

בְּנֵי בָנִים הָרִי הֵן כְּבָנִים! כִּי תִנָּא הָהִיא, לְהַשְׁלִים. מִיתִיבִי: בְּנֵי בָנִים הָרִי הֵם כְּבָנִים, מִתְּאַחַד מֵהֶם אִו שְׁנַמְצָא סָרִיס — לֹא קָנִים פְּרִיָּה וּרְבִיָּה. תִּיּוֹבְתָא דְּרַב הוֹנָא תִּיּוֹבְתָא. בְּנֵי בָנִים הָרִי הֵם כְּבָנִים. סָבַר אַבְי לְמִימַר, בְּרָא לְבָרָא וּבְרָתָא לְבָרָתָא, וְכָל שְׁכֹן בְּרָא לְבָרָתָא. אֲבָל בְּרָתָא לְבָרָא — לֹא. אָמַר לִיה רַבָּא: "לְשִׁכֶּת יִצְרָה" בְּעֵינָא, וְהָא אִיכָא. דְּכוּלִּי עֲלָמָא מִיהַת תְּרִי מַסַּד לֹא. וְלֹא? וְהָא אָמְרִי לִיה רַבִּנּוֹן לְרַב שְׁשֶׁת: נָסִיב אִיתְתָּא וְאוֹלִיד בְּנִי, וְאָמַר לֵהּ: בְּנִי בְרָתִי — בְּנִי נִינְהוּ! הֵתֵם דְּחוּיִי קְמַדְחִי לֵהּ, דְּרַב שְׁשֶׁת אֵיעָקַר מִפִּירְקֵיהּ דְּרַב הוֹנָא. אָמַר לִיה רַבָּא לְרַבָּא בַר מֵאֲרִי: מָנָא הָא מִילְתָּא דְּאָמַר רַבִּנּוֹן בְּנֵי בָנִים הָרִי הֵם כְּבָנִים? אֵילִמָּא מִדְּכֶתִיב "הַבָּנוֹת בְּנוֹתֵי וְהַבָּנִים בְּנֵי", אֲלֵא מַעֲתָה: "וְהַצֵּאן צֶאֱנִי" הֲכִי נִמְי? אֲלֵא דְקָנִית מִינָא, הֲכָא נָמִי — דְקָנִית מִינָא. אֲלֵא מִהֲכָא: "וְאִחֶר בָּא חֲצֵרוֹן אֶל בֵּית מְכִיר אָבִי גִלְעָד וַתֵּלֶד לוֹ אֶת שְׁגוֹב", וְכֶתִיב: "מִנִּי מְכִיר יָרְדּוּ מְחוּקְקִים", וְכֶתִיב "וְהַיּוֹדָה מְחוּקְקִי". מִתְּנִיתִין דְּלֹא כְּרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, דְּתַנָּא, רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אָמַר: נָשָׂא אָדָם אִשָּׁה בְּיָלְדוּתוֹ — יִשָּׂא אִשָּׁה בְּזִקְנוּתוֹ. הָיוּ לוֹ בָּנִים בְּיָלְדוּתוֹ — יִהְיוּ לוֹ בָּנִים בְּזִקְנוּתוֹ, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "בְּבִקְרָא זָרַע אֶת זֶרְעוֹ וְלַעֲרֹב אֶל תִּנַּח יָדָךְ כִּי אֵינְךָ יוֹדַע אִי זֶה יִכְשֹׁר הֵזֶה אוֹ זֶה וְאֵם שְׁנֵיהֶם כְּאַחַד טוֹבִים". רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אָמַר: לָמַד תּוֹרָה בְּיָלְדוּתוֹ — לָמַד תּוֹרָה בְּזִקְנוּתוֹ. הָיוּ לוֹ תַלְמִידִים בְּיָלְדוּתוֹ — יִהְיוּ לוֹ תַלְמִידִים בְּזִקְנוּתוֹ, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "בְּבִקְרָא זָרַע אֶת זֶרְעוֹ וְגו'". אָמְרוּ: שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר אֲלֹף זִגְגִים תַלְמִידִים הָיוּ לוֹ לְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא מִגְּבַת עַד אֲנִטִּיפְרֶס, וְכוּלָן מֵתוּ בְּפֶרֶק אֶחָד, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁלֹּא נִהְגּוּ כְּבוֹד זֶה לָזֶה. וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם שְׁמֵם, עַד שֶׁבָּא רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אֲצֵל רַבּוּתֵינוּ שֶׁבְּדָרוֹם וּשְׁנֵאָה לָהֶם: רַבִּי מֵאִיר, וְרַבִּי יְהוֹדָה, וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי, וְרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן שְׁמוּעַ, וְהֵם הֵם הַעֲמִידוּ תּוֹרָה אוֹתָהּ שְׁעָה. תָּנָא, כּוֹלֵם מֵתוּ מִפְּסָח וְעַד עֲצָרַת. אָמַר רַב חֲמָא בַר אֲבָא וְאִיתִמָּא רַבִּי חֲזִיָּא בַר אֲבִין: כּוֹלֵם מֵתוּ מִיתָה רַעָה. מֵאִי הִיא? אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן: אֶסְכְּרָה. אָמַר רַב מִתְנָא: הִלְכָה כְּרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחִינִי: כָּל אָדָם שָׂאִין לוֹ אִשָּׁה — יִשְׂרֹי בְּלֹא שְׁמִחָה, בְּלֹא בְּרָכָה, בְּלֹא טוֹבָה. בְּלֹא שְׁמִחָה, דְּכֶתִיב: "וְשִׂמְחַת אִתָּה וּבֵיתְךָ". בְּלֹא בְּרָכָה, דְּכֶתִיב: "לְהַגִּיט בְּרָכָה אֶל בֵּיתְךָ". בְּלֹא טוֹבָה, דְּכֶתִיב: "לֹא טוֹב הָיִית הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ". בְּמַעֲרָבָא אָמְרִי: בְּלֹא תּוֹרָה, בְּלֹא חוּמָה. בְּלֹא תּוֹרָה, דְּכֶתִיב: "הֵאֵם אֵין עֲזָרְתִּי בִי וְתוֹשִׁיעָה נְדָחָה מִמֶּנִּי". בְּלֹא חוּמָה, דְּכֶתִיב: "נִקְבָּה תְּסוּבָב גִּבּוֹר". רַבָּא בַר עוֹלָא אָמַר: בְּלֹא שְׁלוֹם, דְּכֶתִיב: "וַיִּדְעַתְּ כִּי שְׁלוֹם אֶהְיֶה וּפְקַדְתָּ נֹדָה וְלֹא תִחָטָא". אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֹוִי: כָּל הַיּוֹדֵעַ בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ שֶׁהִיא יִרְאֵת שְׁמִים וְאֵינוֹ פּוֹקְדָה — נִקְרָא חוּטָא, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "וַיִּדְעַתְּ כִּי שְׁלוֹם אֶהְיֶה וְגו'". וְאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֹוִי: חֲזִיב אָדָם לִפְקוֹד אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ בְּשַׁעָה שֶׁהוּא יוֹצֵא לְדָרָה, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "וַיִּדְעַתְּ כִּי שְׁלוֹם אֶהְיֶה וְגו'". הָא מִהֲכָא נִפְקָא? מִהֲתֵם נִפְקָא: "וְאֵל אִישׁוֹ תְּשׁוּקַתְךָ", מִלְּמַד שֶׁהָאִשָּׁה מְשִׁתּוֹקֶקֶת עַל בַּעֲלָהּ בְּשַׁעָה שֶׁהוּא יוֹצֵא לְדָרָה! אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: לֹא נִצְרָכָה אֲלֵא סְמוּךְ לוֹוִסְתָּהּ. וְכִמְהָ? אָמַר רַבָּא: עוֹנָה. וְהִנֵּי מִיָּלִי לְדָבָר הָרְשׁוּת, אֲבָל לְדָבָר מִצְוָה — מִיִּטְרִידִי. תְּנִי רַבִּנּוֹן: הָאוֹהֵב אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ כְּגוֹפּוֹ, וְהַמְּכַבֶּדָה יוֹתֵר מִגּוֹפּוֹ, וְהַמְּדַרִּיךְ בְּנִי וּבְנוֹתָיו בְּדָרָה יִשְׂרָה, וְהַמְּשִׁיֵּאן סְמוּךְ לִפְרִיקָן — עָלִיו הַפְּתוּב אָמַר: "וַיִּדְעַתְּ כִּי שְׁלוֹם אֶהְיֶה". הָאוֹהֵב אֶת שְׁכִינָיו, וְהַמְּקַרֵּב אֶת קְרוֹבָיו, וְהַנּוֹשֵׂא אֶת בֵּית אָחוּתוֹ,

Grandchildren are considered like children. This indicates that if one's children have passed away, he has fulfilled the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply only if they had children of their own, as they are considered like his own children. The Gemara responds: **When that baraita is taught** it is with regard **to completing** the required number of children, e.g., if he had only a son, but his son had a daughter, he has fulfilled the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply. The Gemara **raises an objection** to the opinion of Rav Huna from another *baraita*:

Grandchildren are considered like children. If **one of** a man's children **died or was discovered** to be a **eunuch**, the father has **not fulfilled** the mitzva to be **fruitful and multiply**. This directly contradicts Rav Huna's statement that one fulfills the mitzva even if his children die. The Gemara concludes: **The refutation of the opinion of Rav Huna is indeed a conclusive refutation.** § It was taught in the *baraita* that **grandchildren are considered like children.** **Abaye thought to say** that if one's children die, he fulfills the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply through grandchildren, provided **a son** was born **to his son and a daughter to his daughter, and all the more so** if **a son** was born **to his daughter**, as his grandchildren take the place of his children in these cases. **However**, if **a daughter** was born **to his son, no**, she cannot take the place of her father. **Rava said to him:** We **require** merely fulfillment of the verse: **"He formed it to be inhabited,"** and **there is** fulfillment in this case, as the earth is inhabited by his descendants. The Gemara comments: **In any event, everyone** agrees that if one has **two** grandchildren **from one** child, **no**, he has not fulfilled the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply, even if he has both a grandson and a granddaughter. The Gemara asks: **And has he not? Didn't the Rabbis say to Rav Sheshet: Marry a woman and have sons**, as you have not yet fathered any sons, **and Rav Sheshet said to them: The sons of my daughter are my sons?** This indicates that one can fulfill the mitzva through grandchildren even if he did not have a son and daughter of his own. The Gemara answers: **There**, Rav Sheshet **was** merely **putting them off.** The real reason he did not want to get remarried was **because Rav Sheshet became impotent from Rav Huna's discourse.** Rav Huna's discourses were so lengthy that Rav Sheshet became impotent after waiting for so long without relieving himself. **Rabba said to Rava bar Mari: From where is this matter that the Sages stated** derived, that **grandchildren are considered like children? If we say** it is derived **from** the fact **that it is written** in Laban's speech to Jacob: **"The daughters are my daughters and the children are my children"** (Genesis 31:43), which indicates that Jacob's children were also considered to be the children of their grandfather Laban, **if** that is **so**, does the continuation of Laban's statement: **"And the flocks are my flocks"** (Genesis 31:43), indicate that **so too**, Jacob's flocks were considered as belonging to Laban? **Rather**, Laban was saying **that you, Jacob, acquired** them **from me. Here too**, with regard to the children, Laban was saying: **You acquired** them **from me**, i.e., it is only due to me that you have children. **Rather**, the proof is **from here:** **"And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir, the father of Gilead...and she bore him Segub"** (I Chronicles 2:21), **and it is written:** **"Out of Machir came down governors"** (Judges 5:14), **and it is written:** **"Judah is my governor"** (Psalms 60:9). Consequently, the governors, who were from the tribe of Judah, were also called the sons of Machir, who was from the tribe of Manasseh. This must be because they were the children of Machir's daughter and Hezron, indicating that grandchildren are considered like children. § The Gemara comments: **The mishna is not in accordance with** the opinion of **Rabbi Yehoshua. As it is taught in a baraita** 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” (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. **Rabbi Akiva says** that the verse should be understood as follows: If one **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.” They said by way of example that **Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of students** in an area of land that stretched **from Gevat to Antipatris** in Judea, and they all died in one period of time, **because they did not treat each other with respect. And the world was desolate of Torah until Rabbi Akiva came to our Rabbis in the South and taught his Torah to them.** This second group of disciples consisted of **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.** Although Rabbi Akiva’s earlier students did not survive, his later disciples were able to transmit the Torah to future generations. With regard to the twelve thousand pairs of Rabbi Akiva’s students, the Gemara adds: It is **taught** that **all of them died** in the period **from Passover until Shavuot. Rav Hama bar Abba said, and some say it was Rabbi Hiyya bar Avin: They all died a bad death.** The Gemara inquires: **What is it** that is called a bad death? **Rav Nahman said: Diphtheria. Rav Mattana said: The halakha is in accordance with** the opinion of **Rabbi Yehoshua**, who said that one must attempt to have more children even if he has already fulfilled the mitzva to be fruitful and multiply. § Apropos the discussion with regard to the mitzva to have children, the Gemara cites statements about marriage in general. **Rabbi Tanhum said that Rabbi Hanilai said: Any man who does not have a wife is left without joy, without blessing, without goodness.** He proceeds to quote verses to support each part of his statement. He is **without joy, as it is written: “And you shall rejoice, you and your household”** (Deuteronomy 14:26), which indicates that a man is in a joyful state only when he is with his household, i.e., his wife. He is **without blessing, as it is written: “To cause a blessing to rest in your house”** (Ezekiel 44:30), which indicates that blessing comes through one’s house, i.e., one’s wife. He is **without goodness, as it is written: “It is not good that man should be alone”** (Genesis 2:18), i.e., without a wife. **In the West, Eretz Yisrael, they say:** One who lives without a wife is left **without Torah, and without a wall** of protection. He is **without Torah, as it is written: “Is it that I have no help in me, and that sound wisdom is driven from me?”** (Job 6:13), indicating that one who does not have a wife lacks sound wisdom, i.e., Torah. He is **without a wall, as it is written: “A woman shall go round a man”** (Jeremiah 31:22), similar to a protective wall. **Rava bar Ulla said:** One who does not have a wife is left **without peace, as it is written: “And you shall know that your tent is in peace; and you shall visit your habitation and shall miss nothing”** (Job 5:24). This indicates that a man has peace only when he has a tent, i.e., a wife. On the same verse, **Rabbi**

Yehoshua ben Levi said: Whoever knows that his wife fears Heaven and she desires him, **and he does not visit her**, i.e., have intercourse with her, is **called a sinner, as it is stated: And you shall know that your tent is in peace**; and you shall visit your habitation. **And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: A man is obligated to visit his wife** for the purpose of having intercourse **when he is about to depart on a journey, as it is stated: "And you shall know that your tent is in peace, etc."** The Gemara asks: Is **this** last statement **derived from here?** It is **derived from there: "And your desire shall be to your husband"** (Genesis 3:16), which **teaches that a wife desires her husband when he is about to depart on a journey. Rav Yosef said:** The additional derivation cited by Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi **is necessary only near** the time of **her set pattern**, i.e., when she expects to begin experiencing menstrual bleeding. Although the Sages generally prohibited intercourse at this time due to a concern that the couple might have intercourse after she begins bleeding, if he is about to depart on a journey he must have intercourse with her. The Gemara asks: **And how much** before the expected onset of menstrual bleeding is considered near the time of her set pattern? **Rava said: An interval** of time, i.e., half a daily cycle, either a day or a night. The Gemara comments: **And this** statement that a man must have intercourse with his wife before he departs on a journey **applies** only if he is traveling **for an optional matter**, **but** if he is traveling in order to attend **to a matter** pertaining to a **mitzva**, he is not required to have intercourse with his wife so that he not become **preoccupied** and neglect the mitzva. § **The Sages taught: One who loves his wife as he loves himself, and who honors her more than himself, and who instructs his sons and daughters in an upright path, and who marries them off near the time** when they reach maturity, **about him the verse states: And you shall know that your tent is in peace.** As a result of his actions, there will be peace in his home, as it will be devoid of quarrel and sin. **One who loves his neighbors, and who draws his relatives close, and who marries the daughter of his sister**, a woman he knows and is fond of as a family relative and not only as a wife,

והמלה סלע לעני בשעת דחקו — עליו הפתוב אומר: "אז תקרא ויהי יענה תשוע ויאמר הנני". סימן: אשה. וקרקע. עור. זאת. שתי. הברכות. תגרי. פחתי. אומר רבי אלעזר: כל אדם שאין לו אשה — אינו אדם, שנאמר: "זכר ונקבה בראם ויקרא את שמם אדם". ואמר רבי אלעזר: כל אדם שאין לו קרקע — אינו אדם, שנאמר: "השמים שמים לה' והארץ נתן לבני אדם". ואמר רבי אלעזר, מאי דכתיב "אעשה לו עזר כנגדו": זכה — עזרתו, לא זכה — כנגדו. ואיכא דאמרי: רבי אלעזר רמי, כתיב "כנגדו", וקרינו "כנגדו". זכה — כנגדו, לא זכה — מנגדתו. אשפחיה רבי יוסי לאלהיו, אומר ליה, כתיב: "אעשה לו עזר", במה אשה עזרתו לאדם? אומר ליה: אדם מביא חישין — חישין כוסס? פשתן — פשתן לובש? לא נמצאת מאירה עיניו ומעמידתו על רגליו?! ואמר רבי אלעזר, מאי דכתיב: "זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי וכשר מבשרי" — מלמד שפא אדם על כל בהמה וסיה, ולא נתקרה דעתו עד שפא על חיה. ואמר רבי אלעזר, מאי דכתיב: "ונברכו בך כל משפחת האדמה", אומר ליה הקדוש ברוך הוא לאברהם: שתי הברכות טובות יש לי להכריך בך: רות המואביה, ונעמה העמונית. "כל משפחת האדמה" — אפילו משפחות הדרות באדמה אין מתברכות אלא בשביל ישראל. "כל גויי הארץ" — אפילו ספינות הבאות מגליא לאספמיא אינן מתברכות אלא

בשביל ישראל. ואמר רבי אלעזר: עתידים כל בעלי אומניות שיעמדו על הקרקע, שנאמר: "וירדו מאניותיהם כל תפשי משוט מלחים כל חבלי הים על הארץ ועמדו". ואמר רבי אלעזר: אין לך אומנות פחותה מן הקרקע, שנאמר: "וירדו". רבי אלעזר חזיה לשהיא ארעא דשדי ביה כרבא לפותיא, אמר ליה: אי תשדייה לאורכיה — הפוכי בעיסקא טב מינה. רב על לביני שיכלי, חזניהו דקא נייפון, אמר להו: אי נייפת — איתנופי. הפוכי בעיסקא טב מינה. אמר רבא: מאה זוזי בעיסקא — כל יומא בשרא וסמרא, מאה זוזי בארעא — מילחא וספורא. ולא עוד אלא מגניא ליה אארעא, ומרמיא ליה תיגרי. אמר רב פפא: זרע ולא תזבין. אף על גב דכי הדדי נינהו, הני מברכין. זבין ולא תיזול. הני מילי ביסתרמי, אבל גלימא — לא מיתרמיא ליה. טום ולא תשפיץ. שפיץ ולא תיבגי. שפל העוסק בבבנין — מתמסקן. קפוז זבין ארעא, מתון נסיב איתתא. נחית דרגא נסיב איתתא. סק דרגא בחר שושבינא. אמר רבי אלעזר בר אביןא: אין פורענות באה לעולם אלא בשביל ישראל, שנאמר: "הכרתי גוים נשמו פנותם החרבתי חוצותם", וכתוב: "אמרתי אף תיראי אותי תקחי מוסר". רב הנה מיפטר מרבי חייא, אמר ליה: רחמנא ליצילך ממידי דקשה ממותא. ומי איכא מידי דקשה ממותא? נפק, דק ואשפח: "וימוצא אני מר ממנות את האשה וגו'". רב הנה קא מצערא ליה דביתהו, כי אמר לה "עבידי לי טלופחי", עבדא ליה חימצי. "חימצי", עבדא ליה טלופחי. כי גדל חייא בריה, אפיך לה. אמר ליה: איעליא לך אמד! אמר ליה: אנא הוא דקא אפיכנא לה. אמר ליה, היינו דקא אמרי אינשי: דנפיק מינה, טעמא מלפך. את לא תעביד הכי, שנאמר: "למדו לשונם דבר שקר הענה וגו'". רבי חייא הנה קא מצערא ליה דביתהו. כי הנה משפח מידי, צייר ליה בסודריה ומייתי ניהלה. אמר ליה רב: והא קא מצערא ליה לך? אמר ליה: דיינו שמגדלות בבנינו, ומצילות אותנו

and who lends a *sela* to a pauper at his time of need, about him the verse states: "Then shall you call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say: Here I am" (Isaiah 58:9). § The Gemara provides a mnemonic device for a series of statements cited in the name of Rabbi Elazar: **Woman; and land; helper; this; two; the blessings; merchants; lowly**. The Gemara presents these statements: **Rabbi Elazar said: Any man who does not have a wife is not a man, as it is stated: "Male and female He created them...and called their name Adam"** (Genesis 5:2). **And Rabbi Elazar said: Any man who does not have his own land is not a man, as it is stated: "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; but the earth He has given to the children of men"** (Psalms 115:16). **And Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "I will make him a helpmate for him [kenegdo]"** (Genesis 2:18)? If one is **worthy** his wife **helps** him; if he is **not worthy** she is **against** him. **And some say** a slightly different version: **Rabbi Elazar raised a contradiction: It is written** in the Torah with a spelling that allows it to be read: **Striking him [kenagdo], and we read** it as though it said: **For him [kenegdo]**. If he is **worthy** she is **for him** as his helpmate; if he is **not worthy** she **strikes** him. The Gemara relates that **Rabbi Yosei encountered Elijah** the prophet and **said to him: It is written: I will make him a helpmate. In what manner does a woman help a man?** **Elijah said to him:** When a man brings wheat from the field, does he **chew** raw wheat? When he brings home **flax**, does he **wear** unprocessed **flax**? His wife turns the raw products into bread and clothing. Is his wife **not found** to be the one who **lights up his eyes** and **stands him on his feet**? **And Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which**

is written: **“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”** (Genesis 2:23)? This teaches that Adam had intercourse with each animal and beast in his search for his mate, and his mind was not at ease, in accordance with the verse: **“And for Adam, there was not found a helpmate for him”** (Genesis 2:20), **until he had intercourse with Eve. And Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “And in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed [nivrekhu]”** (Genesis 12:3)? **The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Abraham: I have two good shoots to graft [lehavrikh] onto you: Ruth the Moabite, the ancestress of the house of David, and Naamah the Ammonite, whose marriage with Solomon led to the ensuing dynasty of the kings of Judea. “All the families of the earth” means: Even families that live in the earth, i.e., who have land of their own, are blessed only due to the Jewish people.** Similarly, when the verse states: **“All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him”** (Genesis 18:18), it indicates that **even ships that come from Galia to Hispania are blessed only due to the Jewish people. And Rabbi Elazar said: All craftsmen are destined to stand upon and work the land, as it is stated: “And all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land”** (Ezekiel 27:29). **And Rabbi Elazar said: There is no occupation lowlier than working the land, as it is stated: “And they shall come down,”** implying that one who works the land is of lower stature than even a sailor. The Gemara similarly relates: **Rabbi Elazar saw land that was plowed across its width. He said to it: Even if they plow you once more lengthwise, for further improvement, conducting business is better than farming with you, as the potential profits gained by selling merchandise are far greater than those from working the land. The Gemara relates a similar incident: Rav entered between the sheaves in a field and saw them waving in the wind. He said to them: If you want to wave go ahead and wave, but conducting business is better than farming with you. Rava similarly said: One who has a hundred dinars that are invested in a business is able to eat meat and wine every day, whereas he who has a hundred dinars worth of land eats only salt and vegetables. And what is more, working the land causes him to lie on the ground at night in order to guard it, and it draws quarrels upon him with other people. Rav Pappa said: Sow your own produce and do not buy it. Even though they are equal to each other in value, these that you sow will be blessed. Conversely, buy your clothes rather than weave [teizul] them yourself. The Gemara comments: This applies only to mats [bistarkei], but with regard to the cloak one wears, perhaps he will not find it precisely to his liking, and therefore he should make his own cloak, which fits his measurements. Rav Pappa further advised: If there is a hole in your house, close it up and do not enlarge it and then plaster it, or at least plaster it and do not knock it down and build it again. As, whoever engages in construction becomes poor. Hurry to buy land so that you do not lose the opportunity. Be patient and marry a woman who is suitable for you. Descend a level to marry a woman of lower social status, and ascend a level to choose a friend [shushevina]. Rabbi Elazar bar Avina said: Calamity befalls the world only due to**

the sins of **the Jewish people**, as it is stated: **“I have cut off nations, their corners are desolate; I have made their streets waste”** (Zephaniah 3:6), and it is written: **“I said: Surely you will fear Me, you will receive correction”** (Zephaniah 3:7). This indicates that other nations were punished so that the Jewish people would mend their ways. The Gemara cites more statements with regard to wives. When **Rav was taking leave of** his uncle and teacher, **Rabbi Ḥiyya**, upon his return from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, **Rabbi Ḥiyya said to him: May the Merciful One save you from something that is worse than death.** Rav was perplexed: **Is there anything that is worse than death? He went, examined** the sources, **and found** the following verse: **“And I find more bitter than death the woman, etc.”** (Ecclesiastes 7:26). Rabbi Ḥiyya was hinting at this verse, and indeed, **Rav’s wife would constantly aggravate him. When he would say to her: Prepare me lentils, she would prepare him peas; if he asked her for peas, she would prepare him lentils. When Ḥiyya, his son, grew up, he would reverse** the requests Rav asked him to convey to her, so that Rav would get what he wanted. Rav **said to his son Ḥiyya: Your mother has improved** now that **you** convey my requests. **He said to Rav: It is I who reverse** your request to her. Rav **said to him: This is** an example of the well-known adage **that people say: He who comes from you shall teach you wisdom;** I should have thought of that idea myself. **You, however, should not do so, i.e., reverse my request, as it is stated: “They have taught their tongue to speak lies, they weary themselves to commit iniquity, etc.”** (Jeremiah 9:4). If you attribute such a request to me, you will have uttered a falsehood. The Gemara relates a similar story. **Rabbi Ḥiyya’s wife would constantly aggravate him.** Nevertheless, **when he would find something** she would appreciate, **he would wrap it in his shawl and bring it to her. Rav said to him: Doesn’t she constantly aggravate you? Why do you bring her things? Rabbi Ḥiyya said to him: It is enough for us** that our wives **raise our children and save us**
