



1. Pesach Haggadah, Maggid (Chabad tr.)

מעשה ברבי אליעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי עקיבא ורבי טרפון שהיו מסבין בבגני ברק והיו מספרים ביציאת מצרים קל-
אותו הלילה, עד שבאו תלמידיהם ואמרו להם רבותינו הגיע זמן קריאת שמע של שחרית.

It happened that Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarphon were reclining [at a seder] in Bnei Berak. They were discussing the exodus from Egypt all that night, until their students came and told them: "Our Masters! The time has come for reciting the morning Shema!"

2. Masechet Makkot 24a-b (edited from William Davidson tr.)

זכר היה ר"ג ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי יהושע ורבי עקיבא מהלכין בדרך...

And it once was that Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Akiva were walking along the road...

... שהגיעו להר הבית ראו שועל שיצא מבית קדשי הקדשים התחילו הן בוכין ור"ע מצחק אמרו לו מפני מה אתה מצחק אמר להם מפני
מה אתם בוכים אמרו לו מקום שכתוב בו (במדבר א, נא) והזר הקרב יומת ועכשיו שועלים הלכו בו ולא נבכה

... When they arrived at the Temple Mount, they saw a fox that emerged from the site of the Holy of Holies. They began weeping, and Rabbi Akiva was laughing. They said to him: For what reason are you laughing? Rabbi Akiva said to them: For what reason are you weeping? They said to him: This is the place concerning which it is written: "And the non-priest who approaches shall die" (Numbers 1:51), and now foxes walk in it; and shall we not weep?

אמר להן לכך אני מצחק...

Rabbi Akiva **said to them: That is why I am laughing...**

באוריה כתיב (מיכה ג, יב) לכן בגללכם ציון שדה תחרש [וגו'] בזכריה כתיב (זכריה ח, ד) עוד ישבו זקנים וזקנות ברחובות ירושלים עד
שלא נתקיימה נבואתו של אוריה הייתי מתיירא שלא תתקיים נבואתו של זכריה עכשיו שנתקיימה נבואתו של אוריה בידוע שנבואתו של
זכריה מתקיימת בלשון הזה אמרו לו עקיבא ניחמתנו עקיבא ניחמתנו :

In the prophecy of Uriah, it is written: "Therefore, for your sake Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become rubble, and the Temple Mount as the high places of a forest" (Micah 3:12), where foxes are found. In the prophecy of Zechariah, it is written: "There shall yet be elderly men and elderly women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem" (Zechariah 8:4). Until the prophecy of Uriah with regard to the destruction of the city was fulfilled, I was afraid that the prophecy of Zechariah would not be fulfilled, as the two prophecies are linked. Now that the prophecy of Uriah was fulfilled, it is evident that the prophecy of Zechariah remains valid. The Gemara adds: The Sages said to him, employing this formulation: Akiva, you have comforted us; Akiva, you have comforted us.

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- Rabbi Akiva resided in Bnei Brak and was the student of some of the other Rabbis.
- Why convene at the house of Rabbi Akiva, who wasn't the greatest amongst them?
- The story with the fox on the Temple Mount. The Rabbis cried and Rabbi Akiva laughed. He explained two prophecies, the first of the destruction of Jerusalem and the second of its rebuilding, which he knew now will come true.
- Rabbi Akiva was the optimist who uplifted those around him.
- Answer to the first question- during the time of Roman persecution, his was the home others wanted to gather at, to lean on him for inspiration.
- A message for this year, as you see fit.