

Beyond the Text Part 2

#6 There's Ladies Here

RaSHbi and Rabbi Elazar

“Rabbi Yehuda opened and said: How pleasant are the actions of this nation, [the Romans] as they established marketplaces, established bridges, and established bathhouses. Rabbi Yosei was silent. Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai responded and said: Everything that they established, they established only for their own purposes. They established marketplaces, to place prostitutes in them; bathhouses, to pamper themselves; and bridges, to collect taxes from them.” (Shabbat 33b)

“And Ḥizkiya said that Rabbi Yirmeya said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: I have seen people who are elite [truly righteous], and they are few. If they number one thousand, I and my son are among them. If they number one hundred, I and my son are among them; and if they number two, I and my son are they” (Sukkah 45b)

“A Divine Voice emerged and said: Emerge from your cave. They emerged. Everywhere that Rabbi Elazar would strike, Rabbi Shimon would heal.” (Shabbat 33b)

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi became offended. He came and told his father. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said to him: My son, do not let his actions offend you, as he is a lion, son of a lion, and you are a lion, son of a fox. (Bava Metzia 84b)

They brought Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon, and he proceeded to arrest thieves. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korḥa sent Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon, the following message: You are vinegar, son of wine. Until when will you inform on the nation of our God to be sentenced to execution? Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon, sent a message back to him: I am merely eradicating thorns from the vineyard Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korḥa sent back to him: Let the Owner of the vineyard,, come and eradicate His own thorns. (Bava Metzia 83b)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi

“Rebbi Ḥanina and Rebbi Joshua ben Levi appeared before the proconsul of Caesarea. He saw them and rose before them. They said to him, you get up before these Jews? He said to them, I saw faces of angels.” (Yerushalmi Berachot 5:1)

“Rebbi Yehoshua ben Levi was used to hear the lesson of his grandson every Friday. Once he forgot and went bathing in the public baths of Tiberias; he was leaning on Rebbi Ḥiyya bar Abba's shoulder. He remembered that he had not

heard his grandson's lesson, turned around and left . . . Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba said to him, did our teacher not teach us "if they started they should not interrupt"? He said to him, Ḥiyya my son, is that unimportant in your eyes? For anyone who hears the lesson from his grandson is as if he heard it from Sinai. "(Yerushalmi Shabbat 1:2)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi would attach himself to them and study Torah, saying : "a loving hind and a graceful doe" (Proverbs 5:19). If it bestows grace on those who learn it, does it not protect (Ketubot 77b)

When Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi was dying, they said to the Angel of Death: Go and perform his bidding,. The Angel of Death went and appeared to him. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said to him: Show me my place in paradise. He said to him: Very well. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said to him: Give me your knife, lest you frighten me on the way. He gave it to him. When he arrived there,, he lifted Rabbi Yehoshua and he showed it to him. Rabbi Yehoshua jumped and fell into that other side, (Ketubot 77b)

"הארון הזה... / בתו של רבי יהושוע... / זכר / צדיקים לברכה", "זו ארונו של רבי יושוע ה...", "זו ארו (נ)ה של קירה מנה / אשתו של רבי יהושוע / בן לוי שלום"

Rabbi Zeira, Ultimate Immigrant

"Rabbi Zeira said: May it be God's will that I merit to ascend to Eretz Yisrael, and that I learn this *halakha* from the mouth of its Master, Rabbi Elazar." (Niddah 48a)

"As Rav Yehuda said: Anyone who ascends from Babylonia to Eretz Yisrael transgresses a positive commandment, as it is stated: "They shall be taken to Babylonia and there they shall remain until the day that I recall them, said the Lord" (Jeremiah 27:22)." (Shabbat 41a)

When Rabbi Zeira ascended to Eretz Yisrael he could not find a ferry to cross. He took hold of a rope and crossed the Jordan. A certain Sadducee said to him: Hasty people who put your mouths before your ears, you remain hasty Rabbi Zeira said to him: a place where Moses and Aaron did not merit entering; who is to say that I will merit? (Ketubot 112b)

"He went and wanted to buy a pound of red meat from a butcher. He asked him: How much is that pound? He said to him, 50 minas and one slap. He said to him: Take 60 [and do not slap me], but he did not accept. Take 70, but he did not accept. Take 80, take 90, until he came to 100 and he did not accept. Then he said: Do what is your routine. The next morning he went to the Academy and said to them: Rabbis, what is this bad practice here that nobody can eat a pound of red meat unless they slap him!" (Yerushalmi Berachot 2:8)

When Rabbi Zeira ascended to Eretz Yisrael, he fasted one hundred fasts so that he would forget the Babylonian method of studying Gemara, so that it would not hinder him (Bava Metzia 85a)

“The land of Shinar [Babylonia] conceived and gave birth to him but the land of beauty [Eretz Yisrael] raised the darling of Babylonia” (Moed Katan 25b)

Rav Yosef: Broken and Whole

Rav Yosef, on the day of *Shavuot*, would say: Prepare me a choice third-born calf. He said: If not for this day on which the Torah was given that caused the Jewish people to have the Torah, how many Yosefs would there be in the market? (Pesachim 68b)

Rav Yosef said: Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi teaches that if there were three they are prohibited from carrying without an *eiruv*. Rav Beivai said to the Sages: Do not listen to him, as he is mistaken. I told it to him, and I told it to him in the name of Rav Adda bar Ahava, not Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. When he heard this, Rav Yosef said in astonishment: Master of Abraham! I mistook the word Rabbi for the word many [*rabbim*].

Rashi: When I forgot the matter in my illness

Rav Yosef fell ill and his studies were forgotten. Abaye restored his studies before him. This is what we say everywhere Rav Yosef said: I did not learn this *halakha*, and Abaye said to him: You said this to us (Nedarim 41a)

When Rava took leave of Rav Yosef, he would walk backward, until his legs were bruised and the threshold of Rav Yosef's house was bloodied (Yoma 53a)

Rav Yosef, said: At first I would say: If someone would tell me that the *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda, who says: A blind person is exempt from fulfilling the mitzvot, I would make a festive day for the rabbis, as I am not commanded and yet I perform (Kiddushin 31a)

Rav Yosef teaches a *baraita*: This verse teaches that both the tablets of the Covenant and the pieces of the broken tablets are placed in the Ark. One should learn from here that with regard to a Torah scholar who has forgotten his Torah knowledge due to circumstances beyond his control, one may not behave toward him in a degrading manner. (Menachot 99a)

Rabbi Confusion #1: Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov

“Rav Huna said: Who is the tanna who taught the mishnayot in tractate Middot? It is Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov,” (Yoma 16a)

Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov said: once they found my mother's brother asleep, and they burnt his clothes.” (Mishnah Middot 1:2)

“It is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai said: I found a scroll recording people’s lineages, in Jerusalem. . . it was also written in it: The teachings of Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov measure only a kav but are clean and accurate, (משנת רבי אליעזר בן יעקב קב ונקי) (Yevamot 49b)

“Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov entered and expounded: “Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying: Pay attention and hear Israel, this day you have become a people [to the Lord your God]” (Deuteronomy 27:9). Was it that day that they received the Torah? Had it not been forty years already since they received the Torah, and you say “this day”? Rather, it teaches that since Moses reviewed the Torah for them and they received it welcomingly, the Torah ascribed them credit as though they had received it that day from Mount Sinai. That is why it is stated: “This day you have become a people to the Lord your God.” And you, our brethren, residents of Usha, who hospitably welcomed our Rabbis, all the more so.” (Shir Hashirim Rabba 2:5)

“This is as it is taught in a baraita that Isi ben Yehuda would recount the praise of the Sages: Rabbi Meir, a scholar and scribe; . . the mishna of Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov is measured [kav] and immaculate; . .” (Gittin 67a)

“For there came a blind man to Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov’s town; Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov sat below him. so that they should say if he were not a great person, Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov would not sit below him. They provided for him in honor. He asked them, what is this? They told him, because Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov sat below you. He prayed for him the following prayer: You did a good deed for one who is seen but does not see; He Who sees but is not seen may be appeased by you and do good for you.” (Yerushalmi, end of Peah)

Rabbi Confusion #2: Too Many Kahanas

Rav Kahana bar Tahalifa said in the name of Rav Kahana bar Minyumi, who said in the name of Rav Kahana bar Malkiyu, who said in the name of Rav Kahana, the teacher of Rav; and some say that Rav Kahana bar Malkiyu is Rav Kahana, the teacher of Rav:

Rav Kahana said: Since this involves *halakhot* of Sages named Kahana, I too will say something with regard to it: (Eruvin 8b)

Rav then said to Rav Kahana: Kahana, until now there were Persian rulers who were not particular about bloodshed. But now there are Greeks who are particular about bloodshed, and they will say: Murder [*meradin*], murder, , get up and ascend to Eretz Yisrael and accept upon yourself that you will not raise any difficulties to the statements of Rabbi Yoḥanan for seven years. Rav Kahana went to Eretz Yisrael and found Reish Lakish, who was sitting and reviewing Rabbi Yoḥanan’s daily lecture in the academy for the Rabbis, i.e., , Rav Kahana said to the students: Where is Reish Lakish? They said to him: Why do you wish

to see him? Rav Kahana said to them: I have this difficulty and that difficulty with his review of Rabbi Yoḥanan's lecture, and this resolution and that resolution to the questions he raised. They told this to Reish Lakish. Reish Lakish then went and said to Rabbi Yoḥanan: A lion has ascended from Babylonia, and the Master ought to examine the discourse he will deliver in the academy tomorrow, (Bava Kamma 117b)

Marta bat Boethos and Yehoshua ben Gamla

"MISHNA: If a priest betrothed a widow and was subsequently appointed to be High Priest, he may marry her. And there was an incident with Yehoshua ben Gamla, who betrothed Marta bat Boethus, a widow, and the king subsequently appointed him to be High Priest, and he nevertheless married her." (Yevamot 61a)

"Rav Asi said: Marta bat Boethus brought a vessel the size of a half-se'a [tarkav] full of dinars to King Yannai until he appointed Yehoshua ben Gamla High Priest." (Yevamot 61a)

"And they arranged two goats there, and there was a lottery receptacle there, and in it were two lots. These were originally made of boxwood, and the High Priest Yehoshua ben Gamla fashioned them of gold, and the people would mention him favorably for what he did." (Mishna Yoma 3:9)

"Abba Shaul ben Batnit said in the name of Abba Yosef ben Ḥanin: Woe is me due to the High Priests of the house of Boethus, woe is me due to their clubs." (Pesachim 57a)

It happened that the Sages assigned to Martha bat Boethos two *se'ah* of wine every day. . . Nevertheless, she cursed them and said to them, so you should give to your daughters. Rabbi Aḥa said, and we answered her, Amen (Yerushalmi Ketubot 5:3)

" Marta bat Boethus was one of the wealthy women of Jerusalem. She sent out her agent and said to him: Go bring me fine flour. By the time he went, the fine flour was already sold. He came and said to her: There is no fine flour, but there is ordinary flour. She said to him: Go then and bring me ordinary flour. By the time he went, the ordinary flour was also sold. He came and said to her: There is no ordinary flour, but there is coarse flour. She said to him: Go then and bring me coarse flour. By the time he went, the coarse flour was already sold. He came and said to her: There is no coarse flour, but there is barley flour. She said to him: Go then and bring me barley flour. But once again, by the time he went, the barley flour was also sold. She had just removed her shoes, but she said: I will go out myself and see if I can find something to eat. She stepped on some dung, which stuck to her foot, and, overcome by disgust, she died." (Gittin 56a)

Bruria and Rabbi Meir

The Roman authorities then sent Nero Caesar against the Jews. When he came to Jerusalem He shot an arrow to the east and the arrow came and fell in Jerusalem. to the west and it also fell in Jerusalem in all four directions of the heavens, and each time the arrow fell in Jerusalem. : He said to a child: Tell me a verse that you learned today. He said to him as follows: “And I will lay My vengeance upon Edom by the hand of My people Israel” (Ezekiel 25:14). Nero said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, wishes to destroy His Temple, and He wishes to wipe his hands with that man, [i.e., with me.] He fled and became a convert, and ultimately Rabbi Meir descended from him. (Gittin 56)

The Romans brought Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon for judgment, and they said to him: Why did you occupy yourself with the Torah? Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon said to them, citing a verse: “As the Lord my God commanded me” (Deuteronomy 4:5). They immediately sentenced him to death by means of burning, and they sentenced his wife to execution by decapitation, and his daughter was condemned to sit in a brothel

Berurya, the wife of Rabbi Meir, was a daughter of Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon. She said to Rabbi Meir: It is a disrespectful matter for me that my sister is sitting in a brothel; you must do something to save her. (Avoda Zara 17-18)

Berurya, wife of Rabbi Meir and daughter of Rabbi Hananya ben Teradyon learned three hundred *halakhot* in one day from three hundred Sages, (Pesachim 62b)

There were these hooligans in Rabbi Meir’s neighborhood who caused him a great deal of anguish. Rabbi Meir prayed for God to have mercy on them, that they should die. Rabbi Meir’s wife, Berurya, said to him: What is your thinking? as it is written: “Let sins cease from the land” (Psalms 104:35), is it written, let sinners cease?” Let sins cease, is written . . . Rather, pray for God to have mercy on them, that they should repent and he prayed for God to have mercy on them, and they repented. (Berachot 10a)

There was a story about Rabbi Meir who was sitting and expounding in the study hall on Shabbat afternoon, when two of his sons died. What did his mother do? She placed both of them on the bed and spread a sheet over them. At the end of Shabbat, Rabbi Meir came home from the study hall. He said to her, 'Where are my two sons?' She said [back], 'They went to the study hall.' He said to her, 'I scanned the study hall and I did not see them.' They gave him the cup of Havdalah and he separated [the days of the week with the closure of Shabbat]. He repeated and said, 'Where are my two sons?' She said, 'They went elsewhere and they are coming now.' She placed food in front of him and he ate and blessed. After he blessed, she said to him, 'I have a question to ask you.' He said to her, 'Say your question.' She said to him, 'Rabbi, before today, a man came

and deposited something with me, and now he is coming to take it. Should we return it to him or not?' He said, 'My daughter, one who has a deposit with him must return it to its owner.' She said to him, 'Were it not for your consent, I would not have given it to him.' What did she do? She grabbed his hand, brought him up to that room, had him approach the bed and took off the sheet from upon them. When he saw both of them dead and laying upon the bed, he began to cry and say, 'My sons, my sons, my teachers, my teachers - my sons in the way of the world, my teachers in that they would enlighten my eyes with their Torah.' At that time, she said to Rabbi Meir, 'Rabbi, is this not what I told you - do I not need to return the deposit to its Owner?' He said, "'The Lord has given and the Lord has taken; may the name of the Lord be blessed'" (Job 1:21).'' (Midrash Mishlei 31)

Hova and Rav Huna

Rav Huna was girded with a piece of straw and was standing before Rav. Rav said to him: What is this? He said to him: I had no wine for sanctifying the day of Shabbat, so I pawned my belt and with the proceeds I brought wine for sanctifying the day. Rav said to him: May it be God's will that you be enveloped in silk [*shira'e*] (Megillah 27b)

"on every cloudy day they would take him out in a golden carriage [*guharka*], and he would survey the entire city. And he would command that every unstable wall be torn down. If its owner was able to build another, Rav Huna would instruct him to rebuild it. And if he was unable to rebuild it, Rav Huna would build it himself with his own money. . . When Rav Huna would eat bread, he would open the doors to his house, saying: Whoever needs, let him come in and eat." (Taanit 20b)

Rav Adda bar Ahava said to Rav Huna: And with regard to your sons, who shaves them Rav Huna said to him: Ḥova. : Ḥova should bury her sons During the years that Rav Adda bar Ahava was alive, Rav Huna's children did not survive. (Nazir 57b)

Rav Adda bar Ahava said to Rav Huna: What of your sheep and goats? Rav Huna said to him: Ḥova, watches [the animals to ensure that they do not graze on land belonging to others.] Rav Adda bar Ahava said to him: May Ḥova bury her son! In all the years of Rav Adda bar Ahava, no children of Rav Huna from Ḥova survived, (Bava Kamma 80a)

The wife of Rav Huna had a trial before Rav Naḥman. Rav Naḥman said: What should we do? If I will arise before her the claims of the other litigant will be suppressed, If I will not arise before her, the status of the wife of a *ḥaver* is like that of a *ḥaver*, Rav Naḥman said to his attendant: Go outside and cause a duck to fly and cast it onto me, and I will be forced to arise (Shevuot 30b)

Yalta and Rav Nahman

Is that so? But didn't Rav Nahman permit Yalta to go out on a Festival on a chair borne on poles? Yalta is different, as she was afraid (Betzah 25b)

she arose in a rage, entered the wine-storage, and broke four hundred barrels of wine. Rav Nahman said to Ulla: Let the Master send her another cup. Ulla sent Yalta a different cup with a message saying that all of the wine in this barrel is wine of blessing; She sent him: From itinerant peddlers, come meaningless words, and from rags come lice. (Berachot 51b)

Yalta said to Rav Nahman: Now any item that the Merciful One prohibited to us, He permitted to us a similar item. He prohibited to us blood, yet He permitted to us liver. . . I wish to eat [a dish that tastes like] meat cooked in milk. Rav Nahman said to his cooks: Roast udders on a spit for her. (Hullin 109b)

Yalta brought blood before Rabba bar bar Hana, and he deemed her ritually impure. She then brought it before Rav Yitzhak, son of Rav Yehuda, and he deemed her pure . . . Every day that I bring blood of this kind of color to Rabba bar bar Hana he deems me pure, and specifically now he issued a different ruling, as he feels pain in his eye. (Niddah 20b)

Yalta heard [what the members of the Exilarch's house did and that Rav Amram was suffering from the chills]. And she brought him to the bathhouse, and placed him in the water of the bathhouse until the water of the bathhouse turned red like blood. (Gittin 67b)

Yalta, his wife, [who overheard that Rav Yehuda was getting the better of the exchange], sent a message to him: Release him so that he not equate you with another ignoramus. (Kiddushin 70b)

Rav Hisda's Daughter and Rava

Rav Hisda said: And as for myself, I prefer daughters to sons. (Bava Batra 141a)

"Rav Hisda's daughter said to her father, Rav Hisda, who would spend his nights in study: Doesn't the Master wish to sleep a little? He said to her: Days that are long but short will soon arrive, and we will sleep a lot." (Eruvin 65a)

"the daughter of Rav Hisda, was sitting on her father's lap Rava and Rami bar Hama were sitting before him. Rav Hisda jokingly said to his daughter: Which of them would you want as a husband? She said: both of them. Rava said: And I will be last." (Bava Batra 12b)

"Rav Adda bar Mattana said to Rava: And should Rav Pappa not be trusted like Rav Hisda's daughter? Rava replied: I relied on Rav Hisda's daughter because I know with certainty about her that she is always truthful. However, I cannot rely

on the Master [Rav Pappa] because I do not know with the same degree of certainty about him.” (Ketubot 85a)

Rava’s wife went after Ḥoma and struck her with the lock of a chest [*kulpei deshida*] until she drove her out of the entire city of Meḥoza, saying to her: You have already killed three men, and now you come to kill another (Ketubot 65a)

Before Rava became the head of the yeshiva, the daughter of Rav Ḥisda, would rattle a nut in a copper vessel for him.. After he was chosen to preside [as head of the yeshiva] she constructed a window for him and placed her hand upon his head. (Berachot 62a)