

Bereshit Rabbah 7:2

Let the waters swarm (Gen. 1:20). Jacob of Kefar Neburaya gave a ruling in Tyre that fish must be ritually slaughtered. When R. Haggai heard this he said, “Come and be flagellated.” He said, “When a man gives a Scriptural ruling he is to be flagellated!?” He asked, “How do you know that this is Scriptural?” He said, “Because it is written, *Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let fowl fly* (Ibid.). Just as a bird must be ritually killed, so must fish be ritually killed.” He said to him, “You have not ruled well.” He said to him, “And whence can you prove this to me?” He said to him, “Lie down [to be lashed] and I will prove it to you.” He said to him, “It is written, *If flocks and herds be slain for them, will they suffice them? Or if all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, will they suffice them?* (Num. 11:22); “shall be slain” is not written here but *be gathered together*.” “Lay on me,” exclaimed he, “for your exposition is good.”

Jacob of Kefar Neburaya ruled in Tyre, It is permitted to circumcise the infant son of a Gentile woman on the Sabbath. When R. Haggai heard this he said to him, “Come and be flagellated.” He said to him, “Shall he who states a Scriptural ruling be punished!? And how is this scriptural?” He said to him, “Because it is written, *And they declared their pedigrees after their families, by their fathers’ houses* (Num. 1:18).” He said to him, “You have not ruled well.” He said to him, “And whence can you prove this to me?” He said to him, “Lie down and I will prove it to you.” “It is written, *Now then, let us make a covenant with our God to expel all these women and those who have been born to them* (Ezra 10:3). He said to him, “And will you actually punish me on the strength of tradition!?” He said to him, *And let it be done according to the Torah* (ib.). He said to him, “Hammer away your hammering, for it is well taught.”