלָיו לַעֲמֹד וְהַלְּבָנוֹן בְּאַדִּיר יִפּוֹל״. אָמְרוּ: לֹא הָיוּ שְׁלֹשָה יָמִים, עַר הַהֶּלֶּךְּ, שֶׁנָּאֲמַר (ישעיה י): "וְנִקֵּף סִּבְבֵּי הַיַּעַר בַּבֵּרְזֶל לָנוּ, שֵׁאֵין בִּית־הַמִּקְדָּשׁ נִּמְסָר בְּיֵד הָדְיוֹט, אָלָא בְּיֵד

אַחְ עוֹמֵר בַּמַּלְכוּת. מִנֵּין אַתָּה יוֹדֵעַ. אָמַר לו: כָּךְ מְסוּר (כּוֹ) שָׁאֹמֵר לְפָנֵיךּ דָּבָּר אָחָד. אָמַר לוֹ: אֵמֹר. אָמַר לוֹ: הָרֵי  $(\zeta, \hat{\alpha})$  אַלּפּֿטְנָנִים לְתַּנְוֹרֵיבֵ אָּע יְרוּשְׁלַנִים, אַפֿר לָתָּם:  $\gamma < 1$ וְכָל מַה שָׁאַהָּה רוֹצֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲשֵׂה. אָמַר לו: רְצוֹנֶךְ וְאָעֵשֶׂה בָה כָּל מִעְּוֹת הָאֲמוּרוֹת בַּתּוֹרָה. אָמַר לוֹ: לֵךְּ, יַבְנָה; אֵלֵךְ וְאֶשְׁנָה בָהּ לְתַלְמִידֵי, וְאֶקְבַּע בָּהּ תְּפַלָה, וַפַאי, שְאַל מָה אָתָּן לָךְ. אָמַר לוֹ: אֵינִי מְבַּאֵשׁ מִמְּךְ אֶלָא ָדָאָרוֹן וְעָמֵר לְפָנָיו. אָמֵר לוֹ: אַנָּה הוּא רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בָּן אָטָר, וְהוֹצִיאוּהוּ, עַר שֶׁהִגִּיעוּ אֵצֶל אַסְפַּסְיָנוֹס. פְּתְחוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ. רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶוֹר אָחַז מִצֵּר אָחָד, רַבִּי יְהוֹשֶׁעַ מְצֵּר לְהֶם: בָּנֵי, עִמְדוּ וְהוֹצִיאוּנִי מִכָּאן. עֲשׂוּ לִי אָרוֹן וְאֶשְׁכַּב שָׁלַח וְקָרָא לְתַלְמִידִיוּ, לְרַבִּי אֵלִיעָוֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, אָמַר ְוְבֶל דְּבֶר וְדָבָר שֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹמְמִין, הָיוּ כוֹחָבִין עַל הַחֵץ בֵּן־וַבַּאי יוֹם אָתָר וּשְׁנֵיִם וּשְׁלשָׁה וְלֹא קַבְּלוּ מִמֶּנוּ – הָיָה מְדַבֵּר לְאַנְשֵׁי יְרוּשְׁלָיִם. וְבֵיוָן שֶׁאָמֵר לָהֶם רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן לומר שֶׁרַבֶּן יוֹחָנָן בָּן־וַבַּאי מִאוֹהָבִי קִיסָר הוֹא. וְכָךּ וָכָּךּ וְזוֹרְקֵתְ חוּץ לַחוֹמָה; וְכָחָבוּ עַל הַחֵץ וְזָרְקוּ חוּץ לַחוֹמָה, לְאַסְפַּסְיָנוֹס אֲנָשִׁים שְׁרוּיִין כְּנָגֶד חוֹמוֹמֶיהָ שֶׁל יְרוּשָׁלֵים. שְׁלֵּכָנִיוּ וַהָּרֵגְנִים, כָּךְּ נֵצֵא עָלָיו וְנַהַרְגָּהוּ. הָיוּ אוֹ חֵץ אַתַּת וְיֵלֵךְ לוֹ מִבֶּם. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: כְּשֵׁם שֶׁיָצָאנוּ עַל מַהוּ מְבַּקֵשׁ מִבָּם, הָא אֵינוֹ מְבַּקֵשׁ מִבָּם אֶלָא לֵשֶׁת אַחַת הָעִיר הַזּאת וְאַהֶּם מְבַּקְשִׁים לְשִׂרֹף אֶת בִּית־הַמְּקְדָשׁ. וְכִי יְרוּשֶׁלַיִם וְאָמֵר לָהֶם: בָּנֵי, מִפְּנֵי מָה אַהֶּם מַחֲרִיבִּין אֶת פֵּיוָן שִׁשְׁמַע רַבָּן יוֹחָנָן בָּן־וַכַּאי, שָׁלַח וְקָנָא לְאַנְשִׁי תָרִאשׁוֹנִים שָׁחֵם לְפָנֵיךּ וַחֲרַגְנוּם, כָּךּ נֵצֵא לְפָנֵיךּ וְנַחֵרְגָּדּ. אַתַות וְאֵלֵךְ מִכֶּם. אָמְרוּ לוּ: כְּשֵׁם שֶׁיֶצְאנוּ עַל שְׁנַיִם אָנִי מְבַקֵּשׁ מִבֶּם, אֵלָא שֶׁתְּשַׁגְּרֵר לִּי לֵשֶׁת אַחַת אוֹ חֵץ תַוֹאת וְאַתֶּם מְבַקְשִׁים לְשְׂרֹף אֶת בֵּית־תַּמְּקְדָשׁ. וְכִי מָה שוֹטִים, מִפְּנֵי מָה אַהֶּם מְבַּקְשִׁים לְהַחֲרִיב אֶת הָעִיר

שִׁבְּדָה אַבִּרְתָּם" – זָה דָוִד וּשְׁלֹמֹה בְנוֹ; "קוֹל שַׁאֲגַת בְּפִירִים כִּי שַׁדַּד גְּאוֹן הַיִּרְדֵּן" – וָה אֵלְיָהוּ וָאֵלִישְׁע.

shall you sacrifice burnt offerings (Devarim 12:13,14). Hashem shall choose [in the territory of] one of your tribes. Only there

do before this (Daniel 6:11). down and prayed, giving thanks before his G-d, exactly as he used to upper chamber facing Ternshalayim, and three times a day he knelt had been put in writing, he went home. He had windows made in his ceived with favor, as it says, When Daniel learned that [the decree] a poor man, and prayed three times a day. And his prayer was rea bride and rejoiced her heart, escorted the dead, gave a perntah to What then were the acts of kindness Daniel did? He provided for

## RABBI YOCHANAN AND VESPASIAN<sup>43</sup>

[as a token of submission], and I will withdraw [my forces]." ing to surrender]? All I ask is that you send me one bow and arrow are you trying to destroy this city and burn the Temple [by refus-When Vespasian [the Roman general] came to destroy Yerushalayim, he said [to the people of Yerushalayim]: "Fools, why

fight against and kill you." the first two45 who were here before you killing them, so will we [The Biryonim<sup>44</sup>] said to Vespasian: "Just as we fought against

want to destroy our city and cause the Beis Hamikdash to be [heads of the Biryonim] telling them; "My children, why do you When R. Yochanan b. Zakkai heard this he summoned the

draw his forces." burned? All [Vespasian] wants is one bow or arrow, and he'll with-

the Romans that R. Yochanan b. Zakkai was a Roman sympathizwall [making it appear as if they were attacking the Romans]. Overhearing what R. Yochanan told the Biryonim, they informed taching the message to an arrow and shooting the arrow over the of Yerushalayim. They wrote down every word they overheard, athere before him, killing them, so will we fight against and kill him." Vespasian had [Jewish collaborators] stationed inside the walls They replied: "Just as we fought against the first two, who were

disciples, R. Eliczer and R. Yehoshua. mit to Vespasian's demand]; it was to no avail. He then sent for his Day after day, R. Yochanan pleaded with the Biryonim [to sub-

fin for me to lie in." "My sons," he said to them, "Take me out of here. Make a cof-

the foot. As the sun set they reached the gates of Yerushalayim. "Who is this?" the [Biryonim] gatekeepers inquired. R. Eliezer carried the head of the coffin and R. Yehoshua carried

"A dead man," they replied. "Don't you know that a corpse may

not be left overnight in Yerushalayim?"

They carried him to Vespasian. When they opened the coffin, R. "If it's a dead man," the gatekeepers said, "go ahead."

me a favor, and I will grant it." Yochanan stood up before him. "Are you Rabbi Yochanan b. Zakkai?" Vespasian inquired, "Ask

Torah. [At least the Torah will survive and continue to flourish]."46 "Give me the city of Yavneh where I will teach my disciples, estabserve the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people,] so he requested, lish a prayer house and perform all the commandments of the [Seeing that Yerushalayim was lost, R. Yochanan wanted to pre-

"Go," replied Vespasian, "and do whatever you want to do."



events is related here. struction of the Beis Hamikdash, another episode about his role in these tragic Since R. Yochanan b. Zakkai was mentioned above in connection with the de-

party were called Biryonim. fare to overthrow Roman domination. The violently militant members of the Zealot laebah, and the Zealots [Kana'in], extreme nationalists who advocated open wartions: moderates who were followers of the Rabbis; the corrupt and assimilated 44 At that time there was a civil war raging in Yerushalayim among three Jewish fac-Sadducees who were Roman sympathizers and opponents of the Rabbis and hu-

earlier uprising. A reference to Florus and Cestius Gallus who were defeated by the Zealots in an

tence of the Jewish people during the long exile. portance. It was the instrument through which G-d ensured the continued exis 46 R. Yochanan b. Zakkai's request to set up a yeshivah in Yavneh was of crucial im-

CHAPTER 4:5-6

Said R. Yochanan, "With your permission, I will tell you some-

"Speak," Vespasian answered

Said R. Yochanan: "You are about to become the emperor of

"How do you know that?" Vespasian asked.

refers specifically to a king, and Lebanon refers to the Beis Hamikdash]. Lebanon will fall by a mighty one (adir)" (Yeshayah 10:34), [adir not fall into the hands of a commoner, but to a king, for it says, R. Yochanan replied: "We have a tradition that the Temple will

the emperor had died, and that Vespasian had been elected as his Three days later, messengers arrived from Rome reporting that

swine's head in the ballista, hurling it toward the sacrifices on the hurled against the wall until it was breached. Then they placed a Yerushalayim. Boards of cedar were inserted into the ballista, and Roman ballista47 was brought up against the wall of

Beis Hamikdash burned, he and his disciples tore their clothes, crywas fearful about the Ark of G-d (1 Shmuel 4:13). When R. ing and mourning tearfully. Yochanan b. Zakkai heard that Yerushalayim was destroyed and the Eli was seated in a chair next to the road, looking out, for his heart happened to the Ark in the battle against the Philistines], as it says, layim was conquered, just as Eli sat and waited [to hear what had R. Yochanan b. Zakkai fearfully awaited the report that Yerusha-

cedars! (Zechariah 11:1). It says, Open your doors, O Lebanon, and let fire consume your

Open your doors, O Lebanon refers to the Beis Hamikdash.

we were not privileged to be faithful agents to do the King's work the universe! Here are Your keys which You entrusted to us. Since Hamikdash who threw their keys toward heaven, saying: "Master of And let fire consume your cedars refers to the kohanim in the Beis

and to cat at the King's table, we herewith return the keys to you." Then the kohanim jumped from the roof and fell into the flames.

pregnable forest has come down (Zechariah 11:2). ones have been vanquished; wail, O oaks of Bashan, because the immournfully, Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, for the mighty Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, and the twelve tribes wept, crying

Hamikdash Wail, O express for the cedar has fallen refers to the Beis

Wail, O oaks of Bashan refers to Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam. For the mighty ones have been vanquished refers to Yisrael.

Because the impregnable forest has come down refers to the Holy

quished (Zechariah 11:3) refers to David and Shlomoh, his son. There is a sound of shepherds' wailing, for their power has been van

bave been vanquished (Zechariah 11:3) refers to Eliyahu and Elisha There is a sound of young lions' roar, for the heights of the Jordan

## Differences Among Men

voice, taste, and appearance. A person is different than his neighbor in three ways: in

each person his own distinctive voice. would not realize it was not her husband]. Therefore, G-d gave home and take his wife. [For if all men had the same voice, she would leave his house [at night], and another man would enter his so there would be a great deal of immorality in the world. A man G-d gave each person a different voice. Had He had not done

his own taste which differs from his neighbor's taste. would hanker for the same thing]. Therefore G-d gave each person Had he not done so, people would envy each other [for everyone G-d gave each person a taste different from that of his neighbor.

different. would not recognize their wives. Therefore, G-d made them look not done so, women would not recognize their husbands, and men G-d made each person look different from anyone else. Had he

An engine used by the Romans for hurling missiles

ROSH HASHANA (:6>) IT

Mishtaff The Mishnah discusses the law of shofar blowing when Rosh Hashanah occurs on the Sabbath:

שָׁבֶּל – And in this additional respect was Jerusalem superior to Yavneh: שְׁבֶּל בְּּיִהְיִה וְּרוֹשְׁלִיִם וְתִירָה עֵּל יִבְּנְה עֵל יִבְּנָה — And in this additional respect was Jerusalem superior to Yavneh: שְׁבָּל – And could see Jerusalem, בְּיִבְּה – and could hear, – מִיר שְׁהִוּא רוֹאָה – and could come to Jerusalem, וּפּוֹבְנָה לֹא הָיוּ – would blow the shofar on the Sabbath; בּיִבְּנָה לֹא הָיוּ – whereas in Yavneh, they would blow only in the Beis Din itself. (ז)

SANHERRIN

erces/ ge:

The Gemara returns to the subject of choosing a court: תַנוּ רַבְּנֵן – The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: "אַרָק תַּרָדּף" – תָּנוּ רַבְּנֵן - The verse states: RIGHTEOUSNESS, RIGHTEOUSNESS, SHALL YOU PURSUE. הַלֶּרְ אַחָר חַבְמִים לִישִׁיבָה – This teaches that one should go after the sages to the place of the academy(19) to have his case adjudicated, אַליעַוַר לְלוּד – for example, AFTER R' ELIEZER TO LOD, אָחָר רַבֶּן יוֹחָנֶן בֶּן זַבָּאי AFTER RABBAN YOCHANAN BEN ZAKKAI TO BEROR CHAYIL, אַחַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעֵ לְבְּקִיעִין — AFTER R' YEHO-SHUA TO PEKI'IN, אַחַר רַבָּן גַּמְלִיאַל לְיַבְנֶא – AFTER RABBAN GAMLIEL TO YAVNEH. אַחַר רַבִּי צָקִיבָא לְבְנֵי בְרֵק — AFTER B' AKIVA TO BNEI BRAK, אַחַר רַבִּי מַתְיָא לְרוֹמִי – AFTER R' MASYA TO ROME, אַחַר רַבִּי חֲנַנְיָא בֶּן תְּרַדְיון לְסִיכִנִי — AFTER R' CHANANYA BEN TERADYON TO SICHNI, אַחַר ר׳ יוֹטַי לְצִיפּוֹרִי – AFTER R' YOSE TO TZIPPORI, אַחַר רַבִּי וְהוּרָה בֶּן בְּתִירָה לְנְצִיבִין — AFTER R' YEHUDAH BEN BESEIRAH TO NETZIVIN. אַתָּר רָבִי יִהוֹשֶׁע הולה - AFTER R' YEHOSHUA TO THE DIASPORA in Pumbe-

ROCH HASHAMA

(16) 30

The Gemara continues its citation of R' Yochanan's original statement:

אנישָא לְּוְכְנָה לְּאוּשָא לִּוְכְנָה – then from Yavneh to Usha back to Yavneh, אניקנה לְאוּשָא לְוְכְנָה – then from Yavneh to Usha once again, ווווי בּיִי בְּיִּבְּיִה לְאוּשָׁא בּיִי בְּיִבְּיה בְּאוּשָׁא – then from Usha to Shefar'am, וווי בּיִי בְּיִבְּיה שְּעָרִים לְבִּבּוּר בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִאנים בְּיִבּוּר בּיִי בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִאנים בּיִּבְיּה בּיִּר שְּעָרִים לְבִּבּוּר בּיִי בְּיִבְּר בְּיִבְּיה בּיִּר בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בּיִּר בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בּיִּבְּיה בּיִּבְּיה בּיִּבְּיה בּיִּבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְּיבִּיה בְיבִּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִּיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְיבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיבְיה בְּיִיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּייי בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיִיבְּיבְּיה בְּיבְייה בְּיִייה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּייה בְּיבְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיים בְּיבְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְּייה בְּיבְּיה בְּיבְיה בְּיי