

and eat a forbidden food or [perform] a similar [transgression]. When there is no religious persecution, [in instances] where [the sages] have said one should transgress rather than be killed; still, if one transgresses, one deserves the death sentence.¹ This is the opinion of Rambam.

[R. Hanina b. Teradion's] wife was also martyred because she did not object when he was teaching the Name to his disciples in public. His daughter who was the sister of Beruriah, the wife of R. Meir,² was thrown into a brothel but the Blessed Name saved her for the sake of R. Meir. R. Hanina was punished because he was teaching his disciples the Name in public. Rashi comments that he would use the Name of 42 letters. There was a mighty tempest around him³. He was the treasurer for the funds for charity and the monies for Purim were [somehow] mixed with [other] monies for charity. He gave his own money for the sake of Heaven. For this good deed he would merit the life of the World-to-Come, the sage told him, and even more so because he spent all his days engaged in Torah.

It says in the Midrash that when Lupinus the Caesar burned R. Hanina b. Teradion; that Lupinus the Caesar looked like R. Nehunia b. Hakaneh and [the Romans] cut off his head. Afterwards he was revived by the Court of Heaven but in the form of R. Hanina b. Teradion and they burned him just as he had burned R. Hanina b. Teradion. A miracle happened, and R. Nehunia b. Hakaneh looked like Lupinus the Caesar and he reigned over the Roman Empire for six months and killed six thousand hegemons.⁴ On the 21st of Sivan, they burned R. Hanina b. Teradion and after him, they executed R. Jeshebab the Scribe.

Abba Saul was of the house of Marmasha. He was the only one of his generation and was like a disciple-colleague of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai. Abba Saul speaks in his name, but R. Zemach Gaon comments that *in his name* means in his spirit.⁵ *Abba* is a title of respect, such as Rabbi. In *Semachoth*,⁶ he commanded his sons to bury him at his father's feet, that they should bury him and remove the blue fringes⁷ from his *pallium*.⁸ In the Ch. *Hamapeleth*⁹ it says that he was a gravedigger and that he saw [the bones of] Og the King of Bashan and Absalom. It seems that his disciple, R. Tarfon was of a large physique, although this statement seems strange, it certainly has to do with [the fact that] he was also burying the dead, etc. This is what is meant when they said there: Abba Saul is the tallest in his generation and R. Tarfon reaches his shoulders. R. Tarfon is the tallest in his generation and R. Meir reaches his shoulders. R. Meir is the tallest in his generation and R. reaches his shoulders. Rabbi is the tallest in his generation and

¹ Of Heaven, though not by an earthly Court.

² AZ 17b-18b.

³ Ps 50:3

⁴ Prefects, generals or Christian bishops.

⁵ i.e. not quoting directly.

⁶ Ch. 12. Abba Saul held that one does remove them and so commanded his sons.

⁷ Num 15:37.

⁸ a sheet worn as a cloak and used for a bed cover. Soncino. Var. lect. Talith.

⁹ *Nidab* 24b, he ran for a mile inside the bone of Og.

¹ *Nidah* 24b-25a.

² *Sukkah* 28a.

³ 157a.

⁴ *Kethuboth* 87a.

⁵ 34a.

⁶ Of Modein.

⁷ 76a.

⁸ *Shevu'oth* 35b.

⁹ = Bar Kochba. It is an unsolved argument, which one was his real name. Perhaps he was from a village Kosiba, and Kochav (= star) is his Messianic title. Perhaps he was from village Kochava, and Koziba (= lie, false) is an offensive name for the false Messiah.

¹⁰ Pejorative for 'Samaritan'.

¹¹ Zechariah 11:17 'and your arm will wither and eye dim'. *PT Ta'anith* 4:5, *Lamentations Rabab* 2:2.

¹² 122 AD, if one accepts the usual date of Destruction; but these dates do not fit very well.

R. Hiyya reaches his shoulders. R. Hiyya is the tallest in his generation and Rab reaches his shoulders. Rab is tallest in his generation and R. Judah reaches his shoulders. R. Judah is tallest in his generation and Ada Dayala reaches his shoulders. (Dayala means an attendant of sages and Ada was his name.) Parshathbina of Pumbeditha reaches Dayala's shoulders and the entire world reaches Parshathbina's waist.¹ R. Zemach comments that [Parshathbina] was a man of valour and the tallest of all the people. The Tosafoth [there] remarks: Rashi comments that it is a man's name and the same [is written] in the *Aruch* and it is not so. If this were the case, he should have said *from* Pumbeditha. The Rashbam comments that it is a figure of speech referring to leadership and hegemony.

This passage calls for interpretation, though its plain reading — that they were men of stature, is also true, as Rashi and the *Aruch* expound. There is a proof, the reference to Rab who was called Abba Arika [the Tall one]. The real meaning is that wisdom had decreased from one generation to the next generation for it all comes from a master to his disciple. To enhance wisdom, Abba Saul would bury the erroneous explanations, which are dead, just as certainly as they said of Jonathan b. Uzziel who had such vision that any bird flying above him would immediately be burnt [to cinders] for he was entirely true.² But Abba Saul b. Botnith was before Abba Saul's time. At the end of *Shabbath*,³ it is explained that Abba Saul was at the time of R. Zadok's father, etc. In Ch. *Hakotev*,⁴ it says in the Baraita, that Abba Saul was the son of Imma Miriam and the halacha is according to him. [But] this is not Abba Saul but Abba Gebal of the School of Rabbi [quoted] in the Ch. Two, *Pesachim*.⁵

R. Eleazar ha-Modai⁶ was a disciple of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai, the colleague of R. Tarfon, although he calls R. Tarfon *Rabbi* and R. Tarfon calls him 'ha-Modai' in the last Ch. of *Yoma*.⁷ R. Eleazar b. Parta quotes him, as does R. Eleazar b. Azariah in Ch. *Shevuath Haeduth*.⁸ R. Hananiah the nephew of R. Joshua quotes R. Eleazar ha-Modai. King Ben Koziba⁹ killed him in Bethar. He was praying that Hadrian would not conquer it and he could not conquer it. Then a Cuthean¹⁰ came and told Ben Koziba a [false] rumour about R. Eleazar ha-Modai that he wanted to make peace with Hadrian the Caesar. When [Ben Koziba] killed him, a Divine Voice said, Woe to the worthless shepherd who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye!¹¹ He was the strong arm of Israel and its right eye. On that day, Bethar was captured. This was 52 years after the Destruction of the Second Temple¹². In the