

## Rabbi Akiva's Students

### 1. Talmud Bavli Yevamot 62b

Sefaria/Koren transl (modified)

<p><b>MISHNA (61b): A man may not neglect the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply unless he already has children. Beit Shammai say: One fulfills this mitzva with two males, and Beit Hillel say: A male and a female, as it is stated: "Male and female He created them" (Genesis 5:2).</b></p>	<p><b>מתני' לא יבטל אדם מפריה ורביה</b>  אלא א"כ יש לו בנים ב"ש אומרים שני  זכרים וב"ה אומרים זכר ונקבה  שנאמר (בראשית ה, ב) זכר ונקבה  בראם:</p>
<p>The Gemara comments: <b>The mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua. As it is taught in a <i>baraita</i> that Rabbi Yehoshua says: If a man married a woman in his youth, and she passed away, he should marry another woman in his old age. If he had children in his youth, he should have more children in his old age, as it is stated: "In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand; for you do not know which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both alike shall be good"</b> (Ecclesiastes 11:6). This verse indicates that a man should continue having children even after he has fulfilled the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply.  <b>Rabbi Akiva says</b> that the verse should be understood as follows: If one <b>studied Torah in his youth he should study more Torah in his old age; if he had students in his youth he should have additional students in his old age, as it is stated: "In the morning sow your seed, etc."</b></p>	<p>מתניתין דלאו כרבי יהושע דתניא רבי  יהושע אומר נשא אדם אשה בילדותו  ישא אשה בזקנותו היו לו בנים  בילדותו יהיו לו בנים בזקנותו שנא'  (קהלת יא, ו) בבקר זרע את זרעך  ולערב אל תנח ידך כי אינך יודע אי זה  יכשר הזה או זה ואם שניהם כאחד  טובים  ר"ע אומר למד תורה בילדותו ילמוד  תורה בזקנותו היו לו תלמידים  בילדותו יהיו לו תלמידים בזקנותו  שנא' בבקר זרע את זרעך וגו'</p>
<p><b>They said</b> by way of example that <b>Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of students</b> in an area of land that stretched <b>from Gevat to Antipatris</b> in Judea, <b>and they all died in one period of time, because they did not treat each other with respect.</b></p> <p><b>And the world was desolate of Torah until Rabbi Akiva came to our Rabbis in the South and taught his Torah to them.</b> This second group of disciples consisted of <b>Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Yosei, Rabbi Shimon, and Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua. And these are the very ones who upheld the study of Torah at that time.</b> Although Rabbi Akiva's earlier students did not survive, his later disciples were able to transmit the Torah to future generations.</p>	<p>אמרו שנים עשר אלף זוגים תלמידים  היו לו לרבי עקיבא מגבת עד  אנטיפריס וכולן מתו בפרק אחד מפני  שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה  והיה העולם שמם עד שבא ר"ע אצל  רבתינו שבדרום ושנאה להם ר"מ ור'  יהודה ור' יוסי ורבי שמעון ורבי אלעזר  בן שמוע והם הם העמידו תורה אותה  שעה</p>

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<p>With regard to the twelve thousand pairs of Rabbi Akiva's students, the Gemara adds: It is <b>taught</b> that <b>all of them died</b> in the period <b>from Passover until Shavuot</b>. <b>Rav Ḥama bar Abba said, and some say it was Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Avin: They all died a bad death</b>. The Gemara inquires: <b>What is it</b> that is called a bad death? <b>Rav Naḥman said: Diphtheria</b>.</p>	<p>תנא כולם מתו מפסח ועד עצרת אמר רב חמא בר אבא ואיתימא ר' חייא בר אבין כולם מתו מיתה רעה מאי היא א"ר נחמן אסכרה</p>
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**2. Kohelet Rabbah 11:6**

*MG transl*

<p>Rabbi Akiva says, I had 12,000 students from Gevat to Antipras, and they all died in my lifetime between Passover and Shavuot, and in the end they stood up for me seven: Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Nechemiah, Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yossi, Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, and Rabbi Eliezer son of R. Yosi the Galilean, and Rabbi Yohanan the shoemaker. He said to them, the first ones only died because their eye was narrow with the Torah of the other; you should not be like that. Immediately they got up and filled the whole land of Israel with Torah.</p>	<p>ורבי עקיבא אומר שנים עשר אלפים תלמידים היו לי מגבת ועד אנטפרס וכלן מתו בחיי בין פסח לעצרת, ובסוף העמידו לי שבועה, ואלו הן: רבי יהודה, רבי נחמיה, רבי מאיר, רבי יוסי, רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי, רבי יוחנן הסנדלר. אמר להם הראשונים לא מתו אלא מפני שהיתה עיניהם צרה בתורה זה לזה, אתם לא תהיו כן, מיד עמדו ומלאו כל ארץ ישראל תורה.</p>
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**3. Tanchuma Miketz 10**

*Sefaria transl. (See also Brachot 8a)*

<p>Another comment on <i>In a time when Thou mayest be found</i>. This refers to the time of death. R. Ishmael said: There are nine hundred and three different kinds of death, as it is said: <i>And unto God the Lord belong the issues of death</i> (Ps. 68:21). By Gematria the letters in the word <i>totza'ah</i> ("issue") total nine hundred and three mathematically. The most painful death of all is to be choked, the most pleasant is the divine kiss of death.</p>	<p>דבר אחר, לעת מצא, זו מיתה, דאמר רבי ישמעאל, תשע מאות ושלושה מיני מיתה הם, שנגמרו: למות תוצאות (תהלים סח, כא). תוצאות בגימטריא הכי הוי. קשה שבכלן אסכרה, וטובה שבכלן נשיקה.</p>
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**4. Ben Yehoyada to Yevamot 62**

*MG transl.*

<p>They all died from Passover to Shavuot - . . . It also seems to me, with heavenly help, that it comes to inform us of the time that they did because we should learn a message from it, not to have hatred and jealousy between each other and no one should put down the honor of his fellow. Because you can find that the night of (the first night) of Passover is a night of large-mindedness, high in purpose, and afterwards in the</p>	<p>כלם נפטרו מפסח ועד עצרת. . . . הנה עוד נראה לי בס"ד בא להודיע הזמן הזה שמתו בו שיש ללמוד ממנו מוסר השכל שלא להיות שנאה וקנאה בין זה לזה ולא יהיה אחד מזלזל בכבוד חבירו כי הנה תמצא בליל יום טוב של פסח הוא זמן גדולות למעלה בתכלית ואחר כך בימי העומר זמן קטנות ואחר כך לאט לאט</p>
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<p>time of the Omer is a time of smallness, and after that bit by bit they return to greatness with the eng goal of the mussaf of the holiday of Shavuot. We find that the great one should learn not to raise his heart over the small, because it is possible that this great one will fall immediately to a low level, and also this small one who seems small now, it is possible that he will be very great, as you can find that immediately after the greatness of the first day of Passover comes the smallness and after the smallness it returns to greatness.</p>	<p>יחזרו לגדלות בתכלית שיהיה במוסף של יום טוב חג השבועות. נמצאת אתה למד הגדול לא יגבה לבו על הקטן כי אפשר להיות שזה הגדול ירד תכף למדרגה התחתונה וגם זה הקטן שעתה נראה קטן אפשר שיהיה גדול הרבה כאשר תמצא תכף אחר הגדלות של יום טוב ראשון דפסח נעשה קטנות ואחר שנעשה הקטנות חזר הדבר לגדלות.</p>
<p>And they all died a bad death - the intention is every person who loses the power of speech at the time of his death, who cannot speak and state his last will, this is called a bad death. And since they died of <i>askara</i> they could not speak at all.</p>	<p><b>כָּלֵם מֵתוּ מֵיְתֵהּ רָעָה.</b> הכונה כל אדם שמסתלק ממנו כח הדיבור בעת מותו שאינו יכול לדבר ולצוות זו נקראת 'מיתה רעה' וכיון דמתו באסכרה לא היו יכולין לדבר כלל.</p>
<p>And that which it says, since they did not respect one another, is difficult. This sin is not so great that they deserve death! Rather the liability for their death was because of the desecration of God's name that came out of the matter before the masses, and the sin of desecrating God's name is punishable by death.</p>	<p>וומה שאמרו מפני שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה קשא אין עון זה כדאי לחייבם מיתה! אך חיוב מיתתם היה מפני חלול השם דנפיק מדבר זה לפני המון העם ועון חלול השם במיתה דכתיב (ישעיהו כב, יד) אם יכפר העון זה עד מותו וכוונתו בגמרא דיומא (יומא פו.).</p>

**5. Shabbat 33a-b**  
*Sefaria/Koren transl (modified)*

<p><b>The Sages taught</b> in a <i>baraita</i> that <b>there are four signs: A sign of sin is <i>hidrokan</i>, a sign of gratuitous hatred is jaundice, a sign of arrogance is poverty, and a sign of slander is <i>askara</i>.</b></p>	<p>תנו רבנן: ארבעה סימנין הן: סימן לעבירה — הדרוקן, סימן לשנאת חנם — ירקון, סימן לגסות הרוח — עניות, סימן ללשון הרע — אסכרה.</p>
<p><b>The Sages taught: <i>Askara</i> comes to the world</b> as punishment for neglecting to separate tithes. <b>Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yosei, says: <i>Askara</i> comes as punishment for slander. Rava said, and some say that it was Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi who said it: <b>What is the verse that alludes to this? “But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that swears by Him shall glory; for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped”</b> (Psalms 63:12). The punishment for lying is that the mouth will be stopped. <i>Askara</i> affects the mouth along with other parts of the body.</b></p>	<p>תנו רבנן: אסכרה באה לעולם על המעשה. רבי אלעזר ברבי יוסי אומר: על לשון הרע. אמר רבא ואיתימא רבי יהושע בן לוי: מאי קראה — “והמלך ישמח באלהים ותהלל כל הנשבע בו כי יסכר פי דוברי שקר”.</p>
<p><b>A dilemma was raised before</b> those who were sitting in the study hall: Did <b>Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yosei, say</b> that <i>askara</i></p>	<p>איבעיא להו: רבי אלעזר ברבי יוסי על לשון הרע קאמר, או</p>

<p>comes as punishment only <b>for slander, or perhaps he said</b> it was <b>also for slander? Come and hear</b> a resolution to this dilemma from that which was taught in a <i>baraita</i>: <b>When our Sages entered the vineyard in Yavne, Rabbi Yehuda, and Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yosei, and Rabbi Shimon were there, and a question was asked before them</b> with regard to this plague of <i>askara</i>: <b>Why does it begin in the intestines and end in the mouth? Rabbi Yehuda, son of Rabbi Illa'i, who was the head of the speakers in every place, responded and said: Even though the kidneys advise, and the heart understands, and the tongue shapes</b> the voice that emerges from the mouth, still, <b>the mouth completes</b> the formation of the voice. Therefore, the disease begins in the same place that slander begins and it ends in the mouth. <b>Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yosei, responded and said:</b> This disease ends in the mouth <b>because one eats with it non-kosher things</b>. They immediately wondered about this: <b>Does it enter your mind</b> to say that <i>askara</i> is caused by eating <b>non-kosher food</b>? Are those who eat non-kosher food so numerous? <b>Rather</b>, it comes as a punishment <b>for eating</b> foods <b>that were not ritually prepared</b>, i.e., were not tithed. <b>Rabbi Shimon responded and said:</b> This disease comes as a punishment <b>for the sin of dereliction in the study of Torah</b>.</p>	<p>דילמא אף על לשון הרע נמי קאמר? תא שמע: קשנכנסו רבותינו לפרם בבינה ה'יה שם רבי יהודה ורבי אלעזר ברבי יוסי ורבי שמעון נשאלה שאלה זו בפניהם: מכה זו, מפני מה מתחלת בבני מעיים וגומרת בפה? נענה רבי יהודה ברבי אלעאי "ראש המדברים בכל מקום" ואמר: אף על פי שקליות יעצות, ולב מבין, ולשון מחתך — פה גומר. נענה רבי אלעזר ברבי יוסי ואמר: מפני שאוכלין בה דברים טמאים. דברים טמאים סלקא דעתך? אלא שאוכלין בה דברים שאינן מתוקנים. נענה רבי שמעון ואמר: בעון ביטול תורה.</p>
<p><b>They said to him: Women will prove</b> that dereliction in the study of Torah is not the cause, as they are not obligated to study Torah and, nevertheless, they contract <i>askara</i>. He answered them: They are punished because <b>they cause their husbands to be idle</b> from the study of Torah. They said to him: <b>Gentiles will prove</b> that this is not the cause, as they also contract <i>askara</i> even though they are not obligated to study Torah. He answered them: They are also punished because <b>they cause Israel to be idle</b> from the study of Torah. They said to him: <b>Children will prove</b> that this is not the cause, for they are not at all obligated to study Torah and they also suffer from <i>askara</i>. He answered them: They are punished because <b>they cause their fathers to be idle</b> from the study of Torah. They said to him: <b>School children will prove</b> that this is not the cause, as they study Torah and, nevertheless, they suffer from <i>askara</i>.</p>	<p>אמרו לו: נשים יוכיחו! — שמבטלות את בעליהן. גוים יוכיחו! — שמבטלין את ישראל. תינוקות יוכיחו! — שמבטלין את אביהן. תינוקות של בית רבן יוכיחו!</p>
<p>The Gemara answers: <b>There</b>, it must be understood in <b>accordance with</b> the statement of <b>Rabbi Guryon</b>, as <b>Rabbi Guryon said, and some say</b> that it was <b>Rav Yosef, son of Rabbi Shemaya</b>, who said it: <b>At a time when there are righteous people in the generation, the righteous are seized</b>, i.e., they die or suffer, <b>for the sins of the generation. If there are no</b></p>	<p>התם כדרבי גוריון, דאמר רבי גוריון ואיתימא רב יוסף ברבי שמעיה: בזמן שהצדיקים בדור — צדיקים נתפסים על הדור, אין צדיקים בדור — תינוקות של בית רבן נתפסים</p>

<p>righteous people in the generation, school children, who are also without sin, are seized for the sins of the generation. Rabbi Yitzhak bar Ze'iri said, and some say that Rabbi Shimon ben Nezira said: What is the verse that alludes to this? “If you know not, you fairest among women, go your way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed your kids, beside the shepherds’ tents [<i>mishkenot</i>]” (Song of Songs 1:8). And we say in explanation of this verse: They are the lambs that are taken as collateral [<i>hamemushkanin</i>], which is etymologically similar to the word <i>mishkenot</i>, in place of the shepherds. If the shepherds and leaders of the generation corrupt the multitudes, young children die because of their sins. With regard to the dilemma, conclude from it that Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yosei, said that the illness of <i>askara</i> also results from slander, as the <i>baraita</i> provides an additional cause of the illness. The Gemara comments: Indeed, conclude from it.</p>	<p>על הדור. אמר רבי יצחק בר זעירי, ואמרי לה אמר רבי שמעון בן נזירא: מאי קראה — “אם לא תדעי לך היפה בנשים צאי לך בעקבי הצאן וגו’”, ואמרינן: גדוים הממושקנין על הרועים. שמע מינה: אף על לשון הרע נמי קאמר — שמע מינה.</p>
<p>In this <i>baraita</i> Rabbi Yehuda is described as head of the speakers in every place. The Gemara asks: <b>And why did they call him head of the speakers in every place?</b> The Gemara relates that this resulted due to an incident that took place <b>when Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yosei and Rabbi Shimon were sitting, and Yehuda, son of converts, sat beside them. Rabbi Yehuda opened and said: How pleasant are the actions of this nation, the Romans, as they established marketplaces, established bridges, and established bathhouses. Rabbi Yosei was silent. Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai responded and said: Everything that they established, they established only for their own purposes. They established marketplaces, to place prostitutes in them; bathhouses, to pamper themselves; and bridges, to collect taxes from all who pass over them. Yehuda, son of converts, went and related their statements to his household, and those statements continued to spread until they were heard by the monarchy. They ruled and said: Yehuda, who elevated the Roman regime, shall be elevated and appointed as head of the Sages, the head of the speakers in every place. Yosei, who remained silent, shall be exiled from his home in Judea as punishment, and sent to the city of Tzipori in the Galilee. And Shimon, who denounced the government, shall be killed.</b></p>	<p>ואמאי קרו ליה “ראש המדברים בכל מקום?” דיתבי רבי יהודה ורבי יוסי ורבי שמעון, ויתבי יהודה בן גרים גבייהו. פתח רבי יהודה ואמר: כמה נאים מעשיהן של אומה זו: תקנו שווקים, תקנו גשרים, תקנו מרחצאות. רבי יוסי שתק. נענה רבי שמעון בן יוחאי ואמר: קל מה שתקנו, לא תקנו אלא לצורך עצמן. תקנו שווקין — להושיב בהן זונות, מרחצאות — לעדן בהן עצמן, גשרים — ליטול מהן מקס. הלה יהודה בן גרים וסיפר דבריהם, ונשמעו למלכות. אמרו: יהודה שעילה — יתעלה. יוסי ששתק — יגלה לצפורי. שמעון שגונה — יהרג.</p>

6. R. Shemaryhu Adler, Mareh Cohen 29

See <http://seforimblog.com/2011/05/printing-mistake-and-mysterious-origins/>

MG transl.

<p>A fitting and correct reason for the power of La"g ba-omer, which is included as a holiday, is apparent. By way of introduction, it should be understood also that which is initially surprising, why according to all the opinions the mourning only begins from the beginning of the counting of the omer, which is the second day of Passover. For what connection does the mourning of the students of Rabbi Akiva have to the time of the beginning of counting the omer, since on Yevamot 62b it said "the all died from Passover to Shavuot," and it teaches from Passover without specification - how do we know that this is from the second day of Passover and not the first?</p> <p>It makes sense according to what is written in Menachot 68b: Rabbi Tarfon sat and posed a difficulty, why does the halachah differentiate between before the Omer offering and before the two loaves of bread offering? Yehudah bar Nehemiah said before him, if you say [regarding] before the Omer, none of it is permitted for a layperson... Rabbi Tarfon was quiet. R Yehudah ben Nechemiah's face went yellow. Rabbi Akiva said to him, Yehudah, your face is yellow for you answered back to an elder. I will be surprised if you live long. R. Yehudah bar Ilai said, that happened before passover. When I arrived at Shavuot I asked after Yehudah ben Nechemiah, where he was, and they told me that he had died...</p> <p>From this it seems that it was 15 days before Passover and they were discussing the matters of the Omer, and because Yehudah ben Nechemiah's face was yellowed because he answered back to Rabbi Tarfon, and about this Rabbi Akiva was harsh, it is logical to say that at the time that the offering of the Omer arrived, which is the time of the beginning of the counting of the omer, which is the second day of Passover, the harshness found a place to be applied. Since the substance of what he answered to Rabbi Tarfon was in the matter of the Omer, and since Rabbi Akiva's harsh insistence was about how his student Yehudah ben Nechemiah self-inflated with his answer to Rabbi Tarfon and did not treat him with</p>	<p>נראה טעם הגון ונכון לעצומו של יום לג בעומר דהוא בכלל יום טוב. ובהקדם להבין עוד מה דלכאורה תמוה דלמה לכולהו הני שיטות ליכא התחלה לאבילות כי אם מזמן התחלת ספירת העומר והיינו מיום ב' דפסח דאיזה שייכות יש לאבילות תלמידי ר"ע לזמן התחלת ספירת העומר כיון דיבמות ס"ב ע"ב אמר כולם מתו מפסח ועד עצרת וסתמא תנא מפסח מנ"ל דזהו מיום ב' דפסח ולא מיום א'.</p> <p>נראה ע"פ דאמר במנחות סח ע"ב יתיב ר"ט וקא קשיא ליה מה בין קודם לעומר לקודם שתי הלחם אמר לפניו יהודה בר נחמיה לא אם אמרת קודם לעומר שכן לא הותר מכללו אצל הדיוט כו' שתק ר"ט צהבו פניו של רבי יהודה בר נחמיה אמר לו ר"ע יהודה צהבו פניך שהשבת את זקן תמהני אם תאריך ימים אר"י ב"ר אלעי אותו הפרק פרס הפסח היה כשעליתי לעצרת שאלתי אחריו יהודה בן נחמיה היכן הוא ואמרו לי נפטר והלך לו עכ"ל הגמרא יעו"ש</p> <p>ומזה נראה דהי' קודם פסח ט"ו יום ונשאו ונתנו בענינא דעומר וע"י דצהבו פניו של יהודה בן נחמיה במה דהשיב את ר"ט ועי"ז קפד ר"ע מסברא לומר דבעת שהגיע זמן הקרבת העומר דהוא זמן התחלת ספירת העומר ביום ב' של פסח מצאה הקפידה מקום דתיחול כיון דעיקר דהשיב לר"ט היה בענינא דעומר וכיון דקפידת ר"ע היה על מה דתלמידו יהודה בן נחמיה התכבד בתשובתו לר"ט ולא נהג בו כבוד כראוי ומצאה הקפידה מקום</p>
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<p>appropriate respect, the harsh insistence found a place to rest in the time of the offering of the omer, since this was the reason he answered the elder R Tarfon, Rabbi Akiva's harsh insistence also fittingly extended to all his students who did not treat each other with respect. Therefore their death fittingly began from that time, when the essence of the harshness fell, which is from the second day of Passover, which is the time for offering the Omer. Therefore it is fitting that the mourning for the students of Rabbi Akiva is associated with the beginning of the counting of the omer, as above.</p> <p>And look into this: Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was one of the students of Rabbi Akiva and he was a very harsh insister. Since Rabbi Shimon also passed on the 33d day of the Omer, even though it was already a long time after the students of Rabbi Akiva died since it said in Yevamont... Nevertheless, since the insistence of Rabbi Akiva regarding failure to treat with respect was actualized in the time of the Omer, later the passing of Rabbi Shimon, which was in the time of the Omer...[would have been assumed to be] also from the insistence of Rabbi Akiva his teacher due to his being very harsh and definitely not respectful. Therefore, to negate any such idea, they make a small celebration to show that the passing of Rashbi was not in the category of the harshness of Rabbi Akiva his teacher. For the reason that even though Rashbi was harsh, still there was no self-aggrandizement in the shame of another, God forbid, as this is impossible, since Rashbi was a complete tzadik, and the essence of his harshness was only for the honor of God and zealous for him, and this is the essence of the <i>hilula</i> of Rashbi.</p>	<p>לנוח בזמן הקרבת העומר דזהו היתה סיבה להא דהשיב הזקן ר"ט שפיר התפשטה קפידת ר"ע ג"כ על כל תלמידיו שלא נהגו כבוד זה לזה והלכך שפיר התחילה פטירתן מאותו זמן דעיקר הקפידה חלה והיינו מיום ב' דפסח שהוא זמן הקרבת העומר והלכך שפיר שייכא אבילות דתלמידי ר"ע לזמן התחלת ספירת העומר וכנ"ל</p> <p>ועיין כי רשב"י היה מתלמידי ר"ע והיה קפדן גדול וכדאמר במעילה יז ע"ב... וא"כ הו"א כיון דר"ש ג"ג נפטר ביום ל"ג בעומר נהי דכבר היה זה זמן טובא אחר שמתו תלמידי ר"ע כיון דאמר ביבמות ס"ב והיה... מ"מ כיון דקפידת ר"ע על מניעת נהיגת כבוד חלה בזמן בעומר שוב פטירת ר"ש דהיתה בזמן ימי העומר והיינו ל"ג בעומר ג"כ מקפידת ר"ע רבו על דהיה קפדן ובודאי לא נהג כבוד, והלכך לשלילת מחשבה כזו עושים קצת שמחה להראות דפטירת רשב"י אינו בגדר קפדנותו של ר"ע רבו ומטעמא דנהי דרשב"י היה קפדן מ"מ לא היתה לבד התכבדות בקלונו של חברו ח"ו דז"א דרשב"י הי צדיק גמור ועיקר קפדנותו לא היתה כ"א לכבוד השי"ת וקנאותו וזהו עיקר הלולא דרשב"י (שו"ת מראה כהן, סי' כט אות ג).</p>
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<https://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=1108&st=&pgnum=234>

**7. Menachot 68b**  
*Sefaria/Koren transl (modified)*

<p><b>GEMARA:</b> The mishna teaches that meal offerings brought from the new crop prior to the sacrifice of the <i>omer</i> offering are unfit, whereas those brought after the <i>omer</i> but prior to the two loaves are fit. <b>Rabbi Tarfon sat and posed</b> the following <b>difficulty</b>: <b>What is</b> the difference <b>between</b> meal offerings brought <b>before the omer</b> and those brought <b>before the two loaves</b>?</p>	<p>גמי יתיב רבי טרפון וקא קשיא ליה מה בין קודם לעומר לקודם שתי הלחם</p>
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Rabbi Yehuda bar Neḥemya **said before** Rabbi Tarfon: **No**, one cannot compare the two situations. **If you said** that this is the *halakha* with regard to **before** the *omer* sacrifice, this is because at that stage there are **no** circumstances in which the new crop's **general prohibition was permitted**, even **with regard to an ordinary person**; **shall you also say** that this is the *halakha* with regard to **before** the sacrifice of **the two loaves**, when the new crop's **general prohibition was permitted with regard to an ordinary person**? The new crop ingredient in the meal offering is at least permitted in consumption after the *omer* is brought. Therefore, the meal offerings that were brought after the *omer* but before the two loaves are fit.

**Rabbi Tarfon was silent, and Rabbi Yehuda ben Neḥemya's face brightened. Rabbi Akiva said to him: Yehuda, has your face brightened because you answered the elder? I will be astonished if the days of your life will be lengthy. Rabbi Yehuda, son of Rabbi Ilai, said: That period in which that interaction occurred was half a month before Passover. When I ascended again to the study hall for the festival of Shavuot, I asked about him: Where is Rabbi Yehuda ben Neḥemya? And they said to me: He passed away and left this world.**

אמר לפניו יהודה בר נחמיה לא  
 אם אמרת קודם לעומר שכן לא  
 הותר מכללו אצל הדיוט תאמר  
 קודם לשתי הלחם שהותר  
 מכללו אצל הדיוט  
 שתק רבי טרפון צהבו פניו של  
 רבי יהודה בן נחמיה אמר לו רבי  
 עקיבא יהודה צהבו פניך  
 שהשבת את זקן תמהני אם  
 תאריך ימים אמר רבי יהודה  
 ברבי אלעאי אותו הפרק פרס  
 הפסח היה כשעליתי לעצרת  
 שאלתי אחריו יהודה בן נחמיה  
 היכן הוא ואמרו לי נפטר והלך לו

8. R. Yerachmiel Yisrael Yitzchak of Aleksander (1853–1910) (transl. Ariel Evan Mayse)

<https://jewishreviewofbooks.com/articles/7615/beauty-within-beauty-how-lag-baomer-stopped-a-plague/>

If they study the holy Torah with arrogance and silly vanity, they will damage the font of life—the numerical value of “wisdom” (hokhmah) is [the same as] “the life” (ha-hayim). The source of life was damaged, God forbid, when the disciples of Rabbi Akiva did not treat each other with honor. And when Lag BaOmer, Hod she-beHod, arrived . . . the light of the King of Life shone upon them, and the spirit of repentance was aroused. “And understanding with the heart, return, and be healed” (Isa. 6:10)—they drew healing into the world, and through repentance they became humble before one other. . . .

The Jewish people have a custom to take up bows (keshet) and arrows during these days. The idea is as follows. We know that the farther you draw back the bowstring toward the earth, the farther the arrow will then shoot into the heavens. The same is true of tzaddikim, of righteous individuals. The more humble they become, the more exalted and uplifted are the spiritual unifications (yichudim) they can accomplish, and the higher their prayers will ascend. This is why such actions are referred to as a bow. When he was leaving this world, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai performed a great unification, something that could only have been done in a state of total self-nullification. He was as nothing, like the dust, truly. . . . Therefore, we hold a festival on the anniversary of his death, something not done on the anniversary of the death of any other sage.