

Beyond the Text #6

No Place Like Home

Bees and Honey

“One who sold a beehive has sold the bees in it, and one who sold a dovecote has sold the doves.” (Mishnah Bava Batra 5:3)

“And one may not place water before bees or before doves in a dove-cote,” (Mishnah Shabbat 24:3)

“And Rabbi Yosei says they distance the bees fifty amot from the city because they sting people. Rabbi Natan says, the one who raises up bees is like the one who raises up dogs.” (Tosefta Bava Batra 1:7)

“a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey;”

“Returning the following year to marry her, he turned aside to look at the remains of the lion; and in the lion’s skeleton he found a swarm of bees, and honey.” (Judges 14:8)

“And he shall obtain so much milk that he shall eat curds. Thus everyone who is left in the land shall feed on curds and honey. For in that day, every spot where there could stand a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels of silver shall become a wilderness of thornbush and thistle.” (Isaiah 7:22-23)

Seven Species

“Are measures a *halakha* transmitted to Moses from Sinai? They are written in the Torah, as it is written: “A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey” (Deuteronomy 8:8), and Rav Ḥanin said: This entire verse is stated for the purpose of teaching measures” (Sukkah 5b)

עליה Attic

Let us make a small enclosed upper chamber and place a bed, a table, a chair, and a lampstand there for him, so that he can stop there whenever he comes to us.” (Kings II 4:10)

the house and the upper story belonging to two people, that collapsed, the two of them divide the timber and the stones and the earth (Mishnah Bava Metzia 10:1)

Rabbi Yoḥanan says in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yehotzadak: they counted [the votes of those assembled] and concluded in the upper story of the house of Nitza in the city of Lod: With regard to all other transgressions in the

Torah, if a person is told: Transgress this prohibition and you will not be killed, he may transgress that prohibition and not be killed, except for those of idol worship, forbidden sexual relations, and bloodshed. (Sanhedrin 74a)

Rabbi Tarfon and the Elders were reclining in the loft of the house of Nit'za in Lod, when this question was asked of them: Is study greater or is action greater? (Kiddushin 40b)

Once a man came to Rabbi Joshua's house. He fed him and gave him the attic room to sleep in, removing the ladder afterwards. . . In the middle of the night [the guest] took the dishes and put them in his cloak and when he tried to go down he fell from the attic and broke his neck . . . Derekh Eretz Rabba 5b

Shared Courtyards

brothers who were eating at their father's table and sleeping in their own houses in the same courtyard, a separate contribution to the *eiruv* is required for each and every one of them. (Mishnah Eruvin 6:7)

One who resides with a gentile in the same courtyard, or with one who does not accept the principle of *eiruv*, (Mishnah Eruvin 6:1)

Partners who wished to make a partition [*meḥitza*] in a jointly owned courtyard build the wall for the partition in the middle of the courtyard. (Mishnah Bava Batra 1:1)

A man may protest against [another that opens] a shop within the courtyard and say to him, "I cannot sleep because of the noise of them that go in and out." One who makes utensils, should go outside and sell them in the market. But none may protest and say to him, "I cannot sleep because of the noise of the hammer" or "because of the noise of the mill-stones" or "because of the noise of children." (Mishnah Bava Batra 2:3)

Rabbi Johanan said in the name of Rabbi Bana'ah: Joint owners of a courtyard can stop one another from using the courtyard for any purpose except that of washing clothes, since it is not fitting that the daughters of Israel should expose themselves to the public gaze while washing clothes. Bava Batra 57b

Ovens and Stoves

a stove (*kirah*) כירה that was lit on Shabbat eve with straw or with rakings, scraps collected from the field, one may place a pot of cooked food atop it . . . An oven (*tanur*) תנור that they lit even with straw or rakings, one may neither place a pot inside it nor atop it on Shabbat. Whereas a portable small stove (*kupah*) כופח that was lit with straw or rakings, its legal status is like that of a stove, (Mishnah Shabbat 3:1-2)

What's Cooking?

Rabbi Ḥanina ben Dosa's wife would heat the oven every Shabbat eve and create a great amount of smoke, due to embarrassment, to make it appear that she was baking, despite the fact that there was no bread in her house. She had a certain evil neighbor who said to herself: Now, I know that they have nothing. What, then, is all this smoke? She went and knocked on the door to find out what was in the oven. Rabbi Ḥanina ben Dosa's wife was embarrassed, and she ascended to an inner room.

A miracle was performed for Rabbi Ḥanina ben Dosa's wife, as her neighbor saw the oven filled with bread and the kneading basin filled with dough. She said to Rabbi Ḥanina's wife, calling her by name: So-and-so, so-and-so, bring a shovel, as your bread is burning. (Taanit 24b)

Dishes

"Had I not lifted the earthenware shard (chaspā) for you, would you have discovered the gem [marganita] beneath it?" (Yevamot 92b)

"When the first group left, he said: These must be owners of extremely large jugs [pittasin], when a second group departed, he said: These are owners of barrels (haviyot), [which are smaller than pittasin.] Later a third group took its leave, and he said: These are owners of jugs (kadim), [even smaller than barrels]. . . He said to them: My sons, I did not say that about you but about those who left, because they abandon the eternal life of Torah and engage in the temporary life" (Betzah 15b)

"vessels from the village of Shiḥin and vessels from the village of Ḥananya also do not typically break" (Shabbat 120b)

"He said: 'What, Joseph, are you bringing straw to Efrayim, earthenware pots to Kefar Ḥanina, fleeces to Damascus, sorcery to Egypt – sorcery in a place of sorcerers?'" (Bereshit Rabba 86:5)

To the Loo

"who is rich? He who has a toilet next to his table." (Shabbat 25b)

"and also a bathroom of honor, This was its honor: If one found the door closed, he would know that there was a person there; open, it was known that there was no person there," (Mishna Tamid 1:1)

One who enters a bathroom says [to the angels who accompany him at all times]: Be honored, honorable holy ones, servants of the One on High, give honor to the God of Israel, leave me until I enter and do my will and come back to you.

“There was a particular bathroom in the city of Tiberias, where, when two would enter it, even during the day, they would be harmed [by demons.] When Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Asi would each enter alone, they were not harmed. The Sages said to them: Aren’t you afraid? Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Asi said to them: We have learned: The tradition to avoid danger in the bathroom is to conduct oneself with modesty and silence.” (Berachot 62a)

Open the Door

There was a place there [in the fire chamber] one cubit square on which was a slab of marble. In this was fixed a ring and a chain on which the keys were hung. When closing time came, the priest would raise the slab by the ring and take the keys from the chain. Then the priest would lock up within while the Levite was sleeping outside. (Mishnah Midot 1:9)

One who sells a house has, as part of the sale, sold also the door, but not the key. (Mishnah Bava Batra 4:3)

If one rents out a house to another, the landlord bears the responsibility for providing the door, for providing the bolt, for providing the lock, (Mishnah Bava Metzia 8:7)

Roman Street Names

And what is the public domain? A main street [stratia] and a large plaza [platia] as well as alleyways [mevo’ot], which are open on both ends to the public domain, connecting between main streets; that is a full-fledged public domain. (Shabbat 6a)

Rashi: Stratia: an inter-city road

Platia: town square

The Mavoi and the Lechi

To render an alleyway fit [for one to carry within it on Shabbat.] Beit Shammai say: Both a side post and a cross beam are required. Beit Hillel say: Either a side post or a cross beam. (Mishnah Eruvin 1:2)

Bet Midrash

“there cannot be a study hall without a novelty.” (Hagigah 3a)

“And Rav Pappi said in the name of Rava: To convert a building from a synagogue into a study hall is permitted, but from a study hall into a synagogue is prohibited,” (Megillah 26b)

“Rabbi Levi bar Ḥiyya said: One who leaves the synagogue and enters the study hall and engages in Torah study, is privileged to receive the Divine Presence, as

it is stated: 'They go from strength to strength, every one of them appears before God in Zion' " (Psalms 84:8) (Berachot 64a)

"Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Asi, despite the fact that they had thirteen synagogues in Tiberias, they would only pray between the pillars where they studied." (Berachot 8a)