

Pitchers¹ that are סריקי

בוקי סריקי –

OVERVIEW

רבה heard a statement in the name of רב נחמן, which he felt was absurd. He admonished the students, saying; ‘haven’t I told you that you should not hang סריקי on נחמן בוקי סריקי.’² תוספות wants to clarify the meaning of סריקי.

אנשים רקים מתרגמינן גוברין סריקין (שופטים יא^ב):

The תרגום translates the words אנשים ריקים – ‘empty headed people, as people who are סריקין (empty [coarse]). We see that the root of the word סריקי in Aramaic is ריק or empty in Hebrew; in the sense that it is lacking any (serious) content (and perhaps worse).

SUMMARY

The translation of בוקי סריקי is ‘empty pitchers’.⁴

THINKING IT OVER

Was רבה merely ridiculing the ideas purported to be said in the name of רב נחמן, or was he also gently chastising those who attributed this statement to רב נחמן (according to תוספות)?

¹ The word בוקי is the plural of בוקא which means a pitcher, as in the word בקבוק.

² It may be that סריקי usually refers to combing (of flax); as in מסרק. Our תוספות negates this translation as it is inappropriate to this discussion.

³ שופטים ט, ד. The same words and same תרגום is found previously in פסוק ג^א.

⁴ See רש"י ע"ז לז,ב ד"ה בוקי, where he translates it to mean כדים ריקים; in the sense that it is lacking meaning.