

though he had destroyed a whole world, and whosoever rescues a single soul from the children of man, Scripture credits him as though he had saved a whole world. (And [a single man only was first created] for the sake of peace in the human race,<sup>10</sup> that no man might say to his fellow, 'My ancestor was greater than thy ancestor', and that the heretics should not say, 'There are many powers<sup>11</sup> in heaven', and [only one human being was first created] to proclaim the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, for man stamps many coins with one die and they are all alike one with the other, but the King of the kings of kings the Holy One, blessed be He, has stamped all mankind with the die of the first man and yet not one of them is like to his fellow. Therefore every one is in duty bound to say, 'For my sake was the universe created'<sup>12</sup>). And if perchance you would say, 'Why should we have to bear all this annoyance?'<sup>13</sup> and was it not already said,<sup>14</sup> (and) *he being a witness, whether he hath seen or known, if he do not<sup>15</sup> utter it, etc.*<sup>16\*</sup> And perhaps you might say, 'Why should we be guilty of this man's blood?'—and was it not already said,<sup>17</sup> *when the wicked perish<sup>18</sup> there is joy.*<sup>19</sup>

1 Literally *do they exhort*; i.e., admonish and warn to give truthful evidence. 2 i.e., repetition of witnesses' evidence before another court. 3 i.e., otherwise they would not have come with unreliable evidence. 4 Literally *are hanging on to him*. 5 i.e., if through wrong evidence a human being was executed the one who gave that evidence was likened to one who had committed a murder, and through that act had prevented the birth of countless generations. 6 *Genesis 4, 10.* צעקים is the Scripture orthography. 7 Literally *thy brother's bloods cry*, the Hebrew terms for *blood* and *crieth*

vacancy occurred. 4 The remaining judges moved up to the head, and the newcomer took the last seat. 5 Those in the second row moved up to the head, and the newly appointed one took the last seat. 6 He took the last place in the second row, the others moving up to the head. 7 To fill up the vacancy. 8 i.e., as in the former cases, they moved up to the head of the row leaving the last seat to the man newly chosen.

Mishnah 5

How did they exhort<sup>1</sup> the witnesses in capital cases? They brought them in and admonished them, 'Perhaps you will state what is supposition, or rumour, [or] evidence from other witnesses,<sup>2</sup> or [you will say] "We heard it from (the mouth of) a trustworthy person", or perchance you were not aware that we would test you by enquiry and examination,<sup>3</sup> you must know that capital cases are not as cases concerning property—in cases concerning property a man may pay money and make atonement, but in capital cases his [that is, the executed person's] blood and the blood of his [eventual] posterity lie at his door<sup>4</sup> to the end of the world,<sup>5</sup> for thus have we found in the case of Cain who slew his brother, as it is said,<sup>6</sup> *thy brother's blood crieth<sup>7</sup>*—it does not say *thy brother's blood* but *thy brother's bloods*, [thus indicating both] his blood and the blood of his succeeding generations'. (Another<sup>8</sup> rendering is, *thy brother's blood*—because his blood was spattered over the trees and over the stones.) Therefore was a single man only<sup>9</sup> [first] created to teach thee that if anyone destroy a single soul from the children of man, Scripture charges him as

משנה ה

כיצד ימאיימין את-העדים על עדי נפשות? היו מכניסין אותן ומאיימין עליהם, שמא תאמרו מאומד, ומשמועה, יעד מפני עד ומפני אדם נאמן שמענו, או שמא אי אתם יודעין שסופינו לבדוק אתכם בדרישה יובתקירה, הווי יודעין שלא כדיני ממונות דיני נפשות, דיני ממונות אדם נותן ממון ומתכפר לו, דיני נפשות דמו נדם ורעיותיו תלוין בו עד סוף העולם, שכן מצאו בקין שהרג את-אחיו, שנאמר, דמי אחיך צועקים, אינו אומר דם אחיך אלא דמי אחיך, דמו נדם ורעיותיו. (דבר אחר דמי אחיך, שהיה דמו מושלף על העצים ועל האבנים). לפיכך נברא אדם יחיד ללמדך שכל המאבד נפש אחת מבני אדם, מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו איבד עולם מלא, וכל-המקיים נפש אחת