

LITERARY CONSTRUCTION IN THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD:

A CASE-STUDY FROM PEREK HELEK

by

MARGARET SARAH JACOBI

A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Theology
College of Arts and Law
University of Birmingham
June 2014

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

ABSTRACT

Perek Helek, the last chapter of Tractate Sanhedrin in the Babylonian Talmud (BT), is unusual in consisting almost entirely of aggadah (non-legal material). The present study is a source and literary analysis of six units (*sugyot*) from the chapter, which are almost continuous over ten pages of Talmud.

The *sugyot* relate to specific groups and individuals who, according to the Mishnah, are denied a place in the World to Come. They cover subjects in the books of Genesis, Numbers and Samuel.

Comparisons with the Tosefta, Palestinian Talmud and midrashim suggest that the BT is less concerned with the World to Come than Palestinian sources are. Rather, it focuses on the wrong-doing of the groups and individuals and issues of justice and authority. The BT also includes vivid stories which appear to be Babylonian in origin and are often self-mocking.

My findings also suggest that the *sugyot* based on passages in a given biblical book (Genesis or Numbers) have more elements in common than *sugyot* based on the same mishnah but derived from a different biblical book. In conclusion I discuss the possible implications of my findings for the more general question of how the chapter was edited.

In memory of

my teacher Rabbi John Rayner (1924-2005)

and my mother Rose Jacobi (1926-2014)

who both in their different ways exemplified the saying

הַקָּב"ה לִיבָא בְּעִי

(bSan. 106b)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many friends have supported me during the time I worked on this PhD and cheered me up over cups of coffee. Special thanks go to Dr. Ann Conway Jones, my study partner, who accompanied me along the path, Rabbi Rachel Benjamin for her careful proof-reading and Rabbi Dr. Norman Solomon and Rabbi Sheila Shulman for helpful conversations.

I am grateful to my supervisors Dr. Joanna Weinberg and Prof. Jonathan Webber, who supported and encouraged me and whose insightful comments clarified my thoughts and my writing. Any errors are my own. My thanks also to my advisors, Dr. Charlotte Hempel and Dr. Deryn Guest, for their invaluable guidance.

Finally, and most importantly, my thanks go to my husband David, who has encouraged me and kept me going, and to my children Yoni and Tali who grew up alongside this thesis and taught me so much more than my studies ever could.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Purpose of the Study	2
Methodology	6
Review of the Literature	10
Overview of Perek Helek	30
Outline of Structure of Perek Helek, Sanhedrin Chapter 11	33
The Manuscripts of bSanhedrin	34
 Chapter 2. The Generation of the Flood	36
Introduction	36
The Text of bSan. 107b-109a	38
Mishnah, Tosefa and Palestinian Talmud	49
The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis	54
Literary Analysis	77
Themes	88
Conclusions	96
 Chapter 3. The Men of Sodom	98
Introduction	98
The Text of bSan. 109a-b	100
Mishnah, Tosefa and Palestinian Talmud	108
The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis	110

Literary Analysis	123
Layers of the Text	134
Conclusions	136
Chapter 4. The Generation of the Dispersion	144
Introduction	144
The Text of bSan. 109a	146
Mishnah and Tosefa	148
Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis	149
Conclusions	154
Chapter 5. Korach and the Generation of the Wilderness	155
Introduction	155
The Text of bSan. 109b-110b	157
Mishnah, Tosefa and Palestinian Talmud	167
The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis	170
Literary Analysis	179
Themes	186
Summary and Conclusions	192
Chapter 6. Balaam	194
Introduction	194
The Text of bSan. 105a-106b	195
Mishnah, Tosefa and Palestinian Talmud	207
The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis	211

Literary Analysis	223
Comparison with other <i>Sugyot</i>	228
Themes	229
Conclusions	235
Chapter 7. Doeg and Ahitophel	238
Introduction	238
The Text of bSan. 106b-107b	239
Mishnah and Palestinian Talmud	248
The Babylonian Talmud - Sources	251
Textual Analysis	253
Conclusions	262
Chapter 8. Conclusions	267
The <i>Sugyot</i> within the Context of the Chapter	267
Similarities and Differences Amongst <i>Sugyot</i>	271
Differences Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds	275
Bibliography	283
Appendices	
1: Parallel Texts on the Generation of the Flood	302
2: Parallel Texts on the Men of Sodom	310
3: Parallel Texts on the Generation of the Dispersion	314
4: Parallel Texts on Korach and the Generation of the Wilderness	317
5: Parallel Texts on Balaam	324
6: Parallel Texts on Doeg and Ahitophel	328

ABBREVIATIONS

ARN	Avot deRabbi Natan (Text A or B, as designated)
b.	son of
BT	Babylonian Talmud (tractates preceded by 'b' e.g. bSan.)
ExR	Exodus Rabbah
GenR	Genesis Rabbah
LamR	Lamentations Rabbah
LevR	Leviticus Rabbah
MRI	Mekhilta deRabbi Ishmael
MRS	Mekhilta deRabbi Shimon
NumR	Numbers Rabbah
PRK	Pesikta deRav Kahana
PT	Palestinian Talmud (tractates preceded by 'p')
R.	Rabbi
San.	Sanhedrin
SifreiDeut	Sifrei on Deuteronomy
SongR	Song of Songs Rabbah
T	Tosefta (tractates preceded by 't')
Tan	Tanhuma
TanB	Buber edition of the Tanhuma

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Perek Helek ('those who have a share' [in the world to come]), the last chapter of Tractate Sanhedrin in the Babylonian Talmud, has unique features which allow insights into the theological and literary work of the compilers of the BT. It is of theological importance, being one of the principal expositions in rabbinic literature of eschatological issues, and contributes to our understanding of the history of these ideas. It forms the starting point for subsequent discussions, notably by Maimonides in his commentary on this chapter of the Mishnah, which includes his thirteen principles of faith. It is unusual in the Babylonian Talmud in that it consists almost entirely of aggadah (stories, sayings etc.) as opposed to halachah (legal discussions), the exception being the final section relating to the 'Seduced city' (111b-113b). Although aggadah is widespread in the Talmud, it is rare for it to be so extended, constituting as it does almost an entire chapter. For example, the long midrash section in bMeg. (10b-17a), is still far shorter.

The present study focuses on a section of Perek Helek which has received little scholarly attention. It makes an original contribution to Talmudic studies in offering a literary and source-critical analysis of a series of continuous *sugyot*¹ within this chapter.

In this introduction, I will first set out the purpose of my study, its relationship to previous work and an outline of my method. This will be followed by a review of the literature. The review focuses on three areas of recent research which relate to the present study: the Stam-

1. The commonly used term *sugya*, pl. *sugyot* (lit. chain) is more usually applied to a chain of argument. However, it may also be applied to a passage on a continuous theme, often relating to a single phrase of the Mishnah, as I do in this thesis.

main and the editing of the Babylonian Talmud; developments in literary theory (as defined below) and Talmudic study and the historical context of the Babylonian Talmud. At the end of the chapter there is an overview of Perek Helek and of the manuscripts of bSanhedrin.

Purpose of the Study

The present study is an analysis of six *sugyot* about the groups and individuals who have no place in the world to come, which form an almost continuous section of ten pages of Perek Helek. Its purpose is to examine possible sources, the redaction and structure of the text and the use of literary techniques to determine:

1. What prior sources the editor of the BT could have drawn on and what material is therefore likely to be original to the BT.
2. How the BT edits together material from other sources and original material to create a literary unit.
3. To what extent different *sugyot* show evidence of separate editing and if and how they are edited together to create a coherent whole.
4. Whether there are differences in content and emphasis which reflect a distinct Babylonian viewpoint, when compared to the Palestinian sources, .

It is not possible within the confines of this thesis to analyse the whole chapter of forty-six pages (90a-113b). Instead the thesis will focus on the gemara relating to the groups (the Generation of the Flood, the Generation of the Dispersal, the Men of Sodom, the Generation of the Wilderness and the Congregation of Korach, 107b-110b) and three of the four commoners (Balaam, Doeg and Ahitophel 105a-107b) who are listed in the Mishnah as having no share in

the world to come.² The short *sugya* about Gehazi, which has been analysed in detail by Rubenstein, will also be omitted.³ Except for this *sugya*, my analysis covers a continuous section of ten pages.

In focusing on this smaller section, I recognise that the conclusions I am able to draw will be limited by the sample size. Thus, it will not be possible to draw any definitive conclusions about the entire chapter, let alone the Tractate or the BT in general. Nevertheless, my analysis of the selected *sugyot* will contribute original work concerning the nature of the editing process within a chapter of the BT. The *sugyot* relate to subjects from Genesis, Numbers and the Books of Samuel, which are listed in mishnayot 10:2 and 10:3 as shown below.

Mishnah 10:2

Balaam

Doeg

Ahitophel

(Gehazi)

Mishnah 10:3

The Generation of the Flood

The Generation of the Dispersion

The Men of Sodom

The Congregation of Korach

The *sugyot* on themes from Genesis all relate to mishnah 10:3. However, those from Numbers are from different mishnayot: Korach with the groups from Genesis in 10:3 and Balaam with the individuals in 10:2. The *sugya* on Doeg and Ahitophel is linked to the same mishnah as Balaam, but relates to a different biblical book. The fact that there are *sugyot* relating to the same biblical book in different mishnayot and also *sugyot* relating to different books with-

2. There is divergence between the Mishnah and BT (as well as the PT and Tosefta) as to which these groups are. The BT discusses the spies, who are not listed in the Mishnah, but has little discussion of the Generation of the Wilderness who are listed.

3. J. Rubenstein, *Stories of the Babylonian Talmud*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2010, pp. 116-149.

in the same mishnah allows me to investigate whether the similarities are greater amongst *sugyot* relating to the same mishnah or amongst those with subjects from the same part of the Hebrew Bible. It is also possible to consider whether there is a common editing process applied throughout all the *sugyot*.

Previous studies of Talmudic aggadah have tended to focus either on single narratives or on a series of narratives on a single theme. These may be either continuous over two or three pages, as in Alyssa Gray's analysis of the story of Antoninus and Rabbi in Avodah Zarah⁴ or consist of separate units which extend over different chapters or tractates, as in Friedman's study of narratives about Rabbi Akiva.⁵ Levinson's detailed analysis of exegetical narrative again deals with individual stories or a series of stories within a *sugya*.⁶ This thesis, by contrast, analyses different *sugyot* which are related, at least superficially, only by the theme of the chapter, their relation to the Mishnah and their being continuous with each other. There have been no similar studies of such a long continuous section of the BT. Segal's study of a passage of similar length in bMeg is, as the title suggests, mainly a commentary on the text.⁷ The present study intends to contribute to our understanding of how the BT brings together and edits disparate material within a chapter, and to what extent it imposes unity of style on the contents. The study will investigate whether the different *sugyot* are indeed related on a deeper level, despite the differing genres and themes.

4. A. Gray, 'The Power Conferred by Distance From Power. Redaction and Meaning in b. A.Z.10a-11a' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 23-69.

5. e.g. S. Friedman, 'A Good Story Deserves Retelling. The Unfolding of the Akiva Legend' in *ibid.*, pp. 71-100.

6. J. Levinson, 'הסיפור שלא סופר. אמנות הסיפור המקראי המורחב במדרשי חז"ל' (*The Twice Told Tale. A Poetics of Exegetical Narrative in Rabbinic Midrash*), Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2005.

7. E. Segal, *The Babylonian Esther Midrash: a critical commentary* (3 vols.), Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1994.

This section has been chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, its content is of intrinsic interest. It throws light on the Babylonian rabbinic understanding of a number of key biblical episodes and characters, both in the mythical history of humanity and of the Jewish people, such as the Flood and the Korach rebellion. In doing so, it addresses issues of justice and compassion (divine and human) and authority and leadership. Analysis of this section allows an exploration of some of these themes from the point of view of the Babylonian Talmud.

Secondly, a variety of genres are used within the same passage. Alongside *memrot* and *baraitot* it contains continuous narratives, some brief and some more extended, and midrashic passages, i.e., brief exegeses of biblical verses. Deliberate juxtaposition of texts in different genres has been said to be a characteristic feature of rabbinic literature.⁸ This analysis offers the opportunity for consideration of how and why the BT uses different genres and whether the juxtapositions have a rationale that can be determined or whether different passages are brought together simply because they relate to the central theme of the *sugya*.

Thirdly, the opening sections, which are about different categories of heresy, arguments for resurrection of the dead and speculation about the Messiah, have been extensively studied, perhaps because of their theological and polemical content. For example, the opening section about the resurrection has been analysed by Schiffman, who lists parallel sources and breaks the section down to determine what he considers to be the work of the *Stammaim* (the anonymous authors/editors of the Talmud, see below).⁹ Whilst Schiffman breaks down the sec-

8. G. Hasan-Rokem, *Tales of the Neighborhood. Jewish Narrative Dialogues in Late Antiquity*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2003, pp. 28-9.

9. L.H. Schiffman, 'Composition and Redaction in Bavli, Pereq Heleq' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggadah*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 201-215. Other publications include D.M. Einhorn, 'Sanhedrin 93a and the Third Chapter of Daniel', *CCAR Journal* vol. 16, no. 2, 1969, pp. 24-25; J. Neusner, *Messiah in Context. Israel's History and Destiny in Formative Judaism.*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1984; C. Hayes, 'Displaced Self-Perceptions: The Deployment of Minim and Romans in B. Sanhedrin 90b-91a' in H. Lapin (ed.), *Religious and Ethnic Communities in Later Roman Palestine*, University Press of Maryland, Maryland, 1998, pp. 249-289; P.

tion into its component parts, his attribution to the Stammaim is only that of anonymous material and he does not give detailed attention to the work of 'editing' and how the component parts are put together, or what role the Stammaim might have played in this.

Methodology

My method of analysis will be similar to that of Rubenstein who, in his pioneering analyses of Talmudic narrative, presented literary analyses of several Talmudic stories and also compared parallel sources.¹⁰ He demonstrated that, as in halachic passages, there is extensive evidence of Stammaitic editing. Like Rubenstein, I will offer both a literary analysis of the passages concerned and an analysis of parallel rabbinic sources. Unlike Rubenstein, who begins with the literary analysis and then analyses parallel sources, I will begin with the source analysis and then look at the entire composition. This method will enable me to draw on what I have previously discovered about pre-existing sources to consider how material is used and adapted in the BT.

The approach I use will therefore be a combination of source criticism and literary criticism (as defined below) and both diachronic and synchronic analysis. It will seek to uncover the stories, sayings and other traditions that might have been available to the authors/redactors of the BT, and therefore how the BT might have reworked or presented differently pre-existing traditions. It will examine the text diachronically by taking these findings into consideration and by analysing the different layers of the text. This will be followed by a synchronic ap-

Alexander, 'The Rabbis and Messianism' in M. Bockmuehl, & J.C. Paget (eds.), *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, T&T Clark, London, 2007, pp. 1-24.

10. J. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories. Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, London, 1999; *Stories of the Babylonian Talmud*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2010.

proach, considering the text as a literary work, which will be informed by the findings of the diachronic analysis.

Both approaches are complementary since the BT is known to draw on earlier sources but is also a literary composition rather than simply a compilation. The issue of whether to treat rabbinic works as finished literary compositions has been much discussed and was crystallised in a debate between Peter Schäfer and Chaim Milikowsky in the 1980s.¹¹ Schäfer argued that it was not possible to talk about a text that was completed at a single point in time, but rather 'the history of the text as reflected in the transmission of its manuscript traditions.'¹² The codicological findings of Malachi Beit-Arié tend to support the view of a text which changes continually as copyists made emendations and additions.¹³ Milikowsky, on the other hand, argued that it was possible to consider a final 'redacted' text, and subsequently argued for the necessity of completed critical editions in which an editor evaluates the merits of different readings in the manuscripts.¹⁴ To some extent the argument depends on which work is being discussed, with some rabbinic texts more clearly having a final redaction than others. It is important to recognise that during its history a text evolves as elements are added and

11. P. Schäfer, 'Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Attempt to Define the Status Quaestionis', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 37, no. 2, 1986, pp. 139-152; C. Milikowsky, 'The Status Quaestionis of Research in Rabbinic Literature', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 39, no. 2, 1988, pp. 201-211; P. Schäfer, 'Once again the Status Quaestionis of Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Answer to Chaim Milikowsky', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 40, 1989, pp. 89-94.. See also a more recent debate: P. Schäfer, & C. Milikowsky, 'Current Views on the Editing of the Rabbinic Texts of Late Antiquity: Reflections on a Debate after Twenty Years' in M. Goodman & P. Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 79-88. The original papers are also reproduced in this volume.

12. P. Schäfer, 'Research into Rabbinic Literature', p. 152.

13. M. Beit Arie, 'Publication and Reproduction of Literary Texts in Medieval Jewish Civilization: Jewish Scribality and Its Impact on the Texts Transmitted' in Y. Elman and I. Gershoni (eds.), *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality and Cultural Diffusion*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2000, pp. 225-247.

14. C. Milikowsky, 'Reflections on the Practice of Textual Criticism in the Study of Midrash Aggada. The Legitimacy, the Indispensability and the Feasibility of Recovering and Presenting the (Most) Original Text' in C. Bakhos (ed.), *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, Brill, Leiden, 2006, pp. 79-109.

altered.¹⁵ In the case of the BT, it is clear that editorial activity continued well into the Geonic period and that even after the advent of printing, censorship meant that the text continued to change.¹⁶ However, at some point the text did become fixed in a printed form. The method of this thesis therefore recognises both that the text of BT has been built up over centuries, drawing on a variety of pre-existing sources and adding original material, and that it became a fixed text with a final literary form.

In considering which sources the BT may have drawn on, I have examined rabbinic works that are generally considered to date from earlier than or be contemporary with the BT. I start with the corresponding sections of the Mishnah, Tosefta and PT. These 'core' texts were all compiled earlier than the BT. The Mishnah forms the starting point for both the Talmuds. The PT represents a parallel, but earlier, Palestinian tradition. The relationship of the Tosefta to the other texts is complicated, but it represents source material which is likely to have been known, at least to a large extent, to the compilers of the BT. This may have been in the form of the Tosefta itself or as independent material which was incorporated into the Tosefta at some stage. The comparison with the PT, in particular, will contribute to identifying the particular character of the BT as a Babylonian text.

The dating of rabbinic works is often uncertain. I have therefore included works such as the Tanhuma (both standard and Buber editions), parts of which are likely to be earlier than the BT, although other parts are later. I have excluded works which are known to be later and to draw on the BT, such as Midrash HaGadol and Yalkut Shimoni. In making comparisons, it is

15. P. Alexander, 'Using Rabbinic Literature as a Source for the History of Late-Roman Palestine: Problems and Issues.' in M. Goodman & P. Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 9-15.

16. M.J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud. A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud*, Im Hasefer, New York, 1992, p. 4.

sometimes possible to determine which text is earlier (see e.g. the discussion of the Tanhuma on Noah in Chapter 2). However, the existence of two parallel texts does not necessarily mean that there was an earlier 'original' text, as Friedman has shown. He argues against the suggestion of Y.N. Epstein that there was a 'Tosefta Keduma', which developed along separate lines into the Tosefta and parallel Baraitot in the BT.¹⁷ Rather, a text may change during the process of writing and re-writing manuscripts or in the process of what Friedman terms 'creative reworking'.

Neither is it possible to say with certainty, as Neusner has done, that an earlier text represents an earlier tradition.¹⁸ A later document may reflect an earlier tradition that has not been recorded in written form, or for which manuscripts have been lost or remain undiscovered. For example, Mordechai Sabato has presented convincing evidence that a relatively late Yemenite manuscript of BT represents an earlier tradition than other manuscripts.¹⁹

With these considerations in mind, I will generally use the analysis of parallel sources for two purposes:

1. As evidence that there was an earlier tradition on which the BT drew. If there is no evidence of an earlier tradition, it will not be possible to conclude, using an argument from silence, that the BT 'invented' a story. However, since the absence of a pre-existing text is the

17. S. Friedman, 'Uncovering Literary Dependencies in the Talmudic Corpus' in S.J.D. Cohen (ed.), *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature*, Brown University, Providence RI, 2000, pp. 35-57; S. Friedman, 'הברייטות בתלמוד הבבלי ויחסן למקבילותיהן שבתוספתא' in S. Friedman, M. Schmeltzer, M. Hirschman (eds.), עשרה, מחקרים בספרות התלמודית והרבנית לכבוד פרופסור חיים זלמן דימיטרובסקי לחיים, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2000, pp. 163-201.

18. J. Neusner, *Talmudic Judaism in Sasanian Babylonia*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1976, p. 9.

19. M. Sabato, 'בבלי סנהדרין : כתבי יד וענפי נוסח' in S. Lassman (ed.), סוגיות במחקר התלמודי ; יום עיון לציון חמש שנים, לפטירתו של אפרים א. אורבך, כ"א בכסלו תשנ"ז. התקנת הספר והבאתו לדפוס: צופיה לסמן. ירושלים: האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית למדעים, Jerusalem, 2001, pp. 80-99.

best evidence there is likely to be that a passage is original to the BT, I will use this evidence tentatively, recognising that such a suggestion cannot be conclusive.

2. As a basis for examining how the BT treats aggadic material in comparison with Palestinian sources, particularly the PT and also GenR and the halachic midrashim.

Manuscripts have been consulted to ascertain whether there is significant variation, which may cast light on the meaning or history of a given passage. I consider variation significant if it changes the meaning of a passage or if the order of elements differs. I also use manuscripts where there is a problematic reading which may be understood in the light of other readings. Manuscripts have been viewed on-line using the Hebrew University resource <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud>, and *Dikdukei Sofrim* has also been consulted.²⁰

The translations of the BT are my own, although I have consulted the Soncino translation and, for biblical citations, I have consulted the Tanakh (JPS), the Authorised Version (AV) and other standard translations. It is not always clear in the text of the BT where a given saying, particularly a citation in the name of a rabbi, begins and ends. I have generally taken a minimalist approach, given that a *memra* is defined as a 'short, didactic statement' and it is generally agreed that statements of earlier rabbis are elaborated by later ones.

Review of Literature

The current study takes place in the context of recent developments in the field of rabbinic and specifically Talmudic studies. These include detailed analysis of the strata of Talmud texts and the role of the 'Stammaim', insights from literary and narrative theory and a greater

20. S. Rabinovitz, *Dikdukei Sofrim*, New York, 1976.

understanding of the context in which the Babylonian Talmud was compiled. All three of these areas impact on the present work. In analysing the composition of the *sugyot* I will draw on research about the different layers of the Talmud and the activity of the Stammaim. This will help in assessing diachronically how the *sugya* was built up from earlier elements and edited into a literary composition. In my literary analysis I will draw on some of the approaches used in literary theory, such as narratology, in order to examine synchronically the literary techniques involved in its creating the final composition. Finally, knowledge of the context in which the BT was compiled will help elucidate the content of the text and the circumstances of its composition. These three areas will therefore be discussed further below.

The Stammaim and the Editing of the Babylonian Talmud

Although the editing of the BT has traditionally been attributed to Ravina and Rav Ashi, whom the Geonim refer to as '*sof hara'ah*' (the end of instruction), it has long been clear that they did not 'close' the Talmud. Since the advent of 'Wissenschaft des Judentums' in Germany in the 19th century, the editing of the Talmud has become the subject of much debate and study. Thus, for example, Y.I. Halevy was one of the early scholars who suggested that the Talmud was 'a continuous process of assembling, arranging, and evaluating traditions...'²¹ B.M. Lewin saw the Saboraim as continuing the work of the Amoraim and identified what he saw as characteristically Saboraic elements.²²

21. D. Goodblatt, 'Y.I. Halevy' in J Neusner (ed.), *The Formation of the Babylonian Talmud*, Brill, Leiden, 1970, pp. 26-47; at pp.46-47.

22. R. Goldenberg, 'B.M. Lewin and the Saboraic Element' in *ibid.* pp. 51-60. For the chronology and terminology of *Tannaim*, *Amoraim* and *Saboraim*, scholars have depended on the Seder Tannaim ve-Amoraim from the Geonic period. This offers a view from the rabbinic successors of the Amoraim, which is not necessarily historically accurate (see G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 6).

The process of analysing the different strata of the *sugya* was further developed fifty years ago by Louis Jacobs. He pointed out the literary nature of the *sugya*: how it was formally structured and material was reworked for literary effect. For example, an original saying might be emended for the sake of debate, and an obvious conclusion delayed to achieve a rhetorical climax. He also concluded that *sugyot* were put together in a logical rather than a random manner. In later work, Jacobs developed these pioneering studies on the literary nature of the Talmud, pointing out characteristic features such as the numbered sequence.²³

David Weiss Halivni further investigated the literary reworking of the *sugya*. He placed this in the context of a cycle of what he termed tendencies toward the apodictic (brief statements, typified by the Mishnah) and the non-apodictic and discursive (typified by midrash). He suggests that the approach of the Amoraim was 'quasi-apodictic' and that their sayings were reworked after the death of Rav Ashi by anonymous redactors, termed by him 'Stammaim.' He attributed to the Stammaim the creation of the *sugya* and the unique character of the BT. He initially dated this to between 427 (the death of Rav Ashi) and 501 or 520, in order to allow for the work of the Saboraim. However, he later reassessed the dating and concluded that the Stammaitic period extended over two hundred years, covering most of what had been considered the Saboraic period. This would account for the re-editing by later Stammaim of earlier Stammaitic material. The Saboraic period, by contrast, was relatively brief and consisted mainly of the addition of brief explanations.²⁴

23. L. Jacobs, *Studies in Talmudic Logic*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 1961; and also *Structure and Form in the Babylonian Talmud*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991; *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 2005, pp. 55-67.

24. D. Halivni, *Midrash, Mishnah and Gemara*, Harvard University Press, London, 1986, pp. 76-92; D. Halivni, 'Aspects of the Formation of the Talmud' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition*, Mohr-Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 343-348; D. Halivni, *מקורות ומסורות. ביאורים לתלמוד. מסכת סנהדרין, שבעות, מכות, עבודה זרה*, הוריות, Magness Press, Jerusalem, 2012, pp. ז-א.

Jay Rovner added to our understanding of the work of the Stammaim through his analysis of a *sugya* from Tractate Succah and its parallel version in Kiddushin. He demonstrated two stages of the process: an initial 'pseudepigraphic effort' in which sources are rationalised and attributions changed, and a later far-reaching revision, which builds on the earlier work. Having demonstrated 'a final, all encompassing, integration of all past sources and productions', he suggested that this second level integration may not be common. However, in later studies, he extended his methods of analysis to aggadah, specifically the narrative about R. Meir and Elisha ben Abuya (bHagigah 15a-b), and concluded that the processes of reformation and transformation are similar.²⁵ The picture of editing which emerges accords with that of Halivni in showing that the work of the Stammaim was a long process in which the later Stammaim re-edited and shaped earlier material.

Halivni's picture of the activity of the Stammaim is now widely accepted. However, the nature and timing of the editing process still remains a matter of debate. Friedman has highlighted the complexity of the analysis by demonstrating that, for example, *baraitot* were extended in the BT by the insertion of additional material. He has also argued that the Stammaitic editing might involve the insertion of pre-existing material into the BT, so that the 'Tannaitic' layer cannot be attributed solely to the Tannaim.²⁶ This is further complicated by the suggestion that some *baraitot* are 'fictitious.' Although Jacobs rejected I.H. Weiss' suggestion that many *baraitot* are composed at a later stage to support the opinion of an Amora, he does show that some *baraitot* are in fact fictitious, manufactured in order to complete a

25. J. Rovner, 'Pseudepigraphic Invention and Diachronic Stratification in the Stammaitic Component of the Bavli: The Case of Sukkah 28', *Hebrew Union College Annual* vol. 68, 1997, pp. 11-62; 'Metasystemic and Structural Indicators of Late-Stage Babylonian Stammaitic Compositions', *Oqimta (e-journal)* vol. 1, 2013, pp. 369-419.

26. S. Friedman, 'הסוגיה ומרכביה' in (ed.), *השוכר את האומנים*, Pt. I, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1996, pp. 7-23.

series of arguments. As he puts it, 'There is more than a little truth in the old jibe about the yeshiva student who said he had a marvellous answer and was now looking for a suitable question.'²⁷

Richard Kalmin, through detailed textual analysis, concluded that the process of editing began with the third to fourth generation of Amoraim, who comment on and alter earlier citations. He traced changes in terminology (for example modes of citation) and attitudes, particularly to fellow rabbis, from the earliest to the latest generations of Amoraim and found evidence of ongoing change throughout the rabbinic period.²⁸ According to his findings, the Stammaim are more likely to draw on similar Tannaitic sources to the late than the early Amoraim, and less likely to misunderstand the sayings of the late Amoraim.²⁹ Thus, although the role of the Stammaim is clearly established and it is generally accepted that they crafted the Talmud into its present, characteristic form, the editing process did not begin with them, but rather during the Amoraic period.

The process of analysing the BT is further complicated by the fact that citations are uncertain and cannot be relied on to date given sayings. This has long been recognised. Sayings are often cited in different names in different works, such as the Mishnah, *baraitot* and halachic midrashim, or even in different manuscripts of the same work. The Talmud itself often shows uncertainty about an attribution, giving two possibilities for the tradent. Sometimes,

27. L. Jacobs, 'Are there Fictitious Baraitot in the Babylonian Talmud?' in *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 2005, pp. 42-54.

28. R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994.

29. R. Kalmin, 'The Stam and the Final Generations of Amoraim: Assessing the Importance of Their Relationship for Study of the Redaction of the Talmud' in (ed.), *The Literature of Early Rabbinic Judaism: Issues in Talmudic Redaction and Interpretation*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York, London, 1989, pp. 29-35.

although a saying is attributed to a given Amora, later discussion makes it clear that they did not in fact say it.³⁰ According to a study by Kraemer comparing Tractate Shabbat in the BT and PT, of the 113 traditions attributed to R. Yochanan in the BT, 75 have no parallel in the PT and nine record the same opinion in the name of a different authority.³¹

Sacha Stern has been critical of this approach and has argued that most stated attributions are not 'deliberately and misleadingly distorting the true attributions'.³² However, he does acknowledge that many attributions are 'conjectural', concluding that the BT favours anonymous authorship, and that attributions frequently represent a collective enterprise. Thus his view is not so different from that of other scholars, and in particular Louis Jacobs, since Jacobs' use of the term 'pseudepigraphic' is not necessarily intended to carry negative connotations.³³

Stern's suggestion that attributions represent a collective enterprise relates to a paradox in the unreliability of rabbinic attributions. The Talmud itself places great importance on citing a tradition '*beshem omro*', in the name of the person who said it. There may well have been uncertainty by the time of the editing of the BT, centuries after the reputed saying, and this is reflected in the BT when two (or more) possible tradents are cited for a given saying. Yet, this does not account for cases where only one tradent is given and this appears to be a deliberate change, as in the preference of later Amoraim for citing R. Yochanan documented by

30. J. Neusner, 'In Quest of the Historical Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai' in M. Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 255-275; William Scott Green, 'What's in a Name? - the Problematic of Rabbinic "Biography"' in W.S. Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Theory and Practice*, Scholars Press, Missoula, Montana, 1978, pp. 77-98.

31. D. Kraemer, 'On the Reliability of Attributions in the Babylonian Talmud' in M. Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 276-292.

32. S. Stern, 'Attribution and Authorship in the Babylonian Talmud', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 45, 1994, pp. 28-51; at p. 42.

33. L. Jacobs, 'How much of the Babylonian Talmud is Pseudepigraphic?' in *Studies in Talmudic Logic*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 1961 pp. 6-17; *Structure and Form in the Babylonian Talmud*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991.

Kalmin.³⁴ It may be, as Scott Green suggests, that the emphasis on attribution is a way of placing traditions in context within a given generation, and so giving them a history and authority by placing them in the past. Kraemer has shown the consistency of certain features of Amoraic statements, e.g., language (Hebrew/Aramaic) and style, within a given generation, leading him to suggest that it is possible to date a given saying within a generation.³⁵

At the least, attributions can establish the earliest possible date of the recording of a given saying, since it must be at or after the time of the Amora cited.³⁶ There may also be cases when it is possible to take an attribution at face value, particularly when the same attribution appears in such different documents as GenR and BT. However, the question of independence is not always clear. Whilst Kraemer claims that the BT and PT cite the same rabbis independently from each other, work by Jaffee and Gray casts doubt upon this view.³⁷

In summary, in trying to date a given Amoraic statement, the attribution to a given sage must be treated with caution. It may, however, be possible to place the tradition, though not the wording, in a given generation by using other criteria, such as those suggested by Kraemer and Kalmin. Tannaitic sayings, on the other hand, are even more uncertain. Given the distance in time between the Tannaim and the editing of the BT, it is difficult to be sure if any

34. R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994, pp. 58-59.

35. D. Kraemer, 'On the Reliability of Attributions'.

36. Even this is not without problems, since we are dependent for the dating of most Amoraim on internal rabbinic sources, particularly the Geonim as mentioned above. However, there is consistency in the chronology of the Amoraim which makes it probable that it can be relied on.

37. M. S. Jaffee, 'The Babylonian Appropriation of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Redactional Studies in the Horayot Tractates' in A. J. Avery Peck (ed.), *The Literature of Early Rabbinic Judaism: Issues in Talmud Revelation and Interpretation*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York, London, 1989, pp. 2-27, A. Gray, *A Talmud in Exile. The Influence of Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah on the Formation of Bavli Avodah Zarah*, Brown Judaic Studies, Providence, Rhode Island, 2005. Whilst Kraemer addresses Jaffee's findings in a footnote (Kraemer, 'On the Reliability of Attributions', n. 11), he fails to convincingly refute them.

Tannaitic sayings can be traced to their purported authors. Moreover, as has often been stated, Talmudic stories have modelled the characters and sayings of the Tannaitic rabbis to put forward a particular picture or viewpoint rather than being a historical account.³⁸

A further problem in analysing the layers of the *sugya* is linguistic. One of the fourteen criteria set out by Friedman for recognising the Stammaitic layer is that the language is Aramaic rather than Hebrew, a view also put forward by Halivni.³⁹ According to Rubenstein, the same criterion also applies to aggadic material in BT.⁴⁰ However, since Aramaic was the vernacular of the rabbis and is interspersed throughout the Talmud, it is difficult to make such a clear-cut separation, as Friedman and Rubenstein both recognise.⁴¹ Kraemer traces a gradual shift from Hebrew to Aramaic through the Amoraic generations from Rav and Samuel's generation, in which the language is almost entirely Hebrew, close to that in the Mishnah, to the generation of Rav Joseph, whose pronouncements are mostly in Aramaic.⁴² As noted above, Kalmin traces shifts in the style of pronouncements, including shifts in language and terminology, which can be used as criteria alongside language.⁴³

38. E.g., J. Neusner, 'In Quest of the Historical Yohanan ben Zakai'; J. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories. Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, London, 1999; D. Boyarin, *Dying for God. Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1999.

39. S. Friedman, סוגיות בחקר התלמוד הבבלי, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 2010; Halivni, Introduction to מסכת סנהדרין. ביאורים ומסורות. לתלמוד.

40. J. Rubenstein, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggada' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition. The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 417-440.

41. See also J. Rovner, "'Rav Assi had this old Mother": The Structure, Meaning and Formation of a Talmudic Story', *ibid.* p. 121, n.52.

42. D. Kraemer, 'On the Reliability of Attributions in the Babylonian Talmud'.

43. R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994, pp. 127-140.

It could be, and has been, argued that, to some extent, the reasoning of Kraemer and Kalmin is circular, in that they assign characteristics to different generations of Amoraim on the basis of which generation the BT itself ascribes the sayings to. They then use these criteria as a basis to assign sayings to different generations. However, both authors themselves address this problem and justifiably claim that this is a more plausible approach than complete scepticism about the dating of sayings. This would suppose that the BT was carefully edited in order to give each generation a characteristic style and artificially create the shifts in feature that are observed, which seems unlikely. Therefore, whilst recognising the problems of such an approach, it remains helpful in analysing the various layers of the Talmud.

The language of the BT is characteristic of the Babylonian Talmud as a whole. Thus, there are particular features of Babylonian Amoraic Aramaic, which distinguish it both from both Palestinian Aramaic of the same period and Geonic Aramaic. Breuer has traced some evolution of forms over this period which may help in distinguishing early and later strata of the BT.⁴⁴ There are also characteristics of Amoraic Hebrew, but to date there has been little research on this topic. Because the language was not spoken, it shows less evolution than Aramaic, but it does show features distinct from Tannaitic Hebrew.⁴⁵

Although it is clear that one cannot generalise about the use of Aramaic in the BT, careful linguistic analysis of Talmudic narratives can help unravel the history of their composition. By analysing the language of a narrative alongside other features and in conjunction with parallel

44. Y. Breuer, 'Aramaic in Late Antiquity' in S.T. Katz (ed.), *Cambridge History of Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, pp. 473-476.

45. Y. Breuer, 'On the Hebrew Dialect of the *Amora'im* in the Babylonian Talmud', *Scripta Hierosolymitana* vol. 37, 1998, pp. 129-150.

texts, it has been possible to gain insight into how earlier material is used and shaped by later 'editors', who may be identified with the *Stammaim*.⁴⁶

Developments in Literary Theory and Talmudic Study

In recent years, there has been an explosion of interest in the application of literary theory to rabbinic texts. In contrast to the 'objective' work began by Leopold Zunz of the 'Wissenschaft des Judentums' school in 19th century Berlin, which was concerned with the history of a text and its time and place of production, this work grew in relation to post-modernism, which emphasised the necessary subjectivity of any reading of a text, and the impossibility of determining its 'true' meaning. The term 'literary theory' covers a variety of different approaches, such as feminist theory⁴⁷ and post-structuralism, which have arisen in the past fifty years to challenge accepted views of questions such as 'what is a text?' They emphasise what a reader brings to a 'text' as much as what the 'author' may have intended.⁴⁸

Visotzky sets out the trend towards literary methodology in rabbinic studies which has occurred in recent years, contrasting this with the historical critical approach.⁴⁹ He suggested that the latter became rooted in Israel, whilst in the USA there was more of a tendency to use literary methodology. However, in a study of recent publications, he found that a simple division into literary or historical approaches was not always possible. Rather, a wide variety of

46. e.g. S. Friedman, 'A Good Story Deserves Retelling. The Unfolding of the Akiva Legend' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition. The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 71-100, R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors*, pp. 23-39.

47. This is itself not a single theory. Rather, feminist approaches use a range of methods to analyse texts. The term is used as a shorthand for such approaches, which cannot be explored in detail here.

48. Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983.

49. B.L. Visotzky, 'Leaning Literary, Reading Rabbinics', *Prooftexts* vol. 28, no. 1, 2008, pp. 85-99 (e-journal).

methods are being used, including folklore studies, orality and feminist analysis. Here, I will mainly consider how literary theory, in its various forms, has been applied to rabbinic texts.

Literary theory has been applied most often to the study of midrash. Whilst this thesis is primarily focused on Talmud rather than midrash, the study of midrash is relevant for two reasons: firstly, I shall be comparing Talmudic texts with texts from collections of midrashim, so it is helpful to understand the various approaches that have been used to study them. Secondly, there is midrash within the BT itself, including Perek Helek.

Midrash is a unique genre of literature which does not fit distinctly into any one category and blurs the distinction between literature and commentary. Midrash is particularly attractive to literary theorists, as David Stern has elaborated: 'In post-structuralist theory, midrash has been put forward as a historical and conceptual alternative to the modes of logocentric interpretation that have dominated Western thought since antiquity.'⁵⁰ Thus, the whole concept of midrash is seen to undermine any attempt to recover a text's 'original' or 'true' meaning. However, Stern questioned this assumption, pointing out that although midrash is polysemous, it is not indeterminate. That is, although midrash suggests a multiplicity of possible interpretations, searching for the meaning of the biblical text, any possible meanings must be grounded in Torah, which is ultimately from God.⁵¹

Fishbane has likewise drawn on literary theory in his studies, in particular exploring how rabbinic texts build on biblical stories. He demonstrates how the elements of biblical myths are

50. D. Stern, *Parables in Midrash*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, 1991, p. 44.

51. D. Stern, *Midrash and Theory. Ancient Jewish Exegesis and Contemporary Literary Studies*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1996, pp. 15-48.

used within rabbinic literature in different and disparate ways in order to create new myths and traditions.⁵²

Boyarin emphasised the importance of intertextuality in the reading of midrash, demonstrating how the reference, often subtle, within one text to another text enriches and deepens its meaning.⁵³ He also showed the effect of what he calls 'confrontation of texts', where two texts with different meanings are brought together to release a meaning neither would have had on its own.⁵⁴ He has also highlighted the complex interplay of fiction and historiography and their interaction within the *mashal*.⁵⁵

In later work, Boyarin has turned to the Talmud and to other modes of comparison. He demonstrates the close interrelationship between the serious and the comic and the halachic and the aggadic. In one study, he has drawn on Menippean satire, which draws together humour and philosophy, as a way to understand talmudic texts.⁵⁶ As Boyarin put it, 'This Menippean motion in which the fabulous undercuts the realistic and the realistic the fabulous is the key to my reading of the Talmud with its doubled presentation of its heroes'.⁵⁷ Thus, in the Talmud, rabbis whose opinions are given great weight are also treated as objects of humour which is frequently grotesque. Boyarin sees this 'dual voice' as intrinsic to the 'authorial' voice of the Talmud, comparing it with Bakhtin's idea of a novel, in which different voices

52. M. Fishbane, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003, pp. 191-220.

53. D. Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990.

54. *Ibid*, p. 31.

55. D. Boyarin, *Sparks of the Logos. Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics*, Brill, Leiden, 2003, pp. 89-112

56. D. Boyarin, 'The Talmud as Fat Rabbi: A Novel Approach', *Text & Talk* vol. 28, no. 5, 2008, pp. 603-619; M. Gray, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2nd edn., Longman York Press, Harlow, 1992, s.v. 'Satire'.

57. Boyarin, 'The Talmud as Fat Rabbi', p. 610.

are brought together, illuminating each other. In doing so, he suggests how the contradictory voices of the Talmud, and particularly the critical voices within Talmudic stories, serve to question, undermine and illumine the halachic discourse. In more recent work, however, he suggests that this undermining is not in fact dialogic, but rather univocal, in the same way that Plato's Dialogues serve to undermine opposition to Plato's views (although this, too, is a matter of debate).⁵⁸ Although some of Boyarin's conclusions about the dialogic nature of the BT and the presence and influence of Greek culture in Babylonia have been questioned, he has opened up new ways of thinking about the BT and especially some of its most puzzling characteristics.⁵⁹

Zellentin has shown how the rabbis also used parody. He suggests that this originates in the PT, but that the BT developed the form. Although not used frequently, it also serves as a means of rabbinic self-criticism.⁶⁰

The study of Talmudic stories has also been deepened by studies of the theory of narrative. Mieke Bal has set out ways of approaching stories, analysing the way they are presented and the different elements within them.⁶¹ These present useful tools for the analysis of Talmudic stories, as is demonstrated by Rubenstein in his analyses.⁶² Levinson has also extensively

58. D. Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009.

59. B. Wimpfheimer, 'The Dialogical Talmud: Daniel Boyarin and Rabbinics', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 101, no. 2, 2011, pp. 245-254; A.H. Becker, 'Positing a "Cultural Relationship" between Plato and the Babylonian Talmud', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 101, no. 2, 2011, pp. 255-269.

60. H.M. Zellentin, *Rabbinic Parodies of Jewish and Christian Literature*, Mohr Siebeck, Tuebingen, 2011.

61. M. Bal, *Narratology. Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Buffalo London, 1985.

62. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*.

studied what he calls 'a Poetics of Exegetical Narrative', using the tools of literary analysis to trace the development of stories in Palestinian midrash collections and the BT.⁶³

A changing understanding of the role of 'orality' has also influenced the analysis of literary precedents. Until recently, the conventional view was that the transmission of rabbinic texts was largely oral until, at some point, they were written down. The fact that the Mishnah was referred to as the 'Oral Law' and that it showed features that would facilitate memorisation, such as listing in threes, reinforced this view. However, Jaffee has shown how the interplay of written and oral shaped the formation of texts in the Greco-Roman schools of the second-third centuries CE and may have influenced the Galilean sages.⁶⁴ A similar process may have been involved in the creation of other rabbinic literature, as Shanks Alexander elaborates.⁶⁵ Thus, a written text may form the basis for oral 'performance' which in turn leads to revision of the text. The rabbis may have emphasised the oral aspect of transmission in order to maintain the importance of a face-to-face encounter between teacher and student. Thus, the classic picture of an oral text becoming 'fixed' when it is written down is more complicated.

Jonah Fraenkel was one of the first scholars to use folklore in his analysis of rabbinic stories, paying attention to type and motifs in order better understand the message they conveyed.⁶⁶ Galit Hasan-Rokem has likewise come to the study of rabbinic stories through the study of folklore. Her analysis of LamR, which includes parallels to passages in Perek Helek, demon-

63. Levinson, *הסיפור שלא סופר*.

64. M.S. Jaffee, 'The Oral-Cultural Context of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Greco-Roman Rhetorical Paedeia, Discipleship and the Concept of Oral Torah' in Y. Elman & I. Gershoni (eds.), *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality and Cultural Diffusion*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2000, pp. 27-72.

65. E.S. Alexander, 'The Orality of Rabbinic Writing' in C.E. Fonrobert & M.S. Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 38-57.

66. Y. Fraenkel, 'שאלות הרמוניות בחקר ספרות-האגדה', *Tarbiz* vol. 47, 1978, pp. 139-172.

strates how many of the characteristics of folktales are found within LamR, and how the BT alters and elaborates the narratives. She finds that what is left unsaid is often as important as what is stated.⁶⁷ She has also explored the use of language in rabbinic texts, particularly puns and word-play, which frequently draw on the Greek language.⁶⁸

In summary, different literary approaches have helped to deepen our understanding of both midrash and talmud. Postmodern studies have alerted us to the biases, often unconscious, with which we approach text, and created an awareness of what we, as readers, bring to the reading of a text. Close study of midrashic texts using the tools of literary theory has demonstrated how polysemy is built into the text and is enriched by intertextuality, which creates a network of cross references that resonate through the text. Narratology has suggested ways in which narratives may be constructed in order to emphasise elements of a story and present the story from particular viewpoints. Studies of orality are increasingly revealing the complex interplay of the oral and the written in the final construction of a text. Insights from the study of folklore have deepened our understanding of the typologies which might underlie Talmudic narratives and how folklore elements may both be present in the narrative and be altered for the purposes of the BT 'redactors'. In my study of *sugyot* from Perek Helek I shall draw on these different studies as they illuminate the subject of my own study.

The Historical Context of the Babylonian Talmud

67. G. Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, trans.B. Stein, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2000.

68. G. Hasan-Rokem, 'משחק במילים יוונית בחידות עבריות-ארמית: מגים בין תרבותים במדרשי האגדה' in M. Bar-Asher, J. Levinson, & B. Lifshitz (eds.), *Studies in Talmudic and Midrashic Literature in Memory of Tirzah Lifshitz*, Bialik Institute, Jerusalem, 2005, pp. 159-171.

In recent years, there have been significant developments in our understanding of the cultural and historical background in which the BT was formed, which have led to a reassessment of its context. It has long been recognised that there are many problems in using the BT itself as a historical source. It was never intended as a historical document, but rather a series of debates about legal and religious questions. It rarely refers to historical events, except tangentially. Where it does do so, it fits them to its own agenda, in a partial and often polemical way. It does not even reflect the entirety of Jewish life, but rather that of a select intellectual elite engaged in the study of Torah. As Shai Secunda puts it, '... the result is a yawning gap between the historical reality of Jewish Babylonia as it has recently been reconstructed and the literary reality of Talmudic self-absorption'.⁶⁹

The earliest Jewish historiography is from the Geonic period, particularly the *Seder Tannaim v'Amoraim*, probably from the end of the 9th century, and the *Igeret Rav Sherira Gaon*, written in 987CE.⁷⁰ Although probably written not long after the compiling of the latest layers of the Talmud, these sources are several centuries after the early and middle Amoraim. As well, they had a specific agenda, which placed the Geonim as successors to the Amoraim and sought to show a continuity of teaching. This can be seen, for example, in descriptions of the rabbinic academy. The Geonim modelled the Amoraic academy on the major academies of their time, but Goodblatt has demonstrated that in fact for most of the Amoraic period, the Talmudic 'academy' was much more likely to be a small school, often meeting in a teacher's

69. Shai Secunda, 'Reading the Bavli in Iran', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 100, no. 2, 2010, pp. 310-342.

70. For more about the latter see R. Brody, 'The Epistle of Sherira Gaon' in M. Goodman & P. Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 253-264.

house.⁷¹ Much of the picture that is presented of the Amoraim is therefore actually a reflection of the Geonic period.

The stories within the BT do inform us about the rabbis' self-perception and their relationship with the world they inhabit and are the means by which they explore the meaning and significance of their history.⁷² This is true both of stories which appear to be about contemporary events and those which purportedly relate to the Tannaim. The attitudes and situations found in these stories are frequently projections into the Tannaitic period of contemporary problems, which are wrestled with by placing them in a different context. Questions of power and authority, for example, are worked out in stories about Rabban Gamliel and Judah haNasi.⁷³ The reading of the context of their composition into Babylonian stories and debates has led to what has been termed 'new historicism.' As Boyarin and others have demonstrated, the BT is not directly a reliable source of history but history can nevertheless be gleaned from it by close examination of the incidental information which is imparted and the attitudes displayed, and by comparison of the BT with Palestinian documents. However, Hayes has called for caution in attributing historical reasons for the differences between the text of the BT and Palestinian documents, demonstrating that other factors in the development of the text could account for some of these differences equally well or better.⁷⁴ In particular, as well as being

71. D. Goodblatt, *Rabbinic Instruction in Sasanian Babylonia*, Brill, Leiden, 1975.

72. E.g., D. Boyarin, 'המדרש והמעשה - על החקר ההיסטורי של ספרות חז"ל' in S Friedman (ed.), *ספר הזקרון לרבי שאול*, ליברמן, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, Jerusalem, 1993, pp. 105-117 and *Sparks of the Logos*, pp. 89-112.

73. Secunda, 'Reading the Bavli in Iran'; Gray, 'The Power Conferred by Distance From Power'.

74. C. Hayes, *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds. Accounting for Halakhic Difference in Selected Sugyot from Tractate Avodah Zarah*, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1997.

geographically separated, the compilation of the two Talmuds was separated by at least a century and possibly two or three centuries.

At the same time as the limitations of the BT as a historical document have been recognised, there has been growing knowledge of the history of Babylonia, its customs and laws, which throw light on the BT. Neusner's multi-volume study traces the history of the Jews in Babylonia, with reference to Persian, Roman and Christian sources, with the fifth volume being devoted to later Sasanian times.⁷⁵ These sources present a picture of relative stability from the reign of Yazdegird I (399-420) until the disintegration of the Sasanian Empire in the seventh century, though with occasional outbursts of persecution and violence. As Brody points out, it is not always possible to ascertain whether the violence was religiously motivated, and sometimes it is likely to have been due to political causes.⁷⁶

On the whole, though, there was relative peace and prosperity throughout the Sasanian period and the Jews were allowed to practice their religion freely. The BT presents a picture of the Jews having good economic relations with their neighbours, and this appears to be confirmed by other sources. However, there was variation from place to place and the Jews themselves tended to keep apart from their neighbours, particularly when it came to issues of marriage, since they wished to preserve their purity of lineage.⁷⁷ Yet even these ideas about

75. J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, Brill, Leiden, 1970, Vol. 5.

76. R. Brody 'Judaism in the Sasanian Empire: A Case Study in Religious Coexistence', *Irano-Judaica* vol. II, 1990, pp. 52-62. For example, Brody cites a reported massacre of 12,000 Jews in the reign of King Shapur, which he suggests was a result of the Jews being perceived to be allied with Rome, rather than due to direct anti-Jewish feeling. The persecutions in the reign of Yazdegird II, in 455 CE, and his son Peroz do appear to have been religiously motivated. Christian sources also report a persecution at this time.

77. A. Oppenheimer, 'יחסי יהודים ונכרים בישובי בבל התלמודית' (Relationships between Jews and Non-Jews in Talmudic Babylonia)', *Proc. 9th World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem* vol. Div. B, Vol 1, 1986, pp. 33-38; I. Gafni, 'יהודי בבל בתקופת התלמוד', *Mercas Zalman Shazar*, Jerusalem, 1990, pp. 42-43.

purity of lineage may have been influenced by Zoroastrianism. Certainly, there are parallels between Zoroastrianism and Judaism as represented in the BT, which may also have affected the rabbinic attitude to issues such as ritual purity and the status of women.⁷⁸ Secunda examines the environment of Sasanian Babylonia in much greater detail, building on Elman's work and exploring aspects of Zoroastrianism that suggest similarities with the culture of the Babylonian rabbis.⁷⁹ At the same time, he cautions against too readily drawing conclusions from apparent parallels. In particular, he suggests that a parallel in the BT does not necessarily reflect Persian influence. It may equally reflect two communities participating in a broader cultural project, or a complex interplay of 'reception, incorporation, rejection and reaction'.⁸⁰

Jews in Babylonia interacted with Christians and a variety of other religious groups, which, like the Jews, formed part of a diverse Babylonian population. The Babylonian empire was at the border of Christian Rome, and later Byzantium, and so was a place where cultures and religions met. Christians formed a minority within Babylonia that could be linked with the rival empire, and thus were often vulnerable to persecution. At the same time, during periods of stability, they seem to have co-existed with the Jews and entered into debate with them. The description by Koltun-Fromm of a report by Aphrahat, a fourth century Persian Church leader, theologian and homilist, suggests not only Christian and Jewish co-existence but also their rivalry as they vied for favour with the Persian authorities.⁸¹ Boyarin's extensive explor-

78. Y. Elman, 'Middle Persian Culture and Babylonian Sages: Accommodation and Resistance in the Shaping of Rabbinic Legal Tradition.' in C. E. Fonrobert & M. S. Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 165-197.

79. S. Secunda, *The Iranian Talmud. Reading the Bavli in its Sasanian Context*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2014.

80. *Ibid.*, p 114.

81. N. Koltun-Fromm, 'A Jewish-Christian Conversation in Fourth Century Persian Mesopotamia', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 47, 1996, pp. 45-63.

ation of the paths of Church history and Talmudic Judaism, which were not so much parallel as often crossing, has made it clear that there was extensive interaction between the two, with developments in one influencing the other, well into the Talmudic period.⁸² At the same time, there was not uniformity within Babylonia, and it is likely that the Christian presence developed later in some areas than in others.⁸³

The diversity of cultures within the Babylonian empire also included access to Roman and Greek culture. Thus, rather than living in a separate milieu from the Greco-Roman world, trade and other links meant that there was an awareness and knowledge of it. For example, the motifs found in Aesop's fables were widely known throughout the Near and Middle East and sometimes as far as India.⁸⁴ In the sixth century, this interaction was enhanced when scholars fled from Athens to Babylonia in 529.⁸⁵ Whereas in the past it had been supposed that Greek elements reached Babylonia only through Palestinian Jewry, there is growing evidence that there was extensive knowledge of, and interaction with, Greek culture within Babylonia. This evidence is both historical, as indicated above, and literary. For example, Boyarin demonstrates parallels to Greek legends in the Talmud. These parallels are only found in the later layers of the BT, so are unlikely to be imported from Palestine, although the possibility cannot be excluded. Equally, whilst it is possible that similar legends developed independently in different places, the closeness of the parallels and the number of examples

82. Boyarin, *Sparks of the Logos* and also *Dying for God*.

83. B.S. Cohen, "'In Nehardea Where There are No Heretics': The Purported Jewish Response to Christianity in Nehardea (a Re-examination of the Talmudic Evidence)" in D. Jaffé (ed.), *Studies in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity. Text and Context*, Brill, Leiden, 2010, pp. 29-44.

84. H. Schwarzbaum, 'Talmudic-Midrashic Affinities of some Aesopic Fables' in H.A. Fischel (ed.), *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature*, Ktav, New York, 1977, pp. 425-442.

85. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, Vol. 5, p. 85.

makes this unlikely. Both Christianity and Judaism within the Persian Empire would have been influenced by this milieu.⁸⁶

In conclusion, recent work on the history and context of the BT has transformed our understanding both of the nature of the BT as a historical document and of the context in which it was written. Whilst the Talmud cannot be relied on directly as a source of historical fact, it can tell us much about the milieu in which it was composed and the interactions of the rabbis both within and beyond the Jewish world. As Moshe Lavee puts it: 'Rabbinic literature can serve as a historical source, especially when read indirectly and through the lens of a well-defined theoretical framework, and when perceived as a rabbinic cultural product that reflects delicate, sophisticated, and hardly recoverable relationships between text and reality'.⁸⁷ At the same time, increased knowledge of the Babylonian and Persian world and the history of the period have increased our understanding of the BT. It is clear that, far from being isolated from Christianity and the Greco-Roman world, both Christianity and Babylonian Judaism developed in close contact with Hellenism and with each other, exerting a mutual influence even as they were influenced by the circumstances in which they found themselves.

Overview of Perek Helek

The *sugyot* examined in this thesis form about a sixth of Perek Helek. Nevertheless, as I will show, they do reflect the context in which they are situated and illuminate aspects of the

86. D. Boyarin, 'Hellenism in Jewish Palestine' in C.E. Fonrobert & M.S. Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 336-363.

87. M. Lavee, 'Rabbinic Literature and the History of Judaism in Late Antiquity: Challenges, Methodologies and New Approaches' in M Goodman & P Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, p. 339.

chapter. To provide the reader with the context in which these *sugyot* appear, I have therefore presented a brief outline of the structure and content of the entire chapter. This is summarised schematically on p. 33, which shows the major subjects covered.

For the most part, the subjects relate to the Mishnah. In relation to the first mishnah, the gemara discusses the categories of belief for which Jews will be excluded from the world to come. For the second and third mishnayot, there is a discussion of each of the individuals and groups mentioned. Some are given more emphasis than others - for example, the Generation of the Wilderness is not developed in the Gemara, whereas the Congregation of Korach is discussed at length. The remaining mishnayot, dealing with the 'seduced city' are dealt with briefly, and for the most part in a halachic discussion, which differs from the predominantly aggadic nature of the chapter.

The major focus of the chapter, in terms of length, is eschatological: the resurrection of the dead followed by the Messiah and the Messianic age, which is by far the longest part of the chapter. The topic of the resurrection of the dead is in the mishnah, which states that those who deny that the resurrection of the dead is derived from the Torah (*min haTorah*) have no share in the world to come. Its length is nonetheless notable. It can clearly be divided into sub-sections which deal in turn with scriptural proofs, proofs from physical evidence and stories about Tannaim. The long debate about the Messiah and the Messianic age, however, is not directly linked to a mishnah. It does not relate to the World to Come, but its emphasis is rather on this world, and sometimes on the contemporary political situation. Whatever the circumstances of his coming, the Messiah will rule in this world. The relationship of the Messianic age and the World to Come is complex and much-debated and will not be dis-

cussed further here, other than to say that they represent two alternative visions of the future.⁸⁸

The focus on the Messiah and Messianic age is not only evident in terms of length. There is extensive narrative about David, the ancestor of the Messiah. This is found both in the section about the Messiah and in the *sugyot* relating to Doeg and Ahitophel.

Curiously, hair-washing is mentioned four times in the chapter: Avishai (95a); the wife of Rav Tavyomi in Kushta (97a); Bathsheva (107a) and Rav Kahana (111a). There are few references elsewhere in the Talmud: once to Hillel (Shabbat 31a) and once to Raba (Betzah 27b) who were washing their hair when they were interrupted, and otherwise to the *niddah* before immersion and the *nazir*. I do not know what purpose this serves in the chapter, but it does seem to be deliberate editing to place an otherwise rare motif here four times.

The conclusion of the chapter brings it full circle. It is a story about Elijah, who will bring the keys of the resurrection. The story includes R. Jose of Tsipporis, who plays a significant role in the *sugya* about the Men of Sodom. There is therefore evidence of editing to bring the different elements of the chapter together. This will be explored further in my study of the *sugyot* which form the basis of this thesis.

88. See E. Urbach, *The Sages*, trans. I. Abrahams, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, England, 1979, pp. 649-653, and 677-695.

Outline of Structure of Perek Helek, Sanhedrin Chapter 11

MISHNAH

90a Tehiyat haMetim

proof from scripture

proof from physical evidence

Gebihah ben Pesisa and *min*/Alexander of Macedon

Rabbi and Antoninus

91b Further scriptural proofs

Ravina/Rav Ashi - Daniel

Sayings of R. Eleazar

Vision of Ezekiel

93a Messiah

94a Hezekiah and Sennacherib

95b David and Priests of Nob - end of David's seed

97a Calculation of time of coming of Messiah

Place called Kushta

Repentance and good deeds

Messiah at gates of Rome

Name of Messiah

Garden of Eden

Special position of Talmid Hacham

Length of days of Messiah

99a Mishnah - Torah from Heaven

Epikoros/Megaleh Panim

Privilege/responsibility of Torah study

Whispering over wounds, healing on Shabbat

101b Mishnah - Kings and Commoners

Menasseh and other Kings

104a-b Commentary on Lamentations

Balaam, Doeg, Ahitophel, Gehazi,

David and Elisha

107b Mishnah – Groups who have no Share in the World to Come

Sodom

Spies

Korach

108a Generation of the Flood

109b Spies, Korach

110b Generation of the Wilderness

Ten tribes

111b Seduced City (Deut. 13:14)

Jericho

Elijah

Keys of the resurrection

92. M. Sabato, 'Bavli Sanhedrin: Kitvei Yad v'Anfei Nusach' in (ed.), סוגיות במחקר התלמוד; יום עיון לציון חמש שנים, (ירושלים: האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית לפטירתו של אפרים א. אורבך, כ"א בכסלו תשנ"ז). התקנת הספר והבאתו לדפוס: צופיה למסן. ירושלים: האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית לפטירתו של אפרים א. אורבך, כ"א בכסלו תשנ"ז. *Jerusalem*, 2001, pp. 80-99.

citations by Alfasi and Nachmanides. It preserves the chapter order of the Mishnah Sanhedrin, with Perek Helek being the penultimate chapter, suggesting the tradition it represents precedes the time when the order of the chapters in BT was altered. Sabato also presents convincing evidence that the manuscript preserves a more correct orthography of unusual, and especially Persian terms, but that it contains errors which appear to be due to oral transmission. As with the other manuscripts, there are also places where glosses are inserted into the texts.

In this thesis, I will use the standard Romm-Vilna printed edition as the basis for my analysis of the text, whilst considering variations amongst manuscripts. The evidence of ongoing editing, even beyond the date of the main manuscripts, means that it is difficult to talk of a 'final text' other than the printed edition. In the absence of a critical edition, I will therefore use the printed edition supplemented by the manuscripts.⁹³

93. Work has begun on a critical edition with commentary under the auspices of the Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud (Jerusalem, 2002 onwards) but only a few volumes have been published to date.

CHAPTER 2

THE GENERATION OF THE FLOOD

Introduction

In the Introduction, I outlined the aim of this thesis, to analyse a series of *sugyot* from Perek Helek which focus on episodes from the books of Genesis and Numbers and also stories from I Samuel about King David. As discussed, my method will be similar to that of Rubenstein,¹ in that I will use both a diachronic, source critical, approach and a synchronic, literary approach. The analysis has two stages. The first is an analysis of parallel material from the time of the BT or earlier, which provides evidence for sources which the BT may have drawn on. This is accompanied by a detailed textual analysis, leading to an assessment of how the BT included and altered pre-existing material. The second part is a literary analysis. It draws on the source analysis for comparison to ascertain features unique to the BT.

I begin with the Generation of the Flood, the first of the groups to be mentioned in mishnah 10:3. The *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood (bSanh. 107b-109a) is the first of three *sugyot* derived from the book of Genesis and is the longest of the three. It has parallels in several midrashic passages, including GenR and the Tannaitic midrashim MRI and SifreiDeut. The *sugya* has similarities with the *sugya* which follows, about the Men of Sodom. The Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom are linked together in SifreiDeut (Ekev 16) and in the Tosefta (Sotah 3:6), where the downfall of both is related to their pride in their

1. J. Rubenstein. *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1999; *Stories of the Babylonian Talmud*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 2010.

prosperity. This caused them to forget their dependence on God; to think that their wealth was theirs alone and there was no duty to share it and to feel that they were immune from any harm.

In this chapter, after setting out the text and an outline of its structure, I will first consider the corresponding sections of the Mishnah, Tosefta and PT. I will then present texts from other sources which contain similar, or sometimes identical, material to the BT and compare them to the text of the BT. The sources will mainly be collections of midrashim (excluding those which are clearly dated later than the BT, e.g. Midrash haGadol, as discussed in the Introduction), although Targumim and other sources will be referred to where relevant.

This will be followed by a literary analysis of the text. Previous work has shown careful crafting of narratives in the BT, involving reworking of earlier sources.² Evidence for such crafting in this passage will be presented. This will include an analysis of the structure of the *sugya*, genre and the use of literary devices such as three-fold sequences, the use of names and references back and forward within the *sugya*, and to elsewhere in the chapter. The variations amongst different manuscripts will be considered at this point. As discussed in the Introduction, the printed Romm-Vilna text is taken as the base text for analysis, but noting significant variations amongst manuscripts which change the meaning of the text or the order of the narrative and which clarify the meaning of the text or cast light on the editing process.

2. As well as Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, see e.g. Alyssa M. Gray, 'The Power Conferred by Distance From Power: Redaction and Meaning in B. A. Z. 10a-11a' in *Creation and Composition*, ed. J. Rubenstein, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 23-70.

The Text of bSanh. 107b-109a

The text of the Mishnah (10:3 and 107b-108a in the BT)³ and the Gemara are shown below.⁴

I have divided the Gemara into numbered sections, based on subject matter, so that in the analysis that follows, I will be able to refer to specific sections of the text of the Gemara. The division is summarised as follows:

A. Judgement concerning the world to come.

B. Pride in their wealth

C. Corruption (R. Yochanan's sayings)

D. Noah

E. Questioning the destruction

F. The seven day waiting period

G. The use of animals for transgression

H. The ark

J. The raven and the dove

K. Eliezer and Shem

L. Nachum of Gimzo

3. The text is the same in printed editions of the Mishnah and Talmud although the mishnah manuscripts vary as discussed below.

4. As noted in the Introduction, all translations presented in this chapter (and throughout the thesis) are my own. To avoid unnecessary visual intrusiveness, the scriptural references that I have supplied in the translations throughout this thesis are presented in parentheses rather than square brackets, although the original text does not contain such references.

Mishnah (107b - 108a):

The Generation of the Flood have no share in the world to come, and will not face judgement, as it is said, 'My spirit will not reside⁵ in human beings forever' (Gen. 6:3) - no judgement and no spirit. The Generation of the dispersion have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'And the Eternal One scattered them from there over the face of all the earth' (Gen. 11:8). 'And the Eternal One scattered them' refers to this world, 'From there God scattered them' (Gen. 11:9) refers to the world to come. The Men of Sodom have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'The men of Sodom were evil and sinful towards the Eternal One, exceedingly' (Gen. 13:3). 'Evil' - in this world; 'sinful' - for the world to come; but they will face judgement. R. Nehemiah said, 'Neither [the Men of Sodom nor the Generation of the Flood] will stand in judgement, as it is said, "Therefore, the wicked will not arise for judgement and the sinful in the congregation of the righteous" (Ps. 1:5).' 'Therefore, the wicked will not arise for judgement' - this refers to the Generation of the Flood; 'amongst the congregation of the righteous' - this refers to the Men of Sodom. They said to him, 'They will not stand in the congregation of the righteous, but they will stand in the congregation of the wicked.'

Gemara (108a - 109a)

A

Our Rabbis taught: The Generation of the Flood have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'And God wiped out all that existed on the face of the earth' (Gen. 7:23). 'And God wiped out all that existed' refers to this world, 'And God wiped them out from the earth' (*ibid.*) refers to the world to come. This is the opinion of R. Akiva. R. Judah ben Batyra said,

5. יָדוּן, understood as 'will reside', is a *hapax legomenon*. For further discussion see below.

'They will not live and they will not be judged, as it is said, "My spirit will not reside in human beings forever" (Gen. 6:3) - no judgement and no spirit'. Another interpretation: 'My spirit will not reside' - their souls will not return to their casings. R. Menachem b. Joseph said, ' Even at the time when the Holy One restores souls to the dead, their souls will suffer in Gehinnom, as it is said, "You shall conceive hay, give birth to straw; fire will consume your soul" (Is. 33:11)'.

B

1. Our Rabbis taught: The Generation of the Flood became proud only because of the plentiful benefits which the Eternal One bestowed on them. And what is written concerning them? 'Their houses are at peace, without fear, and the rod of God is not upon them' (Job 21:9). And it is written, 'His bull breeds and does not fail, his cow gives birth and does not miscarry' (21:10). And it is written, 'They send them out like a flock, their infants and their children dance' (21:11). And it is written, 'They lift up the timbrel and the lyre, they rejoice to the sound of the flute' (21:12). And it is written, 'They wear out their days in good and their years in pleasant things' (21:13).⁶ And it is written, 'In a moment, they are terrified in Sheol' (*ibid.*). This is what caused them to say to God, 'Turn away from us, we do not delight in the knowledge of your ways. What is God that we should serve him, and what is the profit to us if we entreat him?' (21:14-15). They said, 'We do not need God. On the contrary, rather than a drop of rain, we have rivers and springs which meet our needs'. The Holy One said to them, 'Through the plentiful benefits I have bestowed on them, they provoke me, and by means of it I will judge them, as it is said, "Behold, I bring the flood of water" (Gen. 6:17)'.

6. The phrase 'their years in pleasant things' is not in the Masoretic text.

2. R. Jose said: The Generation of the Flood became proud only because of the eyeball, which resembles water, as it is said, 'They took for themselves wives from all that they had chosen' (Gen. 6:2).⁷ Therefore, [God] judged them with water, which resembles the eyeball, as it is said, 'All the springs of the great deep broke out, and the windows of heaven were opened' (Gen. 7:11)'.
C

1. R. Yochanan said: The corruption of the Generation of the Flood is described as 'great' and their judgment is described as 'great'. Their corruption is described as 'great', as it is said, 'And the Eternal One saw that the wickedness of human beings was great' (Gen. 6:5) and their punishment is described as 'great', as is its said, 'All the springs of the great deep broke out' (Gen. 7:11). R. Yochanan said, 'Three remained of them: the gulf of Gador, the hot springs of Tiberias and the great springs of Biram'.

2. 'For the way of all flesh was corrupted upon the earth' (Gen. 6:12). R. Yochanan said, 'This teaches that they caused domesticated beasts to copulate with wild beasts and wild beasts with domesticated beasts, and all of them with human beings and human beings with all of them'. R. Abba bar Kahana said, 'All of them repented except the *tushlami*'.⁸

7. The implication being that seeing the women provoked their desire and led to sin.

8. According to Rashi, a type of bird known to couple with other species. The *tushlami* is listed in Chullin 62b amongst other birds of uncertain status. This suggests that it is a bird found in reality rather than a mythical bird like the phoenix. Jastrow (*A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, Pardes Publishing House, New York, 1950) suggests it was a 'Tartarian lark'. However, the 'Tartarian lark' is itself not known and it may rather be a subspecies of lark with the Latin name *tartarica*. If the *tushlami* is identified with a species of lark, this may be because it goes through a variety of plumage changes, or mimics other birds, leading to the impression of breeding with other species. My thanks to Rabbi Reuven Silverman for the ornithological information.

3. 'And the Eternal One said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before me"' (Gen. 6:13).

R. Yochanan said: Come and see how great is the effect of violence,⁹ for behold, the Generation of the Flood transgressed every sin, but the decree was not sealed against them until they stretched out their hands in robbery with violence, as it is said, 'For the earth is full of violence before them, and behold I will destroy them and the earth' (*ibid.*). And it is written, 'Violence arises as the rod of wickedness; nothing comes of them, nor of their abundance nor their wealth. There shall be no wailing for them' (Ezek. 7:11).¹⁰ R. Elazar said: This teaches that [violence] stood straight as a rod before the Holy One and said before him, 'Master of the universe, not of them nor of their abundance nor of their wealth, and let there be no wailing for them'.

D

1. A Tanna of the school of R. Ishmael [taught]: The decree was made even for Noah, but he found favour in God's eyes, as it is said, '...I regret that I have made them. And Noah found favour in the eyes of God' (Gen. 6:7-8). 'And God regretted that He had made human beings on the earth' (Gen. 6:6). When Rav Dimi came, he said: The Holy One said, 'I did well in appointing them graves in the earth'. How does [the verse] imply this? It is written here, 'God regretted' and it is written there, 'He (Joseph) comforted them and appealed to them' (Gen. 50:21). Others say, 'I did not do well in appointing them graves in the earth'. Here it is writ-

9. The Jerusalem manuscript reads: קשה ענשו שלחמס, 'how hard is the punishment for violence'.

10. The 'Authorised Version' translates 'None of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of theirs; neither shall there be any wailing for them'. *The Tanakah (Tanakh - The Holy Scriptures)*, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1998 reads, 'Nothing comes of them, nor of their abundance or of their wealth; nor is there pre-eminence among them.' I have used elements of both to reflect the use of the verse in BT.

ten, 'And He regretted'. There it is written, 'God repented of the evil that He had spoken of doing to his people' (Ex. 32:14).¹¹

2. 'These are the Generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous and perfect man in his Generation' (Gen. 6:9). R. Yochanan said, 'In his Generation, but not in other Generations'. Resh Lakish said, 'In his Generation, and all the more so in other Generations'. R. Hanina said, 'To what may R. Yochanan's view be compared? To a flask of wine which is left in a cellar of [flasks of] vinegar. In this place it is fragrant, but in a different place it is not fragrant'. R. Oshaiah said, 'To what may Resh Lakish's view be compared? To a phial of precious oil which is left in a place of refuse. In this place it is fragrant, and all the more so in a place of perfume'.

E

1. 'And God wiped out all living things from the face of the earth' (Gen. 7:23). If human beings sinned, what did animals do? A Tanna taught in the name of R. Joshua ben Korcha: It may be compared to a man who sets up a wedding canopy for his son and prepares all sorts of food. A few days later, his son dies. He rises up and destroys the canopy. He says, 'I did this only for my son. Now that he has died, why do I need the wedding canopy?' Similarly, the Holy One said, 'I created domestic and wild animals only for human beings. Now that human beings are sinning, what use are domestic and wild animals to me?'

2. 'Everything that was on dry ground died' (Gen. 7:22) - but not the fish that were in the sea. R. Jose of Caesarea expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'He is swift on the face of the

11. Hebrew נחם in all these verses, as is discussed below.

water; their portion is cursed on the earth' (Job 24:18)? It teaches that the righteous Noah rebuked them and said to them, 'Repent, and if not, the Holy One will bring a flood upon you, and your corpses will float on the water like waterskins, as it is said, "He is swift¹² on the face of the water"'. And not only this, but the curse extended from them to all future generations, as it is said, 'Their portion is cursed on the earth; he will not turn aside by way of the vineyards'. This teaches that they would turn by way of the vineyards. They¹³ said to him, 'Who prevents [you]?' He said to them, 'I have one precious pigeon whom I will save from amongst you'. [108b] 'If so, we will not turn aside from the way of the vineyard'.¹⁴

3. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'A torch¹⁵ despised in the thought of those who are at ease, ready for those whose foot slips' (Job 12:5)? It teaches that the righteous Noah rebuked them and spoke to them words which were as hard as flint, and they would despise him. They would say to him, 'Old man, what is this ark for?' He said to them, 'The Holy One is bringing a flood upon you'. They said, 'A flood of what? If it is a flood of fire, we have a substance called *alita*. If it is a flood of water, if it comes from the earth, we have plates of iron¹⁶ to cover the earth with. If it comes from heaven, we have a substance called *akov*'.¹⁷ Some say it is called *akosh*. He said to them, 'God will bring it from between the heels of your feet, as it is said, 'Ready for those whose foot slips' (Job 12:5). It is taught in a

12. Hebrew קל, also meaning 'light' and resembling קלל, 'to curse.' 'Light on the face of the water' suggests something which floats, hence the corpses floating like waterskins.

13. This is the reading in the Florence and Jerusalem manuscripts, where the Romm Vilna edition has 'He said...'. The reading 'They' makes better sense here, presenting a conversation between the Generation of the Flood and God.

14. This section is unclear, as is discussed more fully below.

15. לפיד, meaning 'torch' and 'flint'.

16. A pun on עששיות and עשתות, translated in both *Tanakh* and Authorised Version as 'thought' (though the word is obscure) in Job 12:5.

17. עקב, a pun on עקבי רגליכם, literally 'the heels of your feet.'

baraita: The waters of the flood were as hard as an emission of seed, as it is said, 'Ready for those whose foot slips'.¹⁸

4. Rav Hisda said, 'Through hot passion they ruined themselves through sin, and through hot water they were judged'. It is written here, 'The waters abated' (Gen. 8:1) and it is written there, 'The anger of the king abated' (Esther 7:10).¹⁹

F

'And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood came upon the earth' (Gen. 7:10). What was the nature of these seven days? Rav said: 'They were the days of mourning for Methusaleh, to teach that the mourning for the righteous delays the punishment that is to come'. Another explanation: in these seven days God reversed for them the order of creation, so that the sun rose in the west and set in the east. Another explanation: God fixed a long period and afterwards a short period. Another explanation: Seven days in which they were given a taste of the world to come, so that they would know what good was being withheld from them.

G

'From all the pure animals you shall take seven and seven, each male with its mate' (Gen. 7:2). Do animals have mates?! R. Samuel bar Nachmani said in the name of R. Jonathan, '[Rather, it means] those which had not been used for transgression'. How did he know? R. Hisda said, 'He made them pass before the ark, and if the ark accepted them in, he knew they had not been used for transgression, and if the ark did not accept them in, he knew they had been used for transgression'. R. Abbahu said, 'From those which came of their own accord'.

18. Foot, רגל, is a euphemism for the male genitalia.

19. וישכו in Gen. 8:1 and שכחה in Esther 7:10, referring to the anger of King Ahasuerus.

H

1. 'Make yourself an ark of gopher wood' (Gen. 6:14). What is gopher wood? R. Ada, and some say R. Shilo, said, '*Mavligah*' and some say '*Golamish*'.²⁰
2. 'You shall make a light for the ark' (Gen. 6:16). R. Yochanan said: The Holy One said to Noah, 'Fix in it precious stones and jewels, in order that it will shine out for you as bright as noon'.²¹
3. 'You shall cover it for a cubit upwards' (*ibid.*). So that it may withstand [the waters.]
4. 'You shall make a second and third storey for it' (*ibid.*). It was taught: 'The lowest floor was for dung, the middle for animals and the highest for human beings'.

J

1. 'And he sent out the raven' (Gen. 8:7). Resh Lakish said: The raven gave a decisive argument to Noah. He said to him, 'Your Master must hate me, and you must hate me. Your master must hate me because [He commanded you to take] seven of the pure animals and two of the impure, and you must hate me because you leave alone the species of which there are seven and send me, of a species of which there are only two. If the power of the heat or the power of the cold should strike me, would not the world be missing a species? Or perhaps you desire my mate?' He said to him, 'You wicked one! If one who is permitted to me [my wife] is forbidden to me, how much more so is one who is forbidden [your mate]'. Whence is it derived that they were forbidden [from co-habiting]? It is written, 'You shall come into the ark, you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you' (Gen. 6:18). And it is

20. Sokoloff (*A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods*, Bar Ilan University Press, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Ramat Gan, Baltimore, 2002) cites זמבליגה as a late Jewish Aramaic alternative for מבליגה. He simply defines גולמיש as a type of tree. Jastrow suggests both words denote a type of cedar, citing bRosh Hashanah 23a.

21. צהרים, related to צוהר, the word used here for 'light'.

written, 'Go out of the ark, you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you' (Gen. 8:16). R. Yochanan said, 'From this we deduce that they were forbidden to engage in sexual relations'.

2. It was taught in a *baraita*: Three engaged in sexual relations in the ark, and they were all chastised: the dog, the raven and Ham. The dog became tied, the raven expectorated its seed and Ham's skin was afflicted.

3. 'And he sent the dove out from him, to see if the waters had subsided' (Gen. 8:8). R. Jeremiah said, 'From this we learn that the dwelling place of pure birds is with the righteous'.

4. 'And behold, a torn-off olive leaf was in her mouth' (Gen. 8:11). R. Eleazar said: The dove said before the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, may my food be as bitter as the olive and received from your hand, rather than as sweet as honey and received from flesh and blood'. What is the meaning of 'torn'? It refers to food, as it is said, 'Feed me²² the bread of your laws' (Prov. 30:8).

K

1. 'They went out from the ark by their families' (Gen. 8:19). R. Yochanan said, 'By their families, and not on their own'.²³

R. Hana bar Bizna said: Eliezer said to Shem [Noah's] eldest son, 'It is written, "They went out from the ark by their families". How did you manage?'

He said, 'We had great trouble. We fed species which were accustomed to eat in the day by day, and those which were accustomed to eat at night, we fed at night. My father did not know what the chameleon ate. One day he was sitting and cutting up a pomegranate and a

22. הטריפני, from the root טרף, usually meaning 'to tear'.

23. 'By their families' implies not just pairs but also their young with them.

worm fell from it. The chameleon ate it. From that time on, he would heap up bran and when it became infested with worms, he would feed it. When the lion had a fever, it sustained him, as Rav said, "A fever sustains for not less than six days and not more than thirteen days". My father found the phoenix sleeping in the store-room. When he asked him, "Don't you want any food?" it said to him, "I saw you were busy and decided not to bother you". He said, "May it be God's will that you do not die, as it is said, 'I thought I would die with my nest and live as long as the phoenix'"²⁴(Job 29:18).'

2. Shem, the eldest son, said to Eliezer, 'When the Kings of the East and West came to you, how did you do what you did?'

He said, 'The Holy One came to Abraham and sat at his right hand, and they threw dust and it turned to swords and stubble and it turned to arrows, as is it said, "A psalm of David: The Eternal One said, 'Let my master sit at my right hand until I set your enemy as your footstool'" (Ps. 110:1). And it is said, "Who arouses the righteous [man] from the East and calls him to his feet? He sets before him nations and kings, he descends and gives his sword like dust, and his bow like driven stubble" (Is. 41:2)'.

L

Nachum of Gimzo was accustomed to say of all that happened to him, 'Also this is for good'.²⁵ One day, the Jewish people wished to send a gift to the Caesar. They said, [109a] 'Whom shall we send on our behalf? Let us send on our behalf Nachum of Gimzo, who is well versed in miracles'. When he reached a certain inn, he wished to stay overnight. They

24. Hebrew חול usually means 'sand' and it is only in the Book of Job that the meaning 'phoenix' is understood, partly based on a different 'k'ri' vocalisation according to the Masoretic note. The phrase וְכָחֹל אֶרְבֶּה יָמַי could also be read 'will multiply days as sand.' However, the phrase 'with my nest' supports the idea of the phoenix, which would die with its nest and then be reborn. As Job was probably written during the Persian period (539-332 BCE), the idea of the phoenix would probably have been known through Greek culture.

25. גם זו לטובה. A play is made on the place name Gimzo, a town in Judaea.

said to him, 'What do you have with you?' He said to them, 'I have brought a tribute for the Caesar'. They arose at night and unlocked his luggage and took away all that was in it and replaced it with dust.

When he reached his destination, the dust was found. They said, 'The Jews are surely mocking us'. They took him out to kill him. He said, 'Also this is for good'. Elijah came and appeared as one of them. He said to them, 'Perhaps this dust is from the dust of our ancestor Abraham, which, when they threw it, the dust turned to swords and the stubble to arrows'. They examined it and found it was so. They sent some of the dust to a district which they had not been able to conquer, and they conquered it.

They went up to the treasury and said, 'Take as much as you like'. He filled his chest with gold. When he returned [to the inn] the lodgers said to him, 'What did you take to the palace?' He said to them, 'What I took from here I brought there'. They took it [dust] there, and they put those lodgers to death.

Mishnah, Tosefta, Palestinian Talmud

The Hebrew texts of the Tosefta and PT are found in Appendix 1.

Mishnah

In the Mishnah (Sanh.10:3, 107b), the Generation of the Flood, the Generation of the Dispersion and the Men of Sodom are grouped together. However, in the Kaufmann and Parma manuscripts of the Mishnah, the text is much briefer. The Generation of the Dispersion is omitted altogether, as are the phrase 'no judgement and no spirit' and the proof-texts for the Men of Sodom. Various groups from the wilderness period are also listed in this mishnah:

the spies, the Generation of the Wilderness and the Congregation of Korach. The same mishnah states: 'The ten tribes will not return', which is not a denial of the tribes' place in the world to come, despite it being in this chapter. Rather, it appears to be related to the eschatological nature of the chapter, since the return of the Ten Tribes is seen as destined for the end time.

The list of groups from the book of Genesis follows biblical chronology: the Generation of the Flood, the Generation of the Dispersion and the Men of Sodom. The three groups are also linked in midrash. In GenR 19:7 these three are part of a succession of generations whose deeds caused the Shechinah to depart to a higher level of the firmament (and therefore further from human beings).²⁶ In tSotah, the groups are part of a different list (see section B1). It is possible that three groups from Genesis are chosen to mirror the three kings in the preceding Mishnah, just as four groups are mentioned from the wilderness period, which would mirror the four commoners. However, as mentioned, the groups from the wilderness vary in different versions of the Mishnah and the Tosefta and BT, so the parallel structures of the Mishnah are tenuous. It may be rather that the compilers of the Mishnah wished to emphasise particular themes by choosing the groups they did. Alternatively, there may also have been a completely separate tradition about these three groups. Evidence for this last possibility is that the three groups are mentioned together in the Tosefta and halachic midrashim, as discussed in section B1.

The Mishnah has an initial statement that the Generation of the Flood will have no share in the world to come, nor will they face judgement, and a proof-text is given. Similar statements and proof-texts follow for the Generation of the Dispersion and the Men of Sodom. There is

26. Adam and Eve, Cain, the Generation of Enoch and the Egyptians at the time of Abraham are also listed.

then a further debate about whether the Men of Sodom will face judgement alongside the Generation of the Flood.

It appears to be agreed that the Generation of the Flood will not face judgement, since there is no contrary opinion recorded. The initial *baraita* of the Gemara suggests that judgement means the return of the soul to the body. This understanding is supported by the parallel phrase in the Tosefta (see below), 'The Generation of the Flood have no share in the world to come and will not live in the world to come'. The distinction between the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom may be because the word יָדוֹן in the flood narrative (Gen. 6:3) lends itself to this particular interpretation rather than because one group is worse than the other. In fact Finkelstein, who discusses this mishnah in great detail, suggests that the denial of judgement does not itself constitute a punishment. Rather, judgement determines whether there is punishment or reward, and this is only possible if the soul is returned to the body.²⁷ The opportunity for judgement may therefore mean the possibility of reward, but in the case of the wicked rather implies the likelihood of punishment. Finkelstein published his analysis over sixty years ago and much has changed in our understanding of rabbinic texts. However, his analysis of the different ways the Tannaim understood future judgement has essentially been substantiated by Milikowsky,²⁸ and makes sense of the way the Tannaim tried to conceptualise seemingly contradictory ideas.

27. L. Finkelstein, מְבוֹא לַמִּסְכָּתוֹת אֲבוֹת וְאֲבוֹת דִּרְבֵּי נֶתָן, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1950, p. 226.

28. C. Milikowsky, 'Gehenna and "Sinners of Israel" in the Light of Seder Olam', *Tarbiz* vol. 55, 1986, pp. 311-343 (Hebr.).

Tosefta

The corresponding Tosefta (San.13:6) closely resembles the first *baraita* of the Gemara. However, the phrase ואינן חיינן לעוה"ב is added. This phrase may reflect divergent beliefs about the world to come. By the time of the Mishnah, there were two opinions: one was that there would be immediate judgement of the soul after death for the world to come, the other that judgement would be at the time of the resurrection.²⁹ Finkelstein suggests that the Tosefta here elaborates the Mishnah to emphasise that those listed will neither be judged for the world to come immediately after death nor resurrected.

The proof-text for the punishment of the Generation of the Flood is Gen. 7:23, 'And God wiped out all that existed on the face of the earth'. This is seen as referring to this world and the world to come. In the *baraita*, there is an attribution to R. Akiva. This is absent both in the Tosefta and in PT. Since the BT is known to add or change attributions, this may be such a change, but the *baraita* may reflect a different tradition. The interpretation by R. Judah b. Batyra of the verse follows: 'they shall not be judged and my spirit will not be in them for ever'. In the BT this is terser: 'No judgement and no spirit'. The Tosefta may be seen as elaborating the phrase, so making its meaning clearer. Both BT and Tosefta give a third, anonymous, opinion that the souls of the wicked will not be returned to their casing. This may be seen as a parallel concept to 'standing in judgement', since for judgement the soul must be returned to the body.

The final part of both the Tosefta and the *baraita* quote R. Menachem b. Joseph, who relates the harshness of the punishment the wicked will suffer. The wording is similar, but in the BT

29. *Ibid.*; Finkelstein, מבוא למסכתות אבות ואבות דרבי נתן, pp. 318-9.

the phrase 'in Gehinnom' is added. Both conclude with the proof-text Is. 33:11, 'You shall conceive hay, give birth to straw; fire will consume your souls'.

Thus, the Tosefta and the *baraita* appear to have a common source, or one has been borrowed from the other. The relationship between the Tosefta and the *baraitot* of BT has been much debated. It seems most likely that the BT did not draw directly on the Tosefta as a collection, but rather that individual sayings may have been incorporated into both.³⁰

Tosefta Sotah also contains parallel material to the BT, which will be considered at the relevant points below.

Palestinian Talmud

The PT again uses Gen. 7:23 as the proof-text for the fate of the Generation of the Flood. It uses the phrase *ואינן רואין לעתיד לבוא*. This may be a reference to the future judgement or the return of the soul to the body, both of which are referred to in the Mishnah, Tosefta and first *baraita* of the BT. As discussed above, the return of the soul seems to be a prerequisite for judgement. This is also made clear in Perek Helek in the BT, where, as part of a lengthy discussion of the resurrection of the dead, a *mashal* illustrates the joint judgement of body and soul (bSan. 91a-b). In the PT, the concept of the return of the soul to the body seems to be emphasised in the opinions which follow. The anonymous opinion cited in the PT that the soul will not return to its casing is also found in the Tosefta and the *baraita*.

30. Y. Elman, *Authority and Tradition: Toseftan Baraitot in Talmudic Babylonia*, Yeshiva University Press, New York, 1994; S. Friedman, 'הבריות בתלמוד הבבלי ויחסן למקבילותיהן שבתוספתא' in S. Friedman, M. Schmeltzer and M. Hirschman (eds.), *מחקרים בספרות התלמודית והרבנית לכבוד פרופסור חיים זלמן דימיטרובסקי*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2000, pp. 163-201.

The final part of the *baraita* mentions Gehinnom. This is elaborated in the PT, where the suffering of the wicked is described. This is not found at this point in bSan. On the other hand, the PT concludes with this description, and has none of the aggadic material which follows in the BT. It is therefore far briefer, and its emphasis is on the punishment in Gehinnom, rather than on the wrongdoing.

The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis

The parallel texts cited here are found in Appendix 1.

The *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood will now be discussed section by section in association with parallel material.

Section A. Judgement concerning the world to come

This section, concerning judgement and the world to come, has already been discussed as it is close in content to the corresponding PT and Tosefta. The only other similar text is Seder Olam Rabbah, which is thought to be Tannaitic or early Amoraic, and therefore earlier than the BT.³¹ It uses the same proof-text as the Mishnah to prove that the Generation of the Flood will not face judgement.

The section explores the enigmatic verse 'my spirit will not reside in human beings for ever' (Gen. 6:3). In the biblical context, this seems to be stating that human beings will no longer have life spans of hundreds of years, as enjoyed by the Generations from Adam to Noah, but only 120 years. It plays on the word יָדוֹן, which is a *hapax legomenon*. The word לָדוֹן means

31. G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 326.

'to judge', hence it may be read for the purpose of exegesis as, 'My spirit will not judge human beings for the world (to come).' The alternative reading appears to understand ידון as meaning 'reside', and therefore sees the verse as referring to the soul residing in the body, its 'casing'. רוחי, which in the biblical verse clearly means God's spirit, appears to be understood as referring to the spirit/soul of God within human beings.

R. Akiva's view is that the Generation of the Flood will not enter the world to come. R. Judah ben Batyra's is that their souls will not be restored to their bodies for judgement. R. Menachem ben Joseph brings a third view, that their souls will be restored to their body and that they will be judged and face torment as a punishment. He uses as a proof-text Is. 33:11: תהרו חשש תלדו קש רוחכם אש תאכלכם - 'You shall conceive hay, give birth to straw; fire will consume your soul'. He may be playing on the apparent redundancy of the word רוחכם : the clause would otherwise read 'Fire will consume you'.

Section B. Pride in their wealth

B1

This section is a *baraita* which draws extensively on proof-texts from Job. It is followed immediately by a saying attributed to R. Jose (B2, see below). Both have close parallels in tSotah 3:6 and also SifreiDeut (Ekev 11) and MRI (Shira-beshallach 2), halachic midrashim probably dating from the second half of the third century CE,³² and also the Tanhuma (Beshallach 12). Although B1 and B2 are considered separately, they are continuous in all the texts and in this sense constitute a single unit.

32. See Stemberger, *Introduction*, pp. 253-255 and 272-273.

The Sotah passage (see appendix) is in the context of a discussion about *middah keneged middah*, measure for measure. It is a key passage for the elaboration of the concept, beginning with the Sotah herself and listing several other instances where the principle is applied in punishment. As Urbach discusses, the setting out of the principle in practice here is one way the rabbis worked out questions of reward and punishment.³³

In common with BT, tSotah (3:10ff.) also discusses the Generation of the Dispersion³⁴ and the Men of Sodom, before continuing with Egypt and then Samson, Absalom, Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar. It uses the term *אנשי מבול*, and there are other differences in wording. Although essentially it follows the same pattern as BT, the text does not flow as smoothly. For example, where the BT has

אמרו: כלום צריכין אנו לו אלא לטיפה של גשמים יש לנו נהרות ומעינות שאנו מסתפקין מהן

They said, 'We do not need God. On the contrary, rather than a drop of rain, we have rivers and springs which meet our needs.'

T has

כלום יש לו עלינו אלא גשמים הרי יש לנו נחלים שאנו מסתפקין מהן ואין אנו צריכין לו

שנא' ואד יעלה מן הארץ.³⁵

We have nothing from Him but rain, and behold we have rivers which meet our needs so we do not need Him, as it is said, 'And a mist went up from the ground...' (Gen. 2:6).

33. E. Urbach, *The Sages*, trans. I. Abrahams, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, England, 1979, pp. 436-440.

34. Referred to in tSotah 3:3 and elsewhere as 'the Men of the Tower (of Babel)'.

35. Zuckerman edn. which draws on the Erfurt and Vienna manuscripts. The Vienna manuscript, which makes even less sense, reads:

אמרו אין עלינו טרחות אלא שתי טיפות של גשמים הרי שלנו נהרות ומעינות שאנו מסתפקין בהם בימות החמה ובימות הגשמים

שנא' ואד יעלה מן הארץ.

The meaning of T is not clear: the first phrase literally means, 'He has nothing against us except rain', although the intention seems to be as I have translated it. The proof-text from Gen. 2:6, 'And a mist went up from the ground and watered all the face of the earth', may relate to the plenitude of water, and is found in other parallel passages (see below). However, it interrupts the flow and does not provide a clear proof-text either for the plenitude of rivers or the provision of rain. BT may have deliberately omitted this proof-text in order to give continuity between the disavowal by the Generation of the Flood of their need for God's help and God's response that they would be punished. BT also avoids the apparent redundancy of the sentence in the Tosefta by placing צריכין לו, 'we [do not] need Him' at the beginning of the sentence.

The MRI passage is in the context of a commentary on the word גאה in the Song of the Sea (Ex. 15:1). Here it is seen to refer both to God being elevated and to the Generation of the Flood elevating themselves in pride. The pride of the Generation of the Dispersion and the Men of Sodom is then described. As in the other passages, the quotations from Job are used to show their prosperity. The quotation about the mist here makes sense, as being proof of the benefit of water given to the Generation of the Flood. Similarly, a quotation about rain falling for forty days and forty nights (Gen. 7:12) here proves the severity of the punishment.

The Sifrei passage is in the context of a commentary on Deut. 11:15, 'You shall eat and be satisfied'. Its focus is therefore on the Generation of the Wilderness, but it cites the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom, who also rebel as a result of the benefits they have been given. The term it uses for the Generation of the Flood is אנשי דור המבול. Like tSotah and MRI, it cites Gen. 2:6, about the mist arising from the ground. Like MRI, Sifrei cites the forty days and forty nights.

The Tanhuma is very similar to MRI, although there are differences in the way the proof-texts are cited: the words שוטים שבעולם which begin God's rebuke in MRI are not in Tan, whereas Tan adds the citation of Gen. 7:23, 'And it rained for forty days... and all existence was wiped out'.

Irving Jacobs points out that there is a strong association between Job and the flood story. Indeed, Job was seen as the expositor of the story, as GenR 26:7 says, 'Had Job come into the world for the sole purpose of recording for us the details of the story of the Generation of the Flood, it would have sufficed him'.³⁶

B2

In the BT, R. Jose is attributed with the saying that the Generation of the Flood became proud because of the eyeball. There are widespread parallels in early rabbinic literature. As well as the continuations of the tSotah, MRI, Sifrei and Tan passages cited above, it is found in GenR (32:7) and NumR (9:24). In all but the BT, the attribution is to R. Jose b. Durmaskit (one from Damascus, or 'son of the Damascene woman'),³⁷ and his appellation is also found in the Jerusalem and Karlsruhe manuscripts of the BT. It is therefore likely that Jose b. Durmaskit was the tradent, and that the words 'ben Durmaskit' were omitted at some stage.

Tosefta Sotah most closely resembles BT, with both quoting the same proof-texts from the Noah narrative.

36. I. Jacobs, *The Midrashic Process: Tradition and Interpretation in Rabbinic Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, p. 27.

37. The latter as translated by Stemmerger, *Introduction*, p. 74.

Sifrei, MRI and Tan are identical in wording.³⁸ None uses the comparison of the eyeball (גלגל העין) with water,³⁹ rather stating that they set their eyes above and below, and so God opened for them the fountains of above and below. There is a play here on the word עין, which, depending on the vocalisation, can mean either 'eye' or 'fountain'. All the texts conclude with the same proof-text, Gen. 7:11.

NumR is the same as BT, except that where BT gives as a proof-text the second half of Gen. 6:2, 'They took wives from amongst any that they chose', NumR gives the first part of the verse, 'The Divine Beings saw the daughters of Adam...', which is a more obvious proof-text because 'seeing' is a link with the eye. However, the compilers of the BT would have expected the beginning of the verse to be known, and the allusion understood. GenR is a brief statement, without proof-texts, and rather than the eyeball being the cause of the pride which led to sin, it was the means by which they actually sinned.

The section about the pride of the Generation of the Flood thus reflects a widespread Tannaitic tradition about the eye, which is nevertheless unclear in its exact meaning. The initial *baraita* is found in MRI and SifreiDeut as well as tSotah, and the second part, about the pride of the eye, is found additionally, albeit in briefer form, in both GenR and NumR. R. Jose b. Durmaskit is cited as the tradent in all these texts, as well as manuscripts of the BT, so this appears to be a well-founded attribution.

The BT uses these traditions with some changes of wording which make clearer the counterpoint between the statements of the Generation of the Flood and of God warning of their punishment. Its wording is closest to tSotah, but there are also differences from this text and sim-

38. Except that the Tanhuma has לעשות תחתון instead of לעשות תאומם, which does not make sense and is probably a scribal error in repeating the word תחתון from earlier in the sentence.

39. The Florence MS reads עולמים instead of מים. It is easier to see the resemblance of the eyeball to a world than to water, both being round, but nevertheless מים is likely to be the correct reading, since it relates better to the context of punishment by water and is found in all other texts.

ilarities to the others. Overall, it cannot be concluded that it uses a single identifiable source. Rather, it seems more likely it draws on a widespread tradition.

The BT, like the other texts, draws extensively on Job to highlight the prosperity of the Generation of the Flood. However, in order to fully demonstrate the 'measure for measure' nature of their punishment, it also needs to emphasise the role of water in their sin. The compilers of the BT do this in two ways. Firstly, they attribute to the Generation of the Flood words which boast of the plentiful water they possess. As a proof-text they use the phrase מַבּוּל מַיִם, a flood of water, in Gen. 6:2. The word מַיִם is redundant, and is therefore understood as pointing to the cause for God bringing the flood. Secondly, drawing on earlier tradition, they use the parallel of the eyeball. The nature of the resemblance between the eyeball and water is unclear. It may be because of tears, or it may be because the eye contains watery fluid. There may also be a link between 'the windows of heaven' and the idea of the eye as the window of the soul. The proof-text also works on a more direct level, in the word-play on עֵינַי, as mentioned above.

Section C. Corruption (R. Yochanan's sayings)

This section consists of three sayings attributed to R. Yochanan. It is linked to the preceding in its use of Gen. 7:11, the breaking out of the springs of the deep. It is not found in the Tannaitic texts and this and the attribution to R. Yochanan make it likely that it is from the time of R. Yochanan or later. However, the possibility remains that an earlier oral tradition or lost written tradition may have been adapted here.

The last part of the first saying, regarding the springs that remained after the flood, has a parallel in GenR 33:4, which states that after the flood abated, three remained. One is the spring

of Tiberias, as in the BT, but the other two are different: Avlonis and the cave of Paneas. This suggests a long-standing tradition about the springs remaining from the flood. The spring of Tiberias seems to have been a historical reality: it is mentioned incidentally in a discussion of where it is permitted to bathe on Shabbat (bShabbat 40a). The springs are also mentioned earlier in Perek Helek, San. 93a, where it is recounted that Daniel went to dig the springs. Biram was probably west of the Euphrates, in the region of Pumbeditha. Although Oppenheimer suggests that a Biram in Palestine is meant,⁴⁰ it is more likely that the BT altered the Palestinian source to mention a Babylonian place (see below). The fact that the names of the springs are the only Aramaic in the whole of sections A and B makes it likely that this was indeed an Babylonian alteration.

The second saying also has parallels in GenR (28:8). In a comment on Gen. 6:12, 'For the way of all flesh was corrupted upon the earth', GenR elaborates the mating between animals of different species. BT is here more succinct, omitting the various examples given in GenR and only stating that wild beasts, domesticated beasts and humans all mated with each other. The curious creature the *tushlami*, which, according to R. Abba bar Kahana did not repent, is not mentioned in GenR.

Although each part of this section is attributed to R. Yochanan, they also develop different themes. The first part continues the 'measure for measure' theme in emphasising the *great* sin and the *great* punishment, using a *gezerah shavah*.

The word הרבין, the *hiphil* third person plural, suggests that human beings appear to be the cause of the corruption, not only of themselves but of animals too, since they caused the

40. A. Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1983, *ad. loc.*

breeding between species. On the other hand, R. Abba Bar Kahana's saying, which follows, implies that the animals had a responsibility, since they repented.

The third part of this section appears to be unique to BT. It emphasises the reason for such drastic punishment, resulting in the destruction of all life. In contrast to the preceding subsection, the principle wrong here is depicted as violence, following from the biblical text which explicitly states violence as God's reason for destroying the earth. An equation is made between violence (חמס) and robbery (גזל), i.e. theft with violence. The verse from Ezekiel makes a suitable proof-text since it has a clear link with violence and also makes reference to 'their abundance', which has already been emphasised. The verse is alliterative, but the meaning of *is* *ולא מהמהם ולא נה בהם*, 'nothing comes of them, nor of their abundance nor their wealth...', is uncertain and the syntax is also puzzling. R. Elazar's saying plays on the redundant 'before them' in Gen. 6:13 to evoke the image of violence arising and standing straight as a rod.

There is significant variation amongst manuscripts for this section, but none is clearer in its meaning.

Section D. Noah

The first part of this section plays on the juxtaposition of 'I regret that I have made them' and 'And Noah found favour in the eyes of God' (Gen. 6:7-8), interpreting this as meaning that Noah was saved even though the decree was made against him. It reflects ambivalence about Noah, which is made more explicit later in this section. Noah is said to have found favour in God's eyes, but the reasons are not given either in the Torah or in BT, and we are left with the impression that the favour may be arbitrary.

The following part is principally an exegesis on the root נחם. In the *kal*, it means 'to be at ease'; in the *piel*, 'to comfort or console', and in the *niphal*, 'to be comforted' but also 'to seek comfort'. The *niphal* also comes to mean, 'to be sorry, to regret, to reconsider'. In Gen. 6:7, the *niphal* is used. God regrets the making of human beings, and reconsiders the decision. The link is made with the use of the verb in the *piel* in Gen. 50:21, where Joseph comforts his brothers. However, the use of the proof-text here is not to affirm God's tenderness, but rather to confirm God's decision to prepare graves. The verb here seems to be used of God comforting or reassuring himself that the destruction was justified. Conversely, the proof-text offered for the alternative explanation, that God regretted having prepared graves, is evidence of נחם (here in the *niphal*) being used to show God's change of mind. In Ex. 32:14, following the episode of the Golden Calf, God is persuaded by Moses to rethink the destruction of the Israelites. Hence, two different meanings of the word lead to two different opinions. R. Dimi uses the understanding, found in the narrative about Joseph and his brothers, of consolation (*piel*) and understands the verse as meaning 'I comforted myself that I made them graves in the earth'. The alternative explanation depends on the understanding of repenting or regretting (*niphal*), as found in the aftermath of the Golden Calf, and so interprets the verse as meaning 'I regretted that that I appointed them graves in the earth'. This may either reflect regret at the destruction of human beings or, conversely, regret at having prepared graves in the earth, i.e. a normal burial place, when instead the Generation of the Flood would perish in the sea. There is a play on the redundant phrase 'on the earth' (Gen. 6:6), which can also be interpreted in Hebrew as 'in the earth'. This in turn seems to refer to the burial of the Generation of the Flood in the earth underneath the sea.

Again, no parallels to the BT have been found. The links between citations are in Aramaic and the use of biblical texts to produce contradictory conclusions is typical of talmudic argumentation, suggesting that the section is indeed unique to the BT.

There are parallels to the second section, concerning the relative righteousness of Noah, in GenR 30:9 and Tan Noah 5 and TanB Noah 6. In GenR and Tan the opinions are attributed to R. Judah and R. Nehemiah, but in the BT the attributions are to R. Yochanan and Resh Lakish. This change of attribution will be discussed further below.

The passage in GenR is more extensive. It compares Noah with the Generations of Moses and of Samuel. It begins with the analogy of a market place of the blind, where the partially sighted have much light by comparison. Noah's moral sight, as it were, is thus seen as being better than those with no moral sight at all, but nevertheless impaired.

The analogy of the wine flask amongst flasks of vinegar is much clearer in GenR, which describes the bottles being opened. When the other bottles are opened, they are found to contain vinegar, so when one is opened which contains inferior wine, the wine is good by comparison.

The analogy to support the opposing point of view, that Noah would have been righteous even in other generations, is similar in GenR and the BT. It is again clearer in GenR, where the flask is sealed and in a place of graves, perhaps a place where precious oils and resins would normally be put. GenR uses a similar motif with reference to Abraham, who is described as a flask of incense wrapped in flax and left in a corner. Only when the flask is opened, i.e. Abraham leaves his birth-place, is the incense of benefit (GenR 39:2).

TanB has the same two analogies as GenR for Noah's righteousness in any Generation, though in reverse order. It has a different analogy for Noah being righteous only in his Generation, of a silver coin amongst copper coins.

In Tan, Noah is compared with Abraham and it is said that if Noah had been in the Generation of Abraham, 'he would not have reached his hands or feet', i.e. that he was of far lesser moral stature. The analogies for both points of view in Tan are almost the same - one has balsam in a place that has been soiled and one has a phial of precious oil, as in the second analogy in BT. The BT makes the contrast more clearly, although not as clearly as in GenR.

This section thus confirms the ambivalence of the BT about Noah, which is in common with other rabbinic literature.

Section E. Questioning the destruction

E1

This section continues the exegesis of certain verses from the biblical narrative by questioning Gen. 7:23, 'And God wiped out all living things from the face of the earth'. What sin did the animals commit that they should be destroyed alongside human beings? A *mashal* is given to suggest an explanation.

David Stern describes how the image of the destroyed wedding canopy is widespread in rabbinic literature.⁴¹ According to his designation, it as an example of 'stereotyping', that is, it has conventional themes and narrative motifs. This particular motif is found also in GenR, LamR and Midrash Tehillim. In all three, the son angers his father. However, whereas in

41. D. Stern, *Parables in Midrash*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, 1991, pp. 24-34.

GenR the father kills his son and afterwards destroys the canopy, which is now useless, in Lam R and Midrash Tehillim the father's anger is displaced to the canopy rather than his son. The earliest form is likely to be that in GenR 28:6, cited in the name of R. Pinchas (found also in a Geniza manuscript as GenR 38).⁴² This also shares the context of the flood with BT, whereas the other midrashim relate to the destruction of the Temple. The comparison between BT and GenR is therefore most apposite. In GenR, the description of the preparations for the wedding banquet is more elaborate, as is the description of the father's destruction of all that had been prepared. The analogy with the flood is closer, in that in GenR the King grows angry with his son and kills him, whereas in BT it is simply stated that the son died. The impression in GenR is of a king motivated by anger, whereas in BT the impression is of a king whose anger is a result of grief. This softens the *mashal*, in fitting with a *sugya* which seems to be wrestling with the problem of why God destroyed innocent creatures.

E2

This section starts from Gen. 7:22, 'Everything that was on dry ground died', with a short comment that the fish of the sea were therefore excluded. It continues with an exposition by R. Jose of Caesarea on Job 24:18, which tells of the warning that Noah gave about the impending flood.⁴³ It plays on the Hebrew word קל, which means 'light' and also resembles קלל, 'to curse'. 'Light on the face of the water' therefore suggests the corpses floating like water-skins. GenR (30:7) depicts Noah warning of the flood by planting and cutting down cedar trees and responding, when asked why, that God would bring a flood.

42. M. Sokoloff (ed.) *The Geniza Fragments of Bereshit Rabba*. Publications of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, 1992.

43. The Jerusalem manuscript of BT has Methusaleh delivering the warning at this point.

The rest of this section is difficult to interpret and the various manuscripts show confusion in the text. 'Their portion' may be understood as referring to 'their descendants, future Generations'. A link is made with the end of the Job verse, 'He will not turn aside by way of the vineyards'. This is particularly appropriate in the context of Noah, who is said to be the first cultivator of vineyards (Gen. 9:20). Although the Romm-Vilna edition says initially of the Generation of the Flood that, perversely, 'they *will* turn aside by way of the vineyards', this sentence is absent from the Florence, Munich and Jerusalem manuscripts. Rashi likewise cites only 'He will *not* turn aside...' The Romm-Vilna edition is further confusing in that it says 'He said to him "And who prevents you?"' where 'They said' would make more sense and is supported by the Florence and Jerusalem manuscripts. This reflects the general textual confusion of this section.

'The way of the vineyard' appears to refer to procreation. 'We will *not* turn aside by the way of the vineyard' means that they wished to indulge in sexual relations only for pleasure, intending not to procreate. Irving Jacobs explains that כרם in rabbinic texts has been invested with the meaning of 'a woman', and דרך is sometimes used as a euphemism for sexual intercourse.⁴⁴ The sexual meaning is supported by a parallel text in GenR, 30:2:

'He does not turn aside by way of the vineyard' - that it was not their intention to plant vineyards, but Noah intended only to be fruitful and multiply in the world, [as it is said], 'These are the Generations of Noah'.

A similar understanding of the phrase 'We will *not* turn aside by the way of the vineyard' is found in pYevamot 37b, where it is explained to mean 'they had sexual relations without intending to have children'.

44. I. Jacobs, *The Midrashic Process*, p. 33 n. 31.

The following sentence suggests that the people felt protected by the 'pigeon' who prevented God bringing a flood, and therefore refused to turn aside from their evil ways. The pigeon is understood to refer to Methusaleh, as is made more explicit in section F, where it is stated that the flood is delayed until after his death. It seems clear that the intention of this part of the section is to convey that the Generation of the Flood refused to repent because they felt assured that they would not be punished whilst Methusaleh was alive.

E3 and E4

Noah's warning is followed by an exposition of Job 12:5. This also follows Noah's warning in GenR 30:7. In BT, the exposition is attributed to Rava and in GenR to Abba bar Kahana. In both, a play is made on לפיד, which could mean 'torch' or 'flint', and the word is understood as referring to the Noah's sharp, hard message. GenR also interprets the word עשתות as meaning a metal bar, so referring to the obduracy of the Generation of the Flood.

BT continues with a longer response by the Generation of the Flood, not found in GenR, in which they claim that they have their own special protection. There is a play on the word עשתות in Job, and the phrase עשיות של ברזל which is used elsewhere in the BT to mean lumps of iron which could be transformed into weapons (Yoma 34b, AZ 16a).

The last part of the Job verse, 'ready for those whose foot slips', is a curious phrase which seems related to מועד and רגל, 'appointed time' and 'pilgrim festival'. However, the meaning here is apparently unrelated and no connection is made in either GenR or the BT. In the BT, it is taken to indicate that the water would come from between their feet, whereas in GenR it is understood to refer to two ruptures, one from above and one from below. However, it is also given a sexual meaning, through the understanding of רגל as a euphemism for the male genitalia. A *baraita* follows, which draws on this understanding to interpret the phrase as re-

ferring to emission of seed, and hence returns to the theme of sexual sin. This theme is continued in the quotation by Rav Hisda about hot passion. This plays on the root שכך, which apart from the quotations cited, occurs otherwise only in Esther 2:1 and Jer.5:26. The use of the verb in Genesis is linked to its use in relation to the anger of a king in Esther, so indicating the anger of the Divine King in Genesis. The waters calm down after boiling with anger.

Thus, sections 3 and 4 continue the sexual theme found in the previous section about the 'way of the vineyard.' Again, there is a description of uncontrolled lust. The hardness of flint and the euphemism of רגל lead to the emission of seed, which, as the previous section leads one to expect, is uncontrolled and not intended for procreation as it should be. Rav Hisda's comment also alludes to this, both in the 'boiling' passion it refers to and in the quotation from the book of Esther, which refers to the king's anger abating after what is understood as Haman's attempted rape of Esther. The theme is pervasive in this *sugya*, which has already elaborated the mating between different species. It is also typical of the BT, which freely uses sexual imagery, particularly imagery of male sexual potency, for example, at its most extreme, in BM 64a.

This section again expresses the idea of 'measure for measure'. Since the Generation of the Flood cannot control their sexual passion, they are punished by waters which are compared to an uncontrolled emission of semen.

Section F. The seven day waiting period

This section offers four interpretations of the seven day period between the entry of the animals into the ark and the beginning of the flood. ARNA (Ch. 32) and tSotah 10:1 also have four explanations, three of which are the same: the mourning period for Methusaleh; the re-

versal of the order of creation, so that the sun rose in the west and set in the east; and the taste of the world to come that would be denied to them. The fourth is given in the Tosefta as 'The Holy One gave them a period of seven days after the decree so that they would repent'. In ARNA, they were given a period of seven days to repent after the period of 120 years. The long period and the short period of the BT may be a briefer expression of the same idea.

The period of 120 years relates to the life-span allocated to human beings just before the flood narrative, in Gen. 6:3. The idea of a 120-year waiting period is already present in the Dead Sea Scrolls (manuscript 4Qcommentary on Genesis A), where it is made clear that 120 years was the time between Noah being warned about the flood and its occurrence.⁴⁵

The first explanation (attributed to Rav in BT), the mourning period for Methusaleh, is also found in GenR 32:7. Here, a second explanation offered is that it was the mourning period of God for Creation. This idea is also found in Tan (Shemini 1).

Although it attributes the mourning period for Methusaleh to Rav, an attribution which it has clearly changed, BT appears to be drawing on a long-standing tradition, found in Tannaitic sources.

Section G. The use of animals for transgression

This section returns to the theme of sexual transgression and relates that only those animals that had not been used for transgression, i.e. bestiality, were admitted into the ark. The question being addressed in the biblical text is the description of the animals as, literally, man and wife. There is an underlying understanding that this phrase implies the relationship of man

45. F. G. Martinez, 'Interpretations of the Flood in the Dead Sea Scrolls' in F.G. Martinez & G.P. Luttikhuisen (eds.), *Interpretations of the Flood*, Brill, Leiden, 1998, pp. 86-108.

and wife, that is, a monogamous relationship. Animals are assumed not to have a monogamous relationship (although in fact they sometimes do), so R. Shmuel bar Nachmani therefore understands the phrase as implying instead that they were not used for bestiality.

Two different opinions are given as to how the selection of animals was put into practice: R. Hisda states that the ark accepted only those animals that had not been used for transgression. R. Abbahu states that only those animals which came of their own accord (presumably because they had not been used for transgression) entered the ark. The Tanhuma (Noah 12) combines both these ideas. It states (anachronistically) that the ark accepted only kosher animals, and that they came of their own accord. TanB (Noah 18) states that only those animals which had had no relations with a different species entered into the ark. Again, it is not possible to say whether the Tanhuma or BT is earlier, or whether they both draw on a pre-existing tradition.

Section H. The ark

This is an exegetical section, explaining different aspects of the ark. Parallels to this are found in GenR, but not elsewhere. Gofer wood is explained by two words which are also unusual, גולמיש and מבליגה. GenR (31:8) also gives an explanation, using a different word, קרדינון, or, in some manuscripts, קדרינון, which refers to a type of cedar wood.⁴⁶

GenR (31:11) offers two different explanations of צוהר, an unusual term for 'light' - a window and precious stones. The latter explanation, attributed to R. Levi, is elaborated by R. Pinchas in the name of R. Levi: that it was a miraculous precious stone that would shine out at night.

46. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, s.v. קדרינון.

This resembles the explanation attributed to R. Yochanan in the BT, 'Fix in it precious stones and jewels in order that it will shine out for you as bright as noon'.

The comments in GenR on 'You shall cover it...' (*ibid.*) again differ from the brief comment in BT.

GenR (*ibid.*) also suggests that the three storeys are for different uses. Whereas the BT states that the bottom floor is for dung, the middle for animals and the highest for humans, GenR suggests that humans shared the second floor with pure animals and the top floor was for impure animals. It also offers an alternative, less practical, explanation, that dung was on the top floor and impure animals on the bottom floor.

There is a strong structural resemblance between BT and GenR in this section. BT is exegetical and follows the order of Genesis in the same way that GenR does. There is also similarity in some of the explanations offered, but in others the BT differs. The tendency to brevity can again be noted, e.g. in the explanation of the 'precious jewel' which gave light. Most significantly, the explanations are either anonymous or attributed to Amoraim. This suggests that this section is Amoraic and is modelled on GenR or an earlier source common to both, but, as occurs elsewhere in the *sugya*, attributions are changed.

Section J. The raven and the dove

J1

The next section concerns the raven and the dove. The raven is portrayed as wicked and the dove, a symbol elsewhere of Israel,⁴⁷ as righteous. In the same way the pigeon in section E is

47. bSan. 95a and e.g. GenR 33:6, bBer. 53b, SongR 1:15.

used as a symbol of the righteous Methusaleh. Nevertheless, in the first section, there is sympathy for the raven. In the name of Resh Lakish the raven is credited with a decisive argument when Noah sends him out: that he is one of a species of which only two are saved, so if anything should happen to him, the world would be lacking a species. Our sympathy for the raven is dissipated by his final jibe to Noah that perhaps Noah desires his mate.

In GenR (33:5), R. Judan in the name of R. Judah b. R. Simon is cited as the tradent for the raven's question as to why he, of all the animals, is being sent out. Whereas in BT, Noah's reply to the first part of the raven's argument is not given (he responds rather to the second point), in GenR, Noah retorts that the world has no need of the raven. However, God rebukes Noah, saying that there will indeed be a need of the raven, since the ravens will come to feed Elijah.

Both GenR and BT base their interpretation on the word 'שוב' in Gen. 8:6, associating it with תשובה, response or argumentation. However, the language in the BT recalls more specifically the language of Talmudic argumentation, particularly in the phrase תשובה נצחת, a winning or victorious reply. It is significant that this is attributed to Resh Lakish, who is credited with victorious battles in argument with his teacher, R. Yochanan. The use of the word רבך 'your master' adds to this parallel. It can mean simply 'master' but here is consistent with a reference to rabbinic debate. The idea of rabbinic debate as a battle is typical of the Stammaim,⁴⁸ but there are no other indications that this section is Stammaitic.

BT here focuses on the raven's speech, which is more eloquent than in GenR, but makes an effective link to the next part of this section, about the raven, the dog and Ham. The trans-

48. J. Rubenstein, 'The Thematization of Dialectics in the Bavli Aggadah', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 54, no. 1, 2003, pp. 71-84.

ition is made through Noah's response to the raven, that if his wife, who is normally permitted, is forbidden to him, how much more so what is in any case forbidden.

The prohibition of sexual relations in the ark is also mentioned in GenR 34:7 and pTaanit 1:6, 7a, which both use the same proof-texts as BT to demonstrate this. Since Gen. 7:7 does not say 'Noah and his wife...', but rather 'Noah, his sons, his wife and his sons' wives,' this suggests that just as they went in separately they came out separately. In TanB Noah 17, Gen. 7:7 is used to prove that males and females entered the ark separately because Noah and his sons are listed together and then the wives are listed.

J2

The theme of perverted sexual relations is returned to here. The *baraita* about the raven, the dog and Ham, who all had sexual relations in the ark and were punished, has parallels in GenR (36:7), pTaanit (1:6, 7a) and Tan Noah 12. Tan is closest to BT, with the punishment of all three being the same as in BT. The punishment of the raven is more explicit - it gives its seed from its mouth - whereas in BT it simply states that the raven spits. Where both these state that Ham was afflicted in his skin, and the dog was tied, PT and GenR use the term מפורסם, blackened, for Ham, and the dog is described as 'exposed in his copulation'.⁴⁹ Secunda explains that dogs are generally viewed as licentious in rabbinic literature and the punishment in the BT referred to the fact that the penis of the male became locked in the female during intercourse, thus linking the punishment to the 'crime'.⁵⁰ This would again link a sexual punishment to sexual sin. Ham's blackened skin would recall the black of the raven and the gen-

49. PT reads מפורסם and GenR reads מפורסם. The GenR reading meaning makes more sense. Whereas the PT reading could be from פרץ, to break out, this form is not usually found.

50. S. Secunda, *The Iranian Talmud: Reading the Bavli in its Sasanian Context*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2014, p. 208 n.39. This is certainly true of foxes (as witnessed in my back garden!).

erally negative connotation of the colour black. In GenR, the raven is not mentioned at all. PT and GenR appear to represent a single tradition about the punishment of the dog and Ham, with the raven added in PT, whereas in Tan and BT there is a different tradition about their punishment.

J3 and J4

The idea that the dove prefers bitter food from God to sweet food from flesh and blood has a parallel in GenR 33:6, where it is stated that the dove says to Noah, 'It is better for me to have bitter food from you than sweet food from another'. The saying is also found in bEruv. 18b. Here the tradent is R. Jeremiah ben Elazar rather than R. Elazar. The former is likely to have been the original version, the name Jeremiah being omitted in Sanhedrin. The BT in both places has the dove address God, whereas it addresses Noah in GenR. It thus comes to represent faith in God, rather than human beings, and thus symbolise Israel's faith in God.

Section K. Eliezer and Shem

K1

This penultimate section is different in style from what precedes, as will be discussed further below, in that it is narrative, not midrashic. The core of this section is the conversation between Shem and Eliezer in which Shem relates how he and his family fed the animals. There are parallels in LevR and Tan but as their dating is uncertain, it may be that this material is original to the BT.

Tan Noah 2 cites a dispute between R. Akiva and the Rabbis about what the animals ate in the ark. R. Akiva claims that all the animals ate dried figs, but the rabbis state that they all ate whatever food was customary for them, giving examples. Not only that, but they ate it at

their usual time. Noah was therefore occupied day and night with feeding the animals for the whole twelve months they were in the ark. A similar passage in Tan Noah 9 attributes to R. Akiva a different view: Noah even provided shoots for the elephants and glass for the ostriches. In TanB Noah 14, this view is attributed to R. Abba bar Kahana, which would resolve the contradiction. The BT account is more anecdotal, in keeping with it being a conversation between Shem and Eliezer.

In the BT, the lion is said to have had a fever, and therefore not needed feeding for a few days. Tan Noah 9 gives a different anecdote about the lion (also found in LevR 20:1 and TanB Noah 14, and 4, in an abbreviated form), that Noah was late in feeding it one day, and it therefore injured him. As a result, Noah limped from the ark, and so was unfit to offer a sacrifice and Shem did this in his stead. The BT account offers the opportunity to teach Rav's view about the treatment of a fever, thereby introducing some medical knowledge.

Significantly in the context of the chapter, BT introduces the feeding of the animals in the context of a conversation between Eliezer and Shem. The introduction of Eliezer at this point is likely to be deliberate. It serves as a link both with Abraham's battle with the kings, and so the story of Nahum of Gimzo, which concludes the Noah section, and with Eliezer's role in Sodom (San. 109b), which will be discussed in the next chapter.

K2

This section has a parallel in GenR 43:3, where a dispute is presented between R. Judah and R. Nehemiah. R. Judah claims that Abraham cast dust on the kings and it turned into swords, and straw and it became arrows. R. Nehemiah claims, conversely, that the kings threw swords on Abraham and they turned into dust and arrows turned into straw. BT follows R. Judah's view, though whether directly or through a different source cannot be known.

Section L. Nachum of Gimzo

This section is narrative and does not appear to have parallels outside the BT, where it is found in bTaanit 21a. The story is essentially the same in both places, although there are some differences in phrasing. In Taanit, it follows a story of Nachum's suffering, attributed to delay in giving food to a poor man, and serves to give an explanation of his name. It appears to be a late addition to a story which is in Hebrew and likely to be Amoraic. An insertion which adds an explanation, here introduced by the phrase *אמאי קרו ליה*, is typical of Stammaitic editing.⁵¹ Here in Sanhedrin the story is more integral to the *sugya*. It flows from the conversation between Eliezer and Shem, linking the dust Nachum used to the battle Abraham fought.

Literary Analysis

Structure

I have divided the *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood into sections according to subject matter. With the exception of the last two sections, each of these begins with the citation of a scriptural verse, sometimes attributed to a tradent. The division is summarised again below, this time with words which suggest the possibility of a chiastic structure highlighted in bold print.⁵² Judgement (A, E4), pride (B, E2) and animals (C2, E1) may be seen as forming a chi-

51. J. Rubenstein, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggada' in *Creation and Composition, The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammim) to the Aggada*, ed. J. Rubenstein, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 417-440; S. Friedman, 'הסוגיה ומרכביה' in (ed.), *השוחר את האומנים נוסח*, Pt. 1, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1996, pp. 7-23; D. Halivni, *מסכתות סנהדרין*, מבית דפוס, Magnés Press, Jerusalem, 2012.

52. Chiasm has been found to be a feature of the BT elsewhere. For example, Rubenstein (*Talmudic Stories*)

asm around Noah (D). However, the structure does not appear to extend any further than section E, and judgement is also in C1, so breaking the chiasm. It seems more likely that the structure is a reflection of the biblical text which the early part of this *sugya* is built around. Whilst some of these verses fit with the major themes of the *sugya*, as discussed below, other verses, e.g. those relating to the ark, have no obvious link with the themes and the reason for their inclusion is less clear. The ark verses, in particular, may simply provide an interlude between passages which have greater significance to the themes.

A. **Judgement** - world to come

B. **Pride** in their wealth

1. Effect of plenty

2. Caused by the eyeball

C. Corruption

1. Corruption and **judgement**

(R. Yochanan sayings)

2. Corruption of **animals**

3. Great effect of violence

D. Noah

1. Noah saved

2. Relative righteousness of Noah

E. Destruction

1. *Mashal* to explain destruction of **animals**

2. Rebuke by Noah

3. Further rebuke and **pride** in protection

4. Hot passion and **judgement**

demonstrates a chiasmic structure in several narrative passages.

The last two sections are different in style. Section J begins with a brief interpretation of Gen. 8:19, which seems to serve as a linking quotation to what follows by emphasising that there were not just pairs of animals but families, and therefore even more animals than might have been thought. Following on from this information, its main focus is a first person narrative by Shem about how the animals were fed in the ark. Here, Eliezer is brought in. The narrative could be told simply in the third person about Noah, but instead, it is framed as a question that Eliezer asks Shem. This leads to Shem asking Eliezer a question in turn, and so makes a link to Abraham's battle with the kings, and from there to the story of Nachum of Gimzo. The character of Eliezer also provides a link with the *sugya* about the Men of Sodom, in which he plays a prominent role.

Layers of the text

The differences in style and language indicate that there are different layers in the *sugya*, some later than others. Almost the entire *sugya* up to the end of section J is in Hebrew. This is the part that draws on Tannaitic sources and is largely midrashic. There are some significant exceptions:

1. The list of names of the springs in section C are in Aramaic. This is consistent with the change of the names of the springs to places in Babylonia. It reflects a tendency of the Babylonian sages to emphasis their proximity to biblical sites linked to the origins of humanity.⁵³

53. I. Gafni, 'Expressions and Types of "Local Patriotism" among the Jews of Sasanian Babylonia', *Irano-Judaica* vol. 2, 1990, pp. 63-71.

2. The extension of the *baraita* in D1, beginning 'When Rav Dimi came...'. This is a miniature debate which, in typical talmudic fashion, uses the same scriptural verses to present both sides of an argument. In this case, on the one hand God says, 'I did well in appointing them graves...'. and on the other hand God says 'I did not do well in appointing them graves....' As well as introducing an element of dialectic, this functions to open up the theme of repentance, forgiveness and consolation represented in this *sugya* by the root נחם, as discussed below.

3. In section G the questions which frame the argument are in Aramaic.

The first and third passages are consistent with Stammaitic editing. The second is more strongly supportive of it, as it both introduces dialectic and extends this short section so that it relates to a wider theme within the *sugya*.

The last two sections (K and L) are almost entirely in Aramaic apart from the opening statement by R. Yochanan, which serves as their point of departure. Shem's opening sentence, which states briefly the trouble they went to, is in Hebrew but the elaboration which follows is in Aramaic, as is the entire section about Nachum of Gimzo.

These last two sections (with the exception of the opening statement) are consistent with the criteria that Rubenstein lists for Stammaitic intervention.⁵⁴

1. The language is almost entirely Aramaic.
2. There is reference to proximate material from both before and after the passage. Thus, there is a narrative about Eliezer in the section about Sodom, where he also appears as a traveller with worldly experience (109b).

54. J. Rubenstein, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Agggada'.

Additionally, although there is similar content elsewhere, it is presented in a quite different form, as part of a narrative, in BT.

Rubenstein also lists textual variation as a criterion. However, the variation is not more marked in these two sections than in the rest of the *sugya*, and is considerably less than found in the Sodom *sugya* (see next chapter).

Nevertheless, the differences in style and language and the links to elsewhere in the chapter, together with the reworking of ideas such as the feeding of the animals into a different form, are sufficient to provide evidence that these two sections are Stammaitic in origin.

Unique features of the BT

The unique features of the BT, reflecting a Babylonian viewpoint, can be seen when the BT is compared with Palestinian sources as reflected in the PT, Tosefta and midrashim. The PT is brief and overlaps little, so the major area of comparison is with the midrashim. Tosefta Sanhedrin overlaps with the initial *baraitot* only, and the more interesting comparison is with tSotah, which is similar to the halachic midrashim.

When compared with the PT, the BT is much more extensive. However, the difference is not simply one of greater elaboration by the BT, but rather the emphasis of the two is quite different. PT retains the focus of the Mishnah on the world to come. It extends this from denial of a place in the world to come to the punishment of the wicked in Gehinnom, which it describes in some detail. None of this is present in the BT, which is concerned rather with Noah and the Generation of the Flood. It focuses mainly on events leading up to the flood and the wickedness of the Generation of the Flood, formulating an answer to the question of why they deserved to be punished. It also elaborates certain aspects of the narrative, such as the ark,

the dove and the raven which, at least at first sight, appear to be unrelated to this central question.

The 'midrashic' sections of BT mostly use material that is found elsewhere, often in Tannaitic midrashim and GenR. This suggests that it drew on earlier traditions. The sections on corruption (C1 and C3) do not appear to have parallels elsewhere, which suggests that the theme of corruption and violence is brought in to the BT as an added explanation of the wickedness of the Generation of the Flood. The abundance of wealth and its misuse leading to violence (C3) is a theme that comes to the fore in the *sugya* on Sodom, as will be discussed in the next chapter. It is implicit in the biblical story of Noah so it is not surprising that it is found here too. Rather, what is different and unexpected in the BT is that the major motif is not violence but sexual wrong-doing.

In drawing on earlier sources, BT edits and changes them. The following features may be distinguished:

1. **Stylistic change.** BT is often more concise. For example, in the last part of B1, tSotah has the Generation of the Flood saying, 'We have rivers and springs which are sufficient for us in days of sun and rain, as it is said, "And a mist went up from the earth"'. BT has them saying simply, 'We have rivers and springs to meet our needs'.

Similarly, in C2, GenR (28:8) states, 'Every species perverted their deeds in the Generation of the Flood. The dog coupled with the wolf and the cock copulated with the turkey, as it is written, "For the way of all flesh was corrupted upon the earth". It is not written, "the way of all human beings was corrupted" but rather "the way of all flesh was corrupted"'. BT states only, 'This teaches that they caused domesticated beasts to copulate with wild beasts and wild

beasts with domesticated beasts, and all of them with human beings and human beings with all of them', using broad categories rather than giving the particular examples of GenR.

A third example is the conversation between the raven and Noah (J1). In GenR (33:5), there is a conversation between Noah and the raven about why the raven should be saved, with God intervening to point out to Noah that the raven will indeed have a role to play in future. BT omits this argument, but adds an accusation by the raven that Noah desires his mate, which is consistent with the frequent mention of perverted sexual relations throughout the passage and also leads to the information that sexual relations were forbidden in the ark.

2. Change in attribution. There is a tendency in this *sugya* to change the attribution of a citation. This is first seen in the first *baraita* (A), which is attributed to R. Akiva in BT but is anonymous in T and PT.

More strikingly, the quotations attributed to R. Yochanan in C are variously attributed elsewhere. The quotation about the fountains of the deep which remained open (C1), is attributed in GenR (33:4) to R. Elazar, and the comment on 'For all flesh was corrupted' (C2) is attributed to R. Azariah, in the name of R. Judah bar Simon, in GenR.

The debate about the relative righteousness of Noah (D2) is attributed to R. Yochanan and Resh Lakish, whereas in both GenR and Tan the debate is between R. Judah and R. Nehemiah. The idea of the seven day mourning period for Methusaleh (F) is attributed to Rav even though it is found in Tannaitic sources.

These findings are consistent with those of David Kraemer, who, as noted in the introduction, has found, in a comparison of Tractate Shabbat in the BT and PT, that of 113 traditions attributed to R. Yochanan in the BT, 75 have no parallel in the PT and nine record the same opin-

ion in the name of a different authority.⁵⁵ The changes here (which are uniform across all manuscripts) suggest that there is a deliberate shift of authority from the Tannaim to the first Generation of Amoraim, both Palestinian and Babylonian. There is a particular emphasis on R. Yochanan, who features as a tradent in much of the chapter. Kalmin has noted a shift in attributions from early to later Amoraim.⁵⁶ Early Amoraim tend to comment on Rav and Samuel, but beginning in the third Generation, there is an increasing tendency to quote Rav less and instead to quote R. Yochanan. Kalmin also points out that there are particular characteristics to the way R. Yochanan is portrayed. For example, he is unique in commenting on statements by rabbis depicted as his inferiors. This would suggest a changing attitude to R. Yochanan, and possibly the Palestinian Amoraim in general, in the later Amoraic period in Babylonia. It also contributes to the evidence that the passage about the Generation of the Flood was edited by the later Amoraim.

3. **Complex narrative.** In contrast to the tendency towards brevity noted above, the last two sections, K and L, represent a complex narrative text and are distinctive to the BT. In analysing section K in particular, the terminology and method described by Mieke Bal are helpful, since they provide a way of considering the different components of a narrative and how they are presented.⁵⁷ Bal uses the term 'story' to describe the relating of the events and 'fabula' to describe the events themselves. In these terms, the two sections consist of four different stories, each relating a different fabula. These are:

55. D. Kraemer, 'On the Reliability of Attributions in the Babylonian Talmud' in M. Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 276-292.

56. R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994, chapters 2 and 5.

57. M. Bal, *Narratology. Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, Christine van Boheemen, University of Toronto Press, London, 1985, pp. 4-10.

1. The meeting and conversation of Shem and Eliezer
2. The feeding of the animals in the ark
3. The battle of Abraham against the kings of the East and West
4. The story of Nachum of Gimzo

Thus, the fabula of the first story is that Shem and Eliezer met and had a conversation about how Shem had managed to feed the animals in the ark and how Abraham had managed to defeat the kings of the East and West. The story is the relating of the fabula by presenting in a conversational form the questions each asked the other and the answers they gave .

The first three stories form a unit and are presented as being related by Hana bar Bizma. The story of Shem and Eliezer meeting serves as a frame for the other two stories. These stories mirror each other. Eliezer asks a question of Shem, who answers with his story. Shem then asks a question of Eliezer, who in turn answers with his story. The two inner stories are both in the first person, which makes them more immediate. In the story of Shem, this makes the narrative particularly vivid. He relates his family's exertions in feeding the animals in a breathless matter, each challenge succeeding the other as though to emphasise the unending task. In contrast, Eliezer's account of the battle is brief, extended only by scriptural citations which serve as proof-texts.

The other two stories serve a purpose less in the fabula they relate than in the characters they introduce. As mentioned, Eliezer also features prominently in the section about Sodom. The dust and stubble which turned into swords and arrows is one of the key elements of the story of Nachum of Gimzo which follows immediately, and thus serve as a link to this story. The purpose of the story itself will be discussed below.

A feature of the stories related both by Shem and by Eliezer is the introduction of an anachronistic element. Shem refers to a saying by Rav about fever; Eliezer quotes from Psalms. Both elements could be considered parenthetical, but in the absence of punctuation the quotations read as part of the conversation and they appear to flow naturally.⁵⁸

The story is enriched by incidents concerning three particular animals, the chameleon, the lion and the phoenix, which all have special qualities. The word chameleon derives from the Greek meaning 'ground lion' (in turn a translation of the Akkadian *nēš qaqqari*). Despite this link with the lion, its place here is more likely to be related to its property of changing colour, which would give the chameleon a magical quality.

The lion was also a beast with special qualities, a symbol of power and danger, who nevertheless was thought only to attack human beings in extreme hunger.⁵⁹ It was also linked mythically with other animals in Babylonian mythology. In Job 28:8, the word שָׂחַל is usually translated as lion, but elsewhere in the Tanakh it is more aptly understood to mean 'snake'. It has therefore been suggested that the word can mean a mythical 'lion-serpent'. As Scott Jones points out, in the ancient world, animals were not classified in the zoological categories we use now and may have been grouped rather in terms of their power and mastery of other creatures, so that the lion and the snake were both seen as fierce and threatening.⁶⁰

58. This is a reflection of the general tendency in BT to bring ideas from different times together, as expressed in the phrase '*ayn mukdam ume-uḥar batorah*' ('there is no early and late in the Torah', bPes. 6b).

59. See e.g. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H Rackham, Wm. Heineman, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1940, Book 8, 19.

60. S.C. Jones, 'Lions, Serpents and Lion-Serpents in Job 28:8 and Beyond', *Journal of Biblical Literature* vol. 130, no. 4, 2011, pp. 663-686.

The myth of the phoenix was well known in the Greek world. It was reputed to build a nest after five hundred years, in which it died, and a new phoenix was then born.⁶¹ This idea is consistent with the verse in Job, which has the seemingly contradictory statement 'I thought I would die with my nest and live as long as the phoenix'. There was also a belief expressed in mediaeval bestiaries that it fed only on dew. This may have had earlier antecedents, which are reflected in the phoenix not requesting food in the ark.⁶²

Thus, the animals depicted here all have a mythical and magical status which contributes the sense of fantasy in the narrative and makes this section particularly imaginative.

The narration of the story of Nachum Gimzo is more straightforward, but again it is vivid in the way it is told and imaginative in the details. There is tension in awaiting how Nachum might escape his fate and there is a satisfying symmetry in the denouement where the lodgers suffer the fate they had planned for Nachum. The details in the conversation about the dust add to the vividness of the story.

The narrative about Noah feeding the animals is consistent with the tendency noted by Levinson for stories in the BT to be further removed from scriptural verse.⁶³ Indeed, it does not seem to relate to any verse from the flood narrative and the only scriptural verse it quotes is that about the phoenix, in the words of Noah. Rather, it is a flight of imagination, which draws on mythological creatures which are likely to have emerged from the Babylonian context. In the tension which Levinson describes between exegesis and telling a story, the final

61. Pliny, *Natural History*, Book 10, 2.

62. A. Jones, *Larousse Dictionary of World Folklore*, Larousse, Edinburgh, 1995, s.v. 'Phoenix'

63. J. Levinson, *אמנות הסיפור המקראי המורחב במדרשי חז"ל* (The Twice Told Tale. A Poetics of Exegetical Narrative in Rabbinic Midrash), Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2005, pp. 257-307.

part of this *sugya* moves away from exegesis towards telling a story independently of scripture.

Themes

A number of themes emerge from this *sugya*. They are not unique to the BT, and indeed the BT draws on earlier material in presenting them. However, the BT draws them together, elaborates on them and raises questions in a way that moves beyond the earlier material.

1. The pride of human beings. The *sugya* depicts the hubris of human beings, who see themselves as no longer being in need of God or subject to God's rule. This leads to their downfall. There is pride in their possessions (B1), and a sense of invulnerability due to the protection they have been afforded (E3).

2. Sexual sin, and particularly intermixing of species, leading to corruption (C2, G). This is emphasised through the suspicion the raven expresses to Noah (J1), and the punishment of the raven, the dog and Ham (J2).

3. Violence. This is seen as being the final straw, which led to the sealing of the decree (C3). It is mirrored, as it is in the biblical account, by God's violence to creation, which is epitomised in the *mashal* of the destruction of the wedding canopy.

There is thus, in the themes of sexual sin and violence, a playing out of the dual implications of Gen. 6:11-12. The Hebrew root שחט suggests a turning aside from God to idolatry, e.g. referring to the worship of the Golden Calf, Ex. 32:7. This is frequently compared in the Hebrew Bible to unfaithfulness in a sexual sense, and so leads to the theme of sexual perversion which is so prominent here. Gen. 6:11 starts with שחט and concludes with חמס, violence,

which is consistent with the idea of sexual perversion being widespread in the Generation of the Flood, and being associated with the violence which finally led to the destruction.

4. **Justice.** This is an overarching theme. Justice is, of course, a pervasive theme in this chapter and the whole tractate Sanhedrin. However, here, it is implicit, unlike the section on Sodom which follows, in which the theme of justice, and especially its perversion, is explicit. In this *sugya*, it is the question of Divine justice which seems to predominate rather than the perversion of justice by human beings.

5. **Compassion.** As well as the theme of justice, there is also a strand in the *sugya* reflecting compassion. This is seen in God's seeming reluctance to bring about the flood (see below). It is also seen in the final sections, where both the battle of Abraham and the feeding of the animals are related. The battle of Abraham would seem have a greater potential for dramatic re-telling than the feeding of the animals, but it is the feeding of the animals which is emphasised by the detail of the story. This may be because it illustrates the compassion which Noah and his family showed to the animals. In doing so, it shifts the balance towards the righteousness of Noah after the debate about whether his righteousness was only relative. It may also serve to make the role of Shem, who was to become the ancestor of the Jewish people, more prominent. Finally, Noah's feeding of the animals according to their need may be a reflection of God's caring for all of creation according to their need, thus redressing to some extent the destruction of creation described earlier in the section.

The ending of the story of Nachum of Gimzo does not exhibit such compassion, since those who had wished to defraud him are killed by the Romans. The ending is, however, consistent with *middah keneged middah*, a concept which runs through the *sugya*. The lodgers are put to death for the crime they plotted that Nachum should be punished for.

6. Relationship between human beings and animals. As might be expected in a text about Noah's ark, animals feature prominently. The biblical account already raises questions about the relationship between humans and animals, which the BT continues to explore. On the one hand, animals are shown compassion by Noah saving them in the ark, but on the other hand, most are drowned in the flood because of the wrong-doing of human beings. For better or for worse, human beings are shown to be responsible for the fate of animals in the world. The transition from vegetarianism at the time of Adam and Eve to the permission to eat animals after the flood represents a shifting relationship between human beings and animals. These tensions are evident in the BT, but there is also an added element, the guilt or otherwise of the animals. In Section C2, not only did human beings indulge in immoral sexual acts, so did animals, albeit at the instigation of human beings. On the other hand, Section E1 questions the destruction of the animals, who did not sin but were caught up in the punishment of human beings.

At some points, too, animals are depicted as active protagonists. The raven and the dove, black and white, symbolise rebellion and devotion. The raven challenges Noah whilst the dove is accepting and recognises God's care. The dog and the raven are punished alongside Ham on an equal basis. On the other hand, the phoenix is rewarded for its selflessness, expressed in conversation with Noah.

7. Relations with the ruling power. The story of Nachum of Gimzo touches on the theme of relations with the ruling power, which also features in a series of debates about resurrection between rabbinic sages and monarchs. There is a particularly close parallel with the stories of Gebiha ben Pesisa (91a). In both, a relatively unknown sage is engaged in a diplomatic mission at a time of crisis, and completes the mission successfully. There is an undermining of

the ruling power, which is also achieved, in a different way, by the satire of the Men of Sodom *sugya*.

The major themes of the *sugya* come together in the concept of *gemul*, as discussed by Slo-movic⁶⁴. He suggests that *gemul* is a key concept both here and in the Sodom *sugya*. By this he means Divine reward and punishment, and for him, 'Rabbinic stress on *gemul* is articulated by its stress on *middah keneged middah*'. The BT seeks to provide an answer to the whole-sale destruction of Sodom and the Generation of the Flood. It has this in common with other rabbinic texts, and indeed, draws on Tannaitic midrashim which have wrestled with this ques-tion. However, there is an additional dimension in Perek Helek which makes the necessity of ascertaining the wickedness of these groups even more urgent - punishment not only in this world but also in the world to come. In the *sugya* about Sodom, the question is answered by a detailed description of the wrongdoing of the Men of Sodom. The *sugya* about the Genera-tion of the Flood is more complex. Their wrongdoing is outlined in more general terms and there is also a working out of the question of why not only all human beings (except Noah and his family) but also the animals were destroyed.

The midrashim included in the first part of the BT passage (section B) emphasise the prin-ciple of *middah keneged middah*. Thus, it is said that the Generation of the Flood were des-troyed because they became proud and took for granted the gifts they had been given, includ-ing the gift of plentiful water. They were therefore destroyed through an over-abundance of water. Again, they were destroyed 'because of the eyeball, which is like water'. Similarly, in section C, play is made on the nature of their sin being great and their punishment being cor-respondingly great, using the midrashic technique of verbal correspondence (*gezerah shavah*)

64. E. Slomovic, 'The Book of Job and the Midrash on the Flood and Sodom-Gomorrah Narratives, *Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly of America* 41, 1979, 167-180.

to derive a conclusion. Against these examples of punishment, there is also an example of reward, the giving of eternal life to the phoenix. The exact nature of *middah keneged middah*, what deed it is that corresponds to the reward, is not clear here. It may be that the phoenix was willing to give up its life, starving rather than bothering Noah for food, and therefore was rewarded by not ever dying.

Slomovic, like Irving Jacobs, also points out the significance of the use of verses from Job as proof-texts in these midrashim. Of all the books of the Tenakh, Job poses the question of theodicy most eloquently and overtly. In chapters 21 and 12, from which quotations are taken, Job protests his innocence and elaborates on the prosperity of the wicked, who appear to flourish despite their wickedness. Whilst he appears to agree that they will ultimately be punished, the overwhelming message is that in the meantime they prosper, and their ultimate punishment remains a mystery known only to God. These verses are therefore particularly appropriate in that they both echo the questioning of God's justice and provide an assurance in the form of God's ultimate answer to Job. The Men of Sodom and the Generation of the Flood are equated with the wicked men that Job refers to through the quotation of verses from Job. The questioning of Job is answered through our knowledge of the punishment that was inflicted. Boyarin has demonstrated in the Mekhilta that scriptural quotations often function not as proof-texts but as '... the generating force behind the elaboration of narrative or other types of textual expansion...' ⁶⁵ Thus, the citation of Job serves as a subconscious pointer to the questioning of Divine justice.

Slomovic gives a second facet of *gemul* - 'Repentance is accessible to every mortal, even to the most wicked'. This facet, too, is explored in the BT. God is reluctant to carry out the

65. D. Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of the Midrash*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990, p. 22.

punishment of the Generation of the Flood. Although they engaged in sexual immorality, according to R. Yochanan the decree was not sealed until they engaged in violence (C1). There is ample warning - a 'long period' during which Noah was engaged in building the ark so that they could see and be warned (E3), and a shorter period of seven days (F). All the time that Methusaleh was alive, the punishment was delayed.

These facets of *g'mul* are dealt with especially in those passages in the BT that have parallels elsewhere. Those passages are widespread and most are Tannaitic or early Amoraic. Thus it is likely that the editors of the BT drew on these passages, editing and altering them within the context of the chapter. Here, they serve to justify not only the punishment of destruction, but also exclusion from the World to Come, for which the sin must have been truly appalling, and for which opportunity for repentance must have been given. Not only the sin, but also the obduracy of the Generation of the Flood is emphasised here.

The BT adds other aspects to the midrashim. As well as stylistic editing, as discussed above, it subtly alters the emphasis on God's judgement. This can be seen in two passages which appear to me to be key. The *mashal* about the wedding canopy, which offers an explanation for the destruction of the animals (E1), differs from the similar passage in GenR. In GenR, the king destroys the wedding canopy in anger about his son's misdeeds. Such a *mashal* would have been appropriate, reflecting the wickedness of the Generation of the Flood. However, in BT the king destroys the canopy because the son dies. The sin of human beings appears to distance them from God, so that to God it is as if they had died. This causes God such sorrow that God feels that the rest of creation is not worth preserving. Although the destruction is a result of anger, where in GenR the anger is a direct result of the son's misbehaviour, in BT the anger is an expression of bereavement and loss. Whilst the motifs may, as Stern points out,

be stereotypical, the BT shapes them to a different context and so subtly alters the nature of the *mashal* and the message it conveys.

The second passage is the play on the Hebrew root נחם (D1), for which I have found no parallels.⁶⁶ The association of the root נחם with Noah is already biblical. When Lemech names his son, he says:

ויקרא את שמו נח לאמור זה ינחמנו ממעשנו ומעצבון ידנו מן האדמה אשר אררה יהוה

And he called his name Noah, saying 'This one will comfort us for our deeds and for our toil on the earth which the Eternal One has cursed' (Gen. 5:29).

Given their extensive use and knowledge of scripture, the compilers of the text would have been aware of this verse and would have expected it to inform the reading of the text without making it explicit. It is therefore no coincidence that the passage on the theme of נחם is part of a discussion about Noah and his merits.

This passage makes a play on the different meanings of the root in different conjugations, as discussed above. The association with the other meanings suggests sorrow in the decision. For the editors of the BT there may even be a hint of mourning and consolation, which would be strengthened by the interpretation of Noah's name. The different meanings, and the different ways proof-texts are used in this passage, suggest God is ambivalent about the destruction of the Generation of the Flood. On the one hand, having been given every opportunity for repentance, they must be punished for their wickedness. On the other hand, God regrets the necessity to punish them. God would that they repent, but instead God repents having made them (the use of נחם in the *niphal* in Gen. 6:7). The *mashal* of the wedding canopy which fol-

66. I am grateful to Prof. Jonathan Webber for this suggestion, which seems to be supported by both the biblical derivation of the name of Noah and the link with Nachum (of Gimzo), whose name is derived from the same Hebrew root.

lows almost immediately, in showing both God's sorrow and God's anger reflects the complexity of meaning expressed by the root נחם, even though the Hebrew root is not referred to explicitly.

The significance of the root נחם is underlined by the concluding passage about Nachum of Gimzo, which is found only in BT. This could be coincidental. However, the names of characters such as Nachum, who are depicted as historical and yet have a miraculous role to play, are frequently significant. Indeed, Rubenstein suggests that symbolic character names are a characteristic of the narrative art of the BT.⁶⁷ Just as play is made on the second part of his name, Gimzo, so it is likely that play is made on Nachum. Indeed, the two names can be seen as going together. Gimzo is understood as referring to the phrase *gam zo letovah*, 'also this is for the good'. It is an assertion that whatever evil may happen, some good will come from it. This is a way of finding comfort. If suffering can result in good, then there can be consolation.

This is, too, an answer to the question of theodicy. God's justice at times seems questionable. But one possible answer to the question is that good will come from apparent evil. Whilst one is suffering, to have faith that good will result is to have faith in God's justice. Throughout rabbinic literature, there is a search for meaning in suffering and frequently the answer is found in a good that will come. Most often this is a reward in the World to Come, and so whilst there is a questioning of why the Generation of the Flood is denied a place in the world to come, at the same time, Nachum's name implies the consolation of a place in the world to come for those who have faith.

67. J. Rubenstein, *Stories of the Babylonian Talmud*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2010, p. 204.

Nachum's name is therefore significant. It affirms there will be consolation in the good that comes from suffering. Perhaps, too, it signifies that God will find consolation in the faith of people like Nachum who believe in Divine justice.

The story of Nachum, as well as his name, contributes to this theme. It has clear good and evil characters. It is a story in which surprising turns of events lead to a happy ending, in which the innocent are saved and the wicked perish. It is an affirmation that what happens is, indeed, for the good.

Conclusions

The *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood is linked thematically with the *sugya* about the Men of Sodom (to be discussed in the next chapter). Both are concerned with justice. Here, the concern is with the questioning of God's justice. The question is made explicit in asking why animals were destroyed together with human beings, but elsewhere, particularly in regard to the question of why the Generation of the Flood deserved such terrible punishment, it is unstated. Likewise, the answer is not stated explicitly. However, there are enough suggestions throughout the *sugya* to support the conclusion that an answer is found in God's compassion and willingness to delay punishment and in God's sorrow at the destruction. Thus, the Generation of the Flood are given ample opportunity for repentance. There is a section which makes play on the Hebrew root נחם in its various meanings of grieving, consolation and repentance. The midrash about the wedding canopy appears to have been altered from the version in GenR to emphasise God's sorrow at the distancing of human beings through their evil ways. The compassion of Noah and his sons in feeding the animals mirrors God's compassion in providing for all living creatures. And finally, and conclusively in both

senses, there is the character of Nachum of Gimzo, whose name emphasises both compassion and an affirmation of faith that 'this, too, will be for good'.

In this chapter I have described how the BT developed ideas which have antecedents in earlier midrashim. It reshapes the midrashim, often more concisely, sometimes changing their emphasis. At the same time, the BT includes original and vivid narrative. The *sugya* about the Flood also has a distinctive structure, which comprises a 'midrashic' section and a 'narrative' section. The former is almost entirely in Hebrew and the latter almost entirely in Aramaic. I suggest that the narrative section is Stammaitic. I also note a tendency to change an attribution from a Tanna to an Amora, frequently Rabbi Yochanan. I suggest that the *sugya* has been edited in order to emphasise and question aspects of the biblical flood narrative, and particularly to explore the question of God's justice and God's compassion.

In conclusion, although the *sugya* about the flood appears to draw extensively on earlier material, its selection and editing, together with additional Stammaitic material, suggest that the *sugya* is edited in order to convey a message which ultimately affirms God's justice.

CHAPTER 3

THE MEN OF SODOM¹

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented a literary and source-critical analysis of the *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood. This chapter will involve a similar analysis of the story of Sodom. Sodom has been the subject of much exegesis, both in Christian and Jewish traditions. By the time of the Book of Jubilees, it was identified with sexual misconduct and the Book of Revelation, towards the end of the first century CE, viewed Sodom as the paradigmatic example of sinful behaviour.² In Western culture, Sodom has become synonymous with 'sodomy'. However, the nature of their wickedness has been seen differently in rabbinic literature, where sexual sin in general (not only homosexuality) is listed alongside violence and idolatry. The wickedness of Sodom is described in the halachic midrashim MRI and Si-freiDeut and in GenR and Tan. In all these texts, the 'sin of Sodom' is related to their refusal to share the wealth that they have been granted. In the context of tractate Sanhedrin, which is concerned with the process of judgement and justice, the nature of this wrongdoing is further elaborated and linked to the perversion of justice.

1. I have chosen to translate אנשי סדום as 'men of Sodom' rather than 'people of Sodom' although both are possible translations. In the biblical narrative, the men are the main protagonists. It is men who surround Lot's house, and to whom he offers his daughters. In the BT, whilst women could be implicated in the petty crimes, it is not clear they are involved. The judges are men and men predominate. Women appear only as victims, although men are victims too.

2. B. J. L. Pearbolte, 'Sodom, Egypt and the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11:8' in E Noort, & E Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin. Gen. 18-19 and its Interpretations*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, pp. 63-82; J.A. Loader, 'A Tale of Two Cities. Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament, Early Jewish and Christian Traditions', *Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology* vol. 1, 1990, pp. 75-125.

The concept of justice is already key in Genesis. When Abraham argues with God about the destruction of Sodom he famously asks, 'Shall not the judge of all the earth do justly?' (Gen. 18:26). When Lot is trying to protect the strangers/Divine beings from the Men of Sodom, they say to him: 'This one has come to dwell amongst us and now will he judge us?' (Gen. 19:9). The echo of the word שפט from chapter 18 to chapter 19 has a resonance which suggests that justice is being questioned throughout these chapters. Questionable justice becomes central to the discussion of Sodom in the BT. It is therefore an important unit within a chapter about Divine justice and final judgement.

As in the previous chapter, I will begin by examining the 'core texts', the Mishnah, Tosefta and PT. I will then present texts from other sources which contain similar, or sometimes identical, material to the BT. The sources are mainly collections of midrashim which are earlier or contemporary with the BT, although Targumim and other sources will be referred to where relevant. This will identify which material in the *sugya* may have drawn on other sources.

In conjunction with the analysis of sources, I will present a detailed examination of the text. This will include a study of the variation amongst manuscripts, which is greater for this *sugya* than for the other *sugyot* which form part of my study of Perek Helek.

This will be followed by a literary analysis of the text, as described previously.

Finally, in the conclusion, I will relate my findings about this *sugya* to those about the Generation of the Flood. I will also consider how the structure and composition of the *sugya* serve to communicate its message and the particular nature of the message the *sugya* conveys.

The Text of bSanh. 109a-b

The text of the Mishnah (10:3 and 107b-108a in the BT) and the Gemara are shown below.

The Gemara is divided into numbered sections, in order to assist in referring to them. The PT, Tosefta and texts corresponding to sections of the Gemara are shown in Appendix 1.

The division of the passage about Sodom in the BT may be summarised as follows:

I - Midrashic Section

A Exegesis of Gen. 13:3

1. Baraita 1 Proof no share in the world to come
2. Rav Judah – interpretation of Gen. 13:3 relating to Sodom's sin
3. Baraita 2 – different interpretation of Gen. 13:3

B Exegesis of Job/Psalms

1. Pride of Sodom in their wealth
2. Rava - leaning wall
3. Rava - digging into houses
4. Misdeeds to orphan and widow

C R. Jose of Sepphoris

II Narrative Section

A. Unjust laws

1. Orphan and oxen
2. Ford

B. Unjust practices

1. Bricks

2. Garlic and onions

C. Judges of Sodom

1. Miscarriage

2. Ass's ear

3. Injury/bleeding

D. Ford-fuller

E. Eliezer - assault

F. Bed - Eliezer

G. Poor given coins

H. Party - garment - Eliezer

J. Young girl

Mishnah (107b-108a):

The Men of Sodom have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'The Men of Sodom were evil and sinful towards the Eternal One, exceedingly' (Gen. 13:3). 'Evil' - in this world; 'sinful' - for the world to come; but they will face judgement. R. Nehemiah said: Neither [the Men of Sodom nor the Generation of the Flood] will stand in judgement, as it is said, 'Therefore, the wicked will not arise for judgement and the sinful in the congregation of the righteous' (Ps. 1:5). 'Therefore, the wicked will not arise for judgement' - this refers to the Generation of the Flood; 'amongst the congregation of the righteous' - this refers to the Men of

Sodom. They said to him, 'They will not stand in the congregation of the righteous, but they will stand in the congregation of the wicked'.

Gemara (109a - 109b)

I A

1. Our Rabbis taught: The Men of Sodom have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'The Men of Sodom were evil and sinful towards the Eternal One, exceedingly' (Gen. 13:3). 'Evil' - in this world, 'sinful' - for the world to come.

2. R. Judah³ said, 'Evil' - with their body and 'sinful' - with their property. 'Evil' - with their body, as it is said, 'And how shall I do this great evil and sin against God?' (Gen. 39:9) and 'sinful' - with their property, as it is said, 'And it shall be accounted for you as a sin' (Deut. 15:9). 'Against the Eternal One' - this is cursing God; 'exceedingly' - they sinned intentionally.

3. It is taught [in a *baraita*], 'Evil' - with their property and 'sinful' - with their body. 'Evil' - with their property, as it is written, 'And your eye shall be evil towards your poor brother' (Deut. 15:9), and 'sinful' - with their body, as it is written, 'And I sin before the Eternal One' (Gen. 39:9). 'Against the Eternal One' - this is cursing God; 'exceedingly' - this is the shedding of blood, as it is said, 'And Manasseh also shed innocent blood exceedingly' (II Kings 21:16).

3. The Romm Vilna edition and the Jerusalem manuscript read 'רב יהודה'. However the Florence and Munich manuscripts read 'ר' יהודה'. This is the more likely reading, since this section is (at least ostensibly) Tannaitic and Rav Judah was a Babylonian Amora. It has therefore been adopted here.

B

1. Our Rabbis taught: The Men of Sodom became proud only because of the plentiful benefits which the Eternal One bestowed on them. And what is written concerning them? 'A land from which comes bread, and its depths are overturned like fire. Its stones are a place of sapphires and its dust is gold. No fowl knows the path, and the vulture's eye has not seen it. Lions' whelps have not trodden it and the lion has not passed by it' (Job. 28:5-8).⁴ They said, 'And since it is a land from which bread comes, and its dust is gold, why should we have wayfarers, who come to us only to diminish [our wealth]? Come, let the custom of the wayfarer be forgotten in our land, as it is said, "The flood breaks out amongst strangers, the forgotten who go on foot, they languish and move away from men"'.

2. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'Why do you conspire against a man to murder him? You are all like a leaning wall, a fence that is unsteady?' (Ps. 62:4). It teaches that they would set their eye on wealthy men and place them by a leaning wall and push it on them and come and take their money.

3. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'In the night they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime; they do not see the light' (Job 24:16)?⁵ They would set their eyes on wealthy men and entrust them with balsam and they would store it away. In the evening, they would come and smell it out like a dog, as it is said, 'They return

4. The translation of these and the following verses from Job and Psalms is difficult. As well as dictionaries, the Authorised Version, *Tanakh* and New English Bible were consulted and the translation is a combination which fits with the interpretations made of the verse in the BT.

5. The *Tanakh* reads: 'By day they shut themselves in', whilst the Authorised Version reads, 'Which they had marked for themselves'. The Hebrew חָתְמוּ allows both interpretations, but the Authorised Version translation fits better with the use that is made of it in the narrative, to show that the houses were marked out by balsam so that they could be robbed at night.

at evening and growl like a dog, they surround the city' (Ps. 59:7). They would come and dig there and take that money.

4. 'They walk about naked, without a garment, and they have no covering in the cold. They lead away the ass of the orphan, they take the widow's ox for a pledge. They remove landmarks, they violently take away flocks and give them pasture'⁶ (Job 24:10, 7, 3, 2). 'And he leads them to graves and watches on a tomb' (Job. 21:32).

C

R. Jose expounded [these verses] in Sepphoris. That night three hundred burglars broke into houses in Sepphoris. They came and complained to him, and said, 'You have shown the way for thieves'. He said to them, 'How could I have known that thieves would come?' When R. Jose died, the gutters of Sepphoris ran with blood.

II A

1. They (the Men of Sodom) said, 'If someone has one ox, let him tend [the oxen of the town] for one day. If someone has no oxen, let him tend [them] for two days'. There was a certain orphan, the son of a widow. They gave him oxen to tend. He went and took them and killed them. He said to them, 'If someone has an ox, let him take one hide. If someone has no oxen, let him take two hides.' They said to him, 'What's the meaning of this?' He said to them, 'The end of the case is like the beginning of the case. Just as at the beginning of the case, if someone has one ox, let him tend [the oxen of the town] for one day; if someone has no oxen, let him tend [them] for two days, so at the end of the case, if someone has an ox, let him take one hide; if someone has no oxen, let him take two hides'.

6. There is a pun on the root רעה meaning both to pasture flock and to be evil.

2. If someone crossed a river by ferry, they had to pay one *zuz*. If they did not use the ferry, they had to pay two.

B

1. If someone put out a row of bricks, every person would come and take one. They would say to him, 'I only took one'.

2. If someone put out garlic or onions, every person would come and take one. They would say to him, 'I only took one'.

C

There were four judges in Sodom, 'Liar', 'Awful Liar', 'Counterfeiter' and 'Perverter of justice'.⁷

1. If someone assaulted his neighbour's wife and caused her to miscarry, they would say to him [the husband], 'Give her to him [the offender] so that he might make her pregnant for you'.

2. If someone cut off the ear of his neighbour's ass, they would say to him, 'Give it [the ass] to him until it grows back'.

3. If someone wounded his neighbour, they would say to him, 'Give him a fee for bleeding you'.

D

If someone crossed a river by ferry, they had to pay four *zuzim*. If they crossed through the water they had to pay eight *zuzim*. Once, a fuller happened to come there. They said to him,

7. On the names of the judges, see below.

'Give us four *zuzim*'. He said, 'I will go through the water'. They said to him, 'If so, give us eight *zuzim* for going through the water'. He did not pay them and they assaulted him. He went before the judges. They said to him, 'Give him a fee for bleeding you and eight *zuzim* for passing through the water'.

E

Eliezer, Abraham's servant, happened to come there. They injured him. He came before the judges. They said to him, 'Give him a fee for bleeding you'. He took a stone and injured the judges. They said, 'What is the meaning of this?' He said, 'Give the fee that you owe to me [for bleeding you] to this man [who injured me], and I will keep my money'.

F

They had a bed on which wayfarers would sleep. If he was too long, they cut off [his legs]. If he was too short, they would stretch him. Eliezer, Abraham's servant, happened to come there. They said to him, 'Arise and sleep on the bed'. He said, 'I have sworn a vow that since the death of my mother, I will not sleep on a bed'.

G

When a poor person happened to come there, each person would give him a dinar, and write his name on it, but they would not bring him any bread. When he died, each person would come and take his [dinar].

H

They agreed this amongst themselves: Anyone who invites a man to a party will be stripped of his garment. At a certain party, Eliezer happened to come, and they did not give him any food. Since he wanted to dine, Eliezer went and sat down at the end. They said to him, 'Who

invited you here?' He said to a man who was sitting there, 'You invited me'. He thought, 'Perhaps they will hear that I invited him and strip me of my clothing'. So the man who was sitting next to him [Eliezer] took his garment and ran away. Thus he did to every one of them, until they had all left and he ate the whole banquet.

J

There was a certain young girl who took bread out to a poor man in a pitcher. The matter was discovered. She was covered in honey and put on the parapet of a wall and the bees came and consumed her. This is what is meant by the verse, 'And the Eternal One said, "The cry of Sodom and Gomorra, because it is great"' (Gen. 18:20). Rav Judah said in the name of Rav, 'Because of the matter of the young girl'.⁸

Mishnah, Tosefta, Palestinian Talmud

The Hebrew texts of the Tosefta and PT are found in Appendix 2.

Mishnah

The Men of Sodom are listed in the Mishnah (10:3) as having no place in the world to come. The Mishnah offers a proof-text for their exclusion: 'The Men of Sodom were very wicked and sinful against the Eternal One' (Gen. 13:3). 'Wicked' in this world; 'Sinful' for the world to come.

8. A pun on רבה 'great', and ריבה 'young girl'.

There follows a discussion of whether they will face Divine judgement after death. The first part of the mishnah, the proof-text for the wickedness of Sodom, is picked up and developed by the BT. However, the BT does not further discuss the question of judgement after death. This is consistent with a trend in the BT to be more concerned with the nature of wrong-doing than the nature of judgement, which was noted in the previous chapter.

Tosefta

The Tosefta (13:8) is brief and closely resembles the PT (see below) except that instead of ואינן רואין לעתיד לבוא, it reads ואינן חיינן לעוה"ב, which seems to be a superfluous repetition of אין להם חלק לעולם הבא. As discussed in the Flood chapter, Finkelstein suggests that it is a reflection of divergent beliefs about the world to come.⁹

The Tosefta offers two interpretations of Gen. 13:3, the first relating to this world and the world to come (the Tosefta, unlike PT, uses עולם הבא) and the second to the different sorts of sins committed. Although the exact wording differs between the Tosefta and PT, the sins listed are the same.

There is also a passage about Sodom in tSotah, which, like that about the Flood, parallels the BT section on Job 28 and will be discussed in this context below.

Palestinian Talmud

The PT has a brief section on the Men of Sodom, related closely to the Mishnah. The mishnah quoted differs from the mishnah in the BT. Instead of 'they will not face judgement', it

9. L. Finkelstein, מבוא למסכתות אבות ואבות דרבי נתן, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1950, pp. 318-9.

states 'they will not see the future' (ואינן רואין לעתיד לבוא). This probably reflects a different Palestinian and Babylonian text type of the Mishnah and is also consistent with the trend, noted in the Flood chapter, for the PT to be more concerned with the world to come.¹⁰

The PT elaborates the reason why the Men of Sodom have no place in the world to come by using the same biblical verse as the Mishnah, although in a different way: 'Wicked and sinful' - in this world; 'against the Eternal One, exceedingly' - for the future. The proof-text is seen as referring not to the World to Come (עולם הבא) but to the future (לעתיד לבוא). This parallels the use of the term לעתיד לבוא in the Mishnah.

An alternative explanation of the verse is then offered: 'Wicked' - against each other; 'sinful' - in forbidden sexual relations; 'towards the Eternal One' - in idolatry; 'exceedingly' - in the shedding of blood. The last three are the three 'cardinal' sins, i.e. those which one must not commit, even to save one's life (bSan. 74a). This interpretation is also found in GenR 41:7 (with עבודת כוכבים instead of עבודה זרה). This fourfold sin of the Men of Sodom is also found in the Targum Neofiti:

ועמה דסדם בישין גבר לחבריה וחייבין בגלוי עריתה ובשפיכות אדמיה ובפלחנא נכרייה

And the people of Sodom were wicked towards each other and guilty of forbidden sexual relations and the shedding of blood and idol worship.¹¹

There is no further material resembling the much more extensive material in the BT.

10. G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, second edn., trans. Markus Bockmuehl, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 140.

11. B. Grossfeld, & L.H. Schiffman, *Targum Neofiti I: an Exegetical Commentary to Genesis Including Full Rabbinic Parallels*, Sepher-Hermon Press, New York, 2000.

The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis

The parallel texts cited here are found in Appendix 2.

The BT *sugya* about the Men of Sodom is in two parts: a midrashic section (I), built around scriptural citations, and an anonymous narrative section (II) which has a single concluding scriptural citation. The first part can be further divided into a section based on Genesis 13:3 (IA) and a section built around verses from Job and Psalms (IB). In between sections I and II is a short story about R. Jose of Sepphoris (IC). The two parts of the *sugya* will be considered separately. There is little manuscript variation in the midrashic sections, but much more variation in the narrative section and in the story about R. Jose, which functions as a bridge passage to the narrative.

Midrashic Section (I)

Section A. Exegesis of Gen. 13:3

This section is directly related to the Mishnah. It consists of a series of interpretations of Gen. 13:3, 'The Men of Sodom were evil and sinful towards the Eternal One, exceedingly', which is the proof-text used in the Mishnah. Here, apart from a *baraita* repeating the mishnah, two further interpretations are offered, with proof-texts for each one.

The section begins with a *baraita* whose wording is identical to the first part of the mishnah. This is followed by an interpretation in the name of R. Judah. It introduces the idea that the Men of Sodom were 'sinful with their property', an idea which will be elaborated in the narrative section. 'Property' here has the double sense of the word ממון, money and property. They were grudging with their own money, unwilling to give it to the poor, and they abused

each other's property, e.g. by taking away onions and bricks. A third *baraita* differs from the opinion cited in the name of R. Judah by interpreting 'exceedingly' as meaning 'the shedding of blood', as in the PT. Shedding of blood is again a prominent theme in the narrative section. This section is playful in the way it introduces different interpretations of the same verse, with different proof-texts to prove the same offence.

Similar interpretations of Gen. 13:3 are found in GenR 41:7 (as mentioned above) and in ARN.¹² These, the Mishnah, the Tosefta, the PT and the *baraitot* contain a number ways of interpreting the words of the verse, in various permutations. These are shown in Table 1 (below). The BT offers three variations, the first being identical with the Mishnah. Elements in the second and third are found elsewhere, but not in the same combination.

12. ARNA 32 and 12, ARNB 30. ARNB is the only mention (as a '*devar acher*') in rabbinic sources of homosexuality (משכב זכר) associated with Sodom, in contrast to the history of interpretation of Sodom in Christianity (see P. Vandermeersch, 'Sodomites, Gays and Biblical Scholars: a Gathering Organized by Peter Damian' in E. Noort, & E. Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin*, pp. 149-171).

Table 1: Comparison of Different Interpretations of Gen. 13:3 in Mishnah,

Midrash and Talmuds

רעים	חטאים	לה'	מאד	
בעולם הזה	לעולם הבא	---	---	Mishnah
בעולם הזה	לעולם הבא	---	---	BT
גופן	ממונם	ברכת השם	מתכוונים וחטאים	B2 R. Judah
ממונם	גופן	ברכת השם	שפיכות דמים	B3 מתניתא
בעולם	הזה-----	לעתיד	לבוא-----	PT
אילו לאילו	גילוי עריות	עבודה זרה	שפיכות דמים	ד'א
אילו לאילו	גילוי עריות	עבודת כוכבים	שפיכות דמים	GenR
זה עם זה	גילוי עריות	חילול השם	מתכוונים וחטאים	ARNA
זה לזה	גילוי עריות	---	שפיכות דמים	ARNB
			ד'א משכב זכר	
בעולם	הזה-----	לעולם	הבא-----	Tosefta
איש על חבירו	גילוי עריות	עבודה זרה	שפיכות דמים	ד'א

This section therefore appears to reflect a well established tradition of interpretation of Gen. 13:3. The apparent repetitions in the verse, 'The Men of Sodom were evil and sinful towards the Eternal One, exceedingly' have led to a variety of interpretations, which were selected differently in different texts. The BT presents us with three such interpretations, this number being a frequent element of talmudic composition.¹³ The elements chosen here in the first interpretation repeat the mishnah in confirming that the Men of Sodom have no place in the world to come. Subsequent elements elaborate the nature of their sins. They are: sin with their body (i.e. sexual sin); sin with their property; cursing God; intentional sin and shedding of blood. For sexual sin and sin with property, an appropriate proof text is offered in both the second and the third *baraitot*. Of these elements, sin with property and shedding of blood will feature most prominently in the narrative part of the passage.

Section B. Exegesis of Job/Psalms

This section begins to elaborate the wrong-doings of the Men of Sodom, and in particular the pride which leads to their downfall. This theme is already found in Josephus, who relates that their pride in their wealth led them to forget God and hate foreigners.¹⁴ This is, however, a brief reference and the idea is likely to have been widespread by the Tannaitic period, as evidenced by the halachic midrashim.

As discussed in the Flood chapter, versions of this section are found in MRI (BeShallah-Shirah 2), SifreiDeut (Ekev 11) and tSotah (3:11), all of which are generally accepted as being earlier than the BT. In MRI the starting point is pride (commentary on גאָה גאָה, Ex. 14:1);

13. See, e.g. L. Jacobs. 'The Numbered Sequence as a Literary Device' in *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud*. Vallentine Mitchell, London 2005, pp. 55-67. However, Jacobs warns: 'Far greater caution must be exercised before a three-fold division can be detected in the structure of the *sugya* since here the three sequence is not stated explicitly'.

14. Josephus *Antiquities*, I, 190-194.

in SifreiDeut, abundance of blessing (וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ, Deut. 8:10) and in tSotah, a discussion of *middah keneged middah*. In all three, Sodom is listed together with the Generation of the Flood and the Generation of the Tower.

MRI, SifreiDeut and tSotah follow a similar pattern to each other and the BT:

A statement that the Men of Sodom were punished by means of the object of their pride.

The quotation of Job 28:5-8 to elaborate their wealth.

A declared intention to abandon the way of the wayfarer.

A warning by God that because they were forgetting the way of the wayfarer, they would be forgotten.

The quotation of Job 28:4 and 12:6 to emphasise the warning.

Quotation of Ezekiel 16:49 to emphasise the sin and punishment of Sodom.

All these three texts differ from BT in the way they use Job 28:4, which links the wayfarer (רגל) and being forgotten (הנשכחים):

פֶּרֶץ נָחַל מֵעַם גֵּר הַנִּשְׁכָּחִים מִנִּי רֶגֶל

'They open up a shaft far from where men live, [in a place] forgotten by wayfarers.'

In the earlier texts, the proof-text is used in a warning given by God that just as they chose to forget the law of the wayfarer in this world, so they will be forgotten from the world. In BT, the proof-text is attributed to the Men of Sodom, who propose to forget the law of the wayfarer. This is consistent with the emphasis in MRI being on God's punishment of Sodom and other groups for pride, whereas in BT the emphasis is on the misdeeds of Sodom. MRI and Sifrei Deut are very similar and both insert an additional quotation, Ezek. 16:50, before Ezek. 16:49, referring to Sodom becoming an abomination. Both also conclude by relating that

God provided wine for Lot's daughters so that they could make their father drunk. In quoting from Joel 4:18 about the mountains dripping wine, they link this episode with a messianic prophesy and so link the origin of the Moabites, and hence the ancestry of David, with the messianic future. The messianic theme is explored in great detail earlier in Perek Helek. One might, therefore, have expected this reference to the messianic future to appear at this point in the BT. It may be that it was not included in the source available to the BT, or more likely, that the BT deliberately omitted reference to Lot's daughters. In support of this is the fact that although in GenR Lot is listed as a judge in Sodom, he is not named in the BT (see below).

There are some differences amongst the earlier texts. For example, the introductory statement in SifreiDeut does not say that they were proud, but rather that they rebelled because of the good they had been given. However, the differences amongst these texts are slight compared to their similarity. This suggests a well established tradition about Sodom by the third century.

The motif of the pride of Sodom is also found in later midrashic collections. NumR (9:24) has the same phrase, 'The Men of Sodom became over-proud only because of the goodness which the Holy One provided them with', with the addition of the words לפני המקום.¹⁵ Tan (Beshallah 12) and LevR (4:1) also set out the idea that the Men of Sodom were punished because they were over-proud of their wealth and this led them to neglect the poor. They all state that the men wished to forget תורת הרגל (the word תורת is absent from NumR but the context suggests the same phrase is meant). All three texts also use the same quotations from Job 28. NumR and BT are most similar, in that they quote extensively from Job 28:5-8, elaborating the wealth of Sodom. LevR (4:1) differs from the other texts in beginning not with

15. There is a close relationship between the Tan and NumR, see G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996. pp. 310-311.

pride, but with the statement, also found in the Mishnah, that the Men of Sodom have no share in the world to come, but will face judgement. As the dating of these texts is uncertain, it is not possible to say which might have served as a precedent for others, or whether they all draw on a common source or sources.

The verses from Job 28 are followed by two sayings attributed to Rava (IB2-3). The first interprets Ps. 62:4 to teach that the Men of Sodom would rob wealthy wayfarers by pushing an unstable wall on them. The second interprets a verse from Job again, this time 24:16, in order to teach that they would rob wealthy wayfarers at night, by planting balsam in the house to mark it out: 'In the night they dig through houses, which they mark for themselves in the day-time'. This second interpretation is also found in GenR (27:3), but here it is the Generation of the Flood who are described as robbing people in this way.

Although distinct from the exegesis of Job 28, in that the statements are attributed to Rava and introduced by מאי דכתיב, they use the same midrashic form and also use verses from Ketuvim to elaborate the wrongdoing of Sodom. Thus, they may be considered as part of the same section. Together with the previous verses from Job and further verses from Psalms and Job, they begin to detail the wrongdoing of the Men of Sodom and anticipate what is to come. The phenomenon of change of attribution of a Tannaitic source to an Amora has been noted in the Flood chapter and this possibility cannot be excluded, particularly as there is a precedent for the second interpretation in GenR.

In summary, the BT in this section contains elements which are also found elsewhere. Of these, MRI is the earliest source, and indicates that there was a pre-existing tradition which linked the destruction of Sodom with pride in their wealth, and which used the verses from Job as proof-texts for this wealth and for their wrong-doing and ultimate destruction. How-

ever, the BT places the Job exegesis within a larger context. This section is followed by a short passage, which serves as a bridge, and a much more extensive section which gives the Job section the role of an extended introduction.

Section C. R. Jose of Sepphoris

There follows a short episode about R. Jose of Sepphoris. It is related that he taught this passage (about digging out wealth) and that the following night three hundred thieves broke in.¹⁶ The inhabitants blamed R. Jose for the thefts. When he died, the gutters of Sepphoris ran with blood.

A passage in bMoed Katan 25b also relates that the gutters ran with blood after R. Jose's death. Here, it is part of a list of supernatural events which follow the death of scholars, which includes R. Jose bar Halafta, on whose death the gutters ran with blood in Laodicea.¹⁷ The Munich and Jerusalem manuscripts have Joseph instead of Jose. However, as R. Jose is usually associated with Sepphoris¹⁸ (see also Rabinovitz *ad loc.*), and bMoed Katan 25b also refers to R. Jose, this seems to be the correct reading. Moed Katan is likely to have been its original context, since it is a series of descriptions of disastrous and unnatural events which follow the death of scholars, which has a parallel in pAvodah Zarah 3:1, 42c.

The story of the robbers is also found in GenR (27:3). It again follows an interpretation of Job 24:16. Here, the name is R. Hanina of Sepphoris (in all manuscripts). As R. Hanina also taught in Sepphoris, the tradition may have been applied to both rabbis. This is supported by the fact that a briefer version of the story in pMaaser Sheni 28b also refers to R. Hanina.

16. The Florence manuscript simply states כמה.

17. Or Lydia. There were several towns of this name in Asia Minor.

18. S. Rabinovitz, *Dikdukei Sofrim*, New York, 1976, *ad. loc.*

Here, the story is not linked to the Job verse, but rather to a discussion of the marking of graves. In both GenR and PT, the night after R. Hanina teaches the verse, three hundred thieves break into houses. However, in GenR, this is followed by the exclamation: 'If they had had balsam, what would Sepphoris have done!?' In PT there is no further comment. Both sources omit the criticism of R. Jose which is part of the BT account. This is consistent with the finding of Kalmin that the BT is generally more critical of rabbis than the PT.¹⁹

It seems likely that two different earlier Palestinian traditions have been brought together here: the tradition of robbers breaking into homes after Job 24:16 has been expounded and the tradition of the gutters running with blood after R. Jose's death. It cannot always be assumed that a story relating to Palestine has its origin there, as the attribution of names and incidents is often changed,²⁰ but here there are clear precedents in both PT and GenR so a Palestinian origin is likely.

Narrative Section (II)

This section describes in detail the wrongdoing of the Men of Sodom. Although descriptions of their wrongdoing in general terms are found widely in midrash and targum, the details in this section are not found elsewhere, with two exceptions: the names of the judges and the episode of the young girl, which concludes the section.

19. R. Kalmin, *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006, pp. 37-60.

20. See e.g. D. Kraemer, 'On the Reliability of Attributions in the Babylonian Talmud,' in *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, ed. M. Chernick, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, 276-292.

The judges of Sodom are mentioned in GenR (50:3) and in TanB (Vayera 21). Both list five judges, with Lot in addition. According to TanB, 'Lot was more wicked than all of them, so they made him sit among them'. According to GenR, Lot was appointed chief judge and the names of the other judges are also listed.

Four judges are mentioned in the BT: שקראי, שקרוראי, זייפי²¹, מצלי דינא. Lot is not mentioned. The names of the judges in GenR are: קוֹוֹ שֶׁקֶר, דְּשֶׁקֶר, רַב־נִבֵּל, מִטְהִידִין וְקִלְא־פָּנֶדֶר.²² As in the BT, they refer to falsehood and perversion of judgement.²³ Likewise, מִטְהִידִין and מִצְלֵי דִינָא sound similar, and both concern diverting judgement.²⁴ The fourth judge in BT is called 'counterfeiter'. The third judge in GenR also represents a perversion of justice: רַב־נִבֵּל means 'greatly foolish'. Jastrow translates קִלְא פָּנֶדֶר, 'man stealer', suggesting it is derived from קִלְא־פָּנֶדֶר, a word of Greek origin.²⁵ In the Jerusalem manuscript there are two additional judges called אֶפְשֶׁקֶר and כַּפְשֶׁקֶר, names which again reflect falsehood. These names rhyme, and so may have been chosen for literary effect.

There thus appears to a tradition of attributing names to the judges of Sodom which reflect their perversion of justice. This becomes part of the satirical nature of the narrative section in BT.

21. אֲזֵלֵי דִינָא in the Karlsruhe MS.

22. As in Theodor-Albeck edition. This lists several manuscript variations, but in all, the names sound similar and have similar meanings.

23. שֶׁקֶרֶאִי and שֶׁקֶרֶרֶאִי are translated by H. Freedman as 'liar' and 'awful liar' (*Babylonian Talmud: Sanhedrin*, Soncino Press, London, 1935). It is not clear exactly what שֶׁקֶרֶרֶאִי means, but it is probably a word-play building on שֶׁקֶרֶאִי, so implying an even worse liar.

24. Jastrow translates מִסְטִידִי, a manuscript variant of מִטְהִידִין, as 'one who diverts justice from its true path' and מִצְלֵי also means 'to turn aside, pervert'.

25. s.v. פָּנֶדֶר. Sokoloff lists קִלְא, meaning 'clod of earth', but it could equally be קֵל with the definite article. פָּנֶדֶר is not listed.

The tradition of five judges plus Lot may be reflected in the Munich and Jerusalem manuscripts of the BT, which list six judges (in the Munich manuscript this is a later correction, see note to Table 2, p. 131). However, Lot is not named as a judge. The passage about Lot and his daughters, which follows immediately the description of the wickedness of Sodom in the Halachic midrashim, is also absent. Given Lot's centrality to Gen. 19, one might have expected that he would feature. There are various possibilities for his omission.

It is possible that Lot was excluded because he was not viewed as particularly wicked in the Babylonian tradition. His inclusion in GenR attributes to him involvement in the wickedness of Sodom. A shift towards negative depictions of Lot can be seen in Palestinian texts. The Book of Jubilees depicts Lot more negatively than in the Torah and shifts responsibility towards him, for example in the episode with his daughters.²⁶ GenR depicts Lot in a similar way. In contrast, of the seven passages referring to Lot in the BT, only one, Naz 23b, is critical, and even that is part of an argument about how far Lot was responsible for his behaviour, and so inconclusive.²⁷ The other references are neutral. The BT may have wished to portray Lot in a positive light as the ancestor of King David.²⁸ However, in contrast to the PT, the BT was critical of King David himself, so this is unlikely.

The most likely explanation for Lot's exclusion is simply because Lot was not important to the purpose of the narrative, which was to detail the wickedness of Sodom. This contrasts with Eliezer, who does not feature in Gen. 19 but has a literary function in the BT narrative.

26. J. Van Ruiten, 'Lot Versus Abraham. The Interpretation of Genesis 18:1-19:38 in *Jubilees* 16:1-9' in E. Noort and E. Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin. Genesis 18-19 and its Interpretations*, Brill, Leiden and Boston, 2004, pp. 29-46.

27. The references are: Eruvin 65a, Megillah 25b, Yevamot 17b, Nazir 23a-ab, Bava Metzia 86b and Shevuot 35b.

28. M. Avioz, 'Josephus' Portrayal of Lot and his Family', *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* vol. 16, no. 1, 2006, pp. 3-13.

He plays a role as a servant, and therefore, like the orphan, undermines the expected hierarchy. He also serves as a link to the Flood *sugya*.

The bed which wayfarers had to be fitted to resembles the Greek legend of the bed of Procrustes.²⁹ The story in BT may reflect a folk legend that was independently present in different cultures, or the Greek legend may have been known and adapted. The latter is likely. One possible route of transmission was from Palestine, where Hellenistic culture was widespread and was reflected in its literature, as Lieberman demonstrates.³⁰ It is therefore possible that the knowledge was transmitted from Palestine to Babylonian through rabbinic interaction.

However, in recent years it has become recognised that the Babylonians themselves had direct access to Greek culture. It was preserved in the Roman Empire, which bordered on Babylonia, and there was contact between the two cultures through trade routes and other interactions and became part of the cultural milieu.³¹ Although Babylonian Amoraim frequently question the meaning of Greek medical terms apparently understood in the Mishnah,³² it is likely that popular legends and stories were transmitted more commonly than esoteric medic-

29. Plutarch, *Lives*, Theseus 11:1, trans. Thomas North, Dent, London, 1898.

30. S. Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*. New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, 1950.

31. J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, Vol. 5, p. 85; D. Boyarin, 'Hellenism in Jewish Palestine' in C.E. Fonrobert & M.S. Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 336-363.

32. M. Geller, 'Akkadian Medicine in the Talmud' in D. Cohn-Sherbok (ed.), *A Traditional Question. Essays in Honour of Louis Jacobs*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, 1991, pp. 101-112.

al knowledge. Thus, motifs from Aesop's fables are also found in BT.³³ It therefore seems most likely that the Procrustean bed was another Greek motif that was known in Babylonia.

The story of the young girl is found in a different version in GenR 49:6. Here, the girl helps another young girl whom she meets at a well. She is punished by burning. This may be linked to the punishment of Sodom by fire, which in turn is linked to the punishment for the promiscuous daughter of the High Priest, and so to Sodom's sexual immorality. The proof-text that this episode is the final straw which led God to punish Sodom is: 'I will go down now and see if they have done completely according to her cry [not *their* cry] which has come to me' (Gen. 18:21).

In BT, the girl helps a poor man and is punished by being covered with honey and placed on a wall, where bees sting her to death. The proof-text used here is the preceding verse, where רבה (great) is linked to ריבה (maiden).

The help given by the young girl is more fully described in GenR. In this account, there is an interaction between the girl who is punished and the girl (not a man, as in BT) she provides food for. GenR thus humanises the situation and makes it vivid.

The BT simply says, 'The matter of the young girl who gave the piece of bread to the poor man in a pitcher'. The wording suggests an allusion to a story which is already well known. The brevity is also consistent with the tendency noted by Hasan-Rokem for the BT to focus

33. H. Schwarzbaum, 'Talmudic-Midrashic Affinities of some Aesopic Fables' in H.A. Fischel (ed.), *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature*, Ktav, New York, 1977, pp. 425-442.

on ideological meaning rather than human interaction and emotion.³⁴ However, the ending, which describes the manner of her death, is none the less disturbing.

The punishment of covering the girl in honey appears to be unique to BT. There are parallels with bBava Batra 3b, where it is narrated that a maiden kills herself rather than marry Herod, and Herod preserves her body in honey. Honey was a recognised preservative in ancient times but its sweetness also highlights the erotic nature of this episode. Honey may also hint at an erotic undertone to the punishment of the young girl, especially if it resonated for the reader with the episode in bBB.

In summary, apart from the story of the girl and the judges' names, this section appears to be original to the BT. The language is entirely Aramaic and the different elements are incorporated smoothly to create a coherent picture of Sodom.

Literary analysis

Midrashic Section (I)

As discussed above, the passage about the Men of Sodom is clearly divided into two parts, a midrashic section and a narrative section, with a short bridge passage. The midrashic section begins with exegesis of Gen. 13:3 (IA) and continues with exegesis of Job 28 (IB1). Interpretations, two of which are attributed to Rava, of verses from Psalms and Job follow (IB2-4).

34. G. Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life. Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2000, pp. 34-36.

Section I sets the scene for what follows. It begins with a *baraita* which repeats the mishnah and then gives two further interpretations for Gen. 13:3. The mishnah and first *baraita*, together with PT, interpret רעים and חטאים as referring to this world and the World to Come, unlike GenR and ARN. As well as offering a proof-text for the statement that the Men of Sodom have no place in the World to Come, this interpretation leads smoothly to the other diverse interpretations of their sins. Sin concerning property, i.e. theft, features in the next two *baraitot*, but is not listed in either the PT or the other midrashim. This is significant, because theft is the predominant theme of what follows, although shedding of blood forms the climax, and can be seen as a consequence of theft. Cursing God and intentional sin may also be seen in the behaviour of the Men of Sodom. Intentional sin is clear in the considered means of exploitation, such as the formulating of laws to legitimise extortion and the deliberate traps for wayfarers. Cursing God is not explicit. It may be understood from the disregard and destruction of human beings, made in God's image, or in the deliberate and blatant disregard for God's laws.

The interpretations of Job (IB1) are introduced as a further *baraita*. This is extended, and begins to detail the sins of the Men of Sodom. In doing so, it depicts how their wealth has made them care only about preserving it for themselves. It leads them to hubris, and to denying that their wealth comes from God, and so no longer accepting their responsibility to share it with the wayfarer. The sayings attributed to Rava (IB2-4) again follow smoothly. Their style is similar, in interpreting verses with unusual vocabulary, the second again from the book of Job. Thematically, they continue to elaborate the sins of Sodom, which follow from the decision to ignore the law of the wayfarer, and rather to exploit him. It leads them to devise crafty ways of obtaining the wealth of strangers.

R. Jose of Sepphoris (IC)

The section concerning R. Jose of Sepphoris serves stylistically and thematically as a bridge passage. It appears to be a later insertion, although based on earlier elements. Firstly, it comes between a Job verse, 'They take away the ass of the orphan, they take the widow's ox for a pledge' (24:3) and the episode of the orphan and the oxen which relates to the verse, so interrupting the flow of the interpretation. Secondly, it is entirely in Babylonian Aramaic, although the parallel story in GenR is in a mixture of Hebrew and Palestinian Aramaic.

There are significant manuscript variations, notably in the conclusion, where the Jerusalem manuscript states, 'When R. Jose died, the inhabitants of the city did not occupy themselves with him. Three tears of blood fell from heaven, and the gutters of Sepphoris ran with blood.' This seems to emphasize the rift between R. Jose and the inhabitants, which is reflected in their anger at the robbery. The expression 'the gutters ran with blood' is a hyperbolic expression of the enormous loss that R. Jose's death represented.

As discussed above, there are parallels to the events after the death of R. Jose in bMoed Katan 25b and pAvodah Zarah 3:1, 42c. Both lists include the tradition that after R. Abahu's death, the pillars of Caesarea ran with tears. Lieberman points out that Eusebius describes a miracle in Caesarea towards the end of 309 in which the pillars which support the public porches '...let fall drop by drop as it were tears'.³⁵ Thus there was a tradition in both Judaism and Christianity that the death of scholars or martyrs would be reflected in the inanimate world by supernatural events. In bMoed Katan, but not in the PT, the miraculous events become progressively more remarkable, beginning with the pillars weeping tears and cumu-

35. S. Lieberman, 'The Martyrs of Caesarea', *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves* 7, 1939-1944, 395-446.

lating with the palm trees bearing thorns after the death of R. Meharsha. Gutters running with blood would be a sign of the greatness of the rabbi concerned. It would be less easy to refute as a miracle than the pillars weeping with tears, which, according to the PT, the Samaritans mocked, saying that the pillars were merely perspiring.

The emphasis in Moed Katan is on the miraculous: such was the impact of the scholar's death that even the inanimate world mourned. However, the emphasis in Sanhedrin is different. Here, the reason for the gutters running with blood is ambiguous. It recalls the Moed Katan passage where such incidents reflect the merit of a scholar. However, here it reflects, too, the situation following R. Jose's death which resulted in the shedding of blood.

Sepphoris is often depicted in rabbinic literature as a scene of strife. For example, pTa'anit 4:2, 68a describes the Sepphoreans shouting against the appointment of R. Hanina.³⁶ It was also the centre of a revolt against Rome in the 350s.³⁷ Although Miller argues that the city was no more unruly than other cities in the north, given its history and its frequent depiction in this way it can be seen to epitomise violence and conflict between rabbis, civil leaders and lay people.³⁸

This passage, though brief, reflects the themes of violence and disorder which precede and follow it, and the blood therefore has a different significance. It raises the question of a scholar's responsibility for his teaching, leaving it open whether R. Jose, who says 'How could I have known that thieves would come?' should have known. The rivers of blood at his

36. S. Lieberman, *Texts and Studies*, Ktav Publishing House, New York, 1974, pp. 145-6.

37. F. Millar, 'The Palestinian Context of Rabbinic Judaism' in M. Goodman, & P. Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, p. 40.

38. S.S. Miller, 'Those Cantankerous Sepphoreans Revisited' in L. Schiffman (ed.), *Ki Baruch Hu. Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine*, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1999, pp. 543-573.

death may have indicated not only the loss, but also the association with violence in his lifetime which he could have done more to prevent. The passage suggests that teachings about violence and theft are not given in isolation, but occur in the real world and have implications for it.

Narrative Section (II)

The narrative section which follows is entirely in Aramaic, apart from the concluding quotation and comment on it by Rav.

This section continues to detail the wickedness of Sodom. From the beginning, the deeds of the Men of Sodom are depicted as absurd and even surreal. They represent a perversion of justice, which purports to work according to rational rules. This was epitomised as *middat Sedom* (the attribute of Sodom) in rabbinic literature, as defined in the Mishnah: "'What is mine is mine and what is yours is yours" – this is the average attribute, but some say it is the attribute of Sodom' (Avot 5:10). To observe *middat Sedom* is to observe the law strictly, by the letter but not by the spirit of the law, and in a spirit of selfishness and therefore without any regard for human consequences.

The rules (IIA-B) have the aim of depriving the poorest yet further and enriching the rich. So those with no oxen have to feed the oxen for longer than those who have an ox. There appears to be no escape: if you wish to avoid paying to cross a ford, you have to pay more for not crossing it. In fact, the amount charged for crossing the ford increases four-fold from IIA2 to IID, which may be a deliberate depiction of the worsening situation or simply two different ideas about the price. The crimes are justified by claiming that they are small - the

taking of a single brick, or onion, or garlic - though the cumulative effect was catastrophic for the owner of the stolen objects.

After setting out these relatively minor crimes, the judges who uphold this law are mentioned and examples of their judgement are given (IIC). They may be seen as relating to three of the categories mentioned at the beginning of the entire passage: sexual sin, relating to the wife who is assaulted and miscarries; sin against property, concerning the donkey; and shedding of blood relating to injury. Together, they represent the range of human wrong-doing. It becomes clear how pervasive the wickedness was. It reached (or perhaps started with) those who should have been the upholders of moral values, the judges. The names of the judges underline that they represent the opposite of what judges should be. Instead of being truthful and upholding justice, they are liars and perverters of justice. This is a subversion of the biblical view of what judges should be: 'You shall appoint judges and officers in all your gates which the Eternal One your God is giving to you, according to your tribes. And they shall judge the people with just judgments. They shall not turn away justice and they shall not recognise persons. They shall not take a bribe, for bribes blind the eyes of the wise and twist the words of the righteous.' (Deut. 16:18-20). These judges sit in the gate, but they recognise the rich and turn away justice. The law is adhered to in Sodom, but it is a harsh, twisted law, which has no regard for true justice. Everything has to fit the law, regardless of whether it is right, in the same way that everyone has to fit their bed, and if they do not fit, they will be made to suffer until they do.

However, these laws can be subverted by those they are designed to oppress. Thus, the orphan and Eliezer, Abraham's servant, who is also a wayfarer, both use the logic of the laws of Sodom to their own purpose. This serves to further ridicule the Men of Sodom by showing that people from these despised categories are more intelligent than the Men of Sodom. Giv-

en the high value of wisdom in rabbinic literature, this would further emphasise the worth of the orphan and the wayfarer. Wisdom is valued not only in the form of knowledge of Torah but also sharpness of intellect. The latter is a particular feature of the Babylonian Talmud.³⁹ The orphan even speaks in the legalistic language of the Talmud: 'The end of the judgement should be as the beginning of the judgement. Just as (מה) at the beginning... so (אף) at the end....' The orphan and Eliezer also fit what Boyarin terms the 'trickster' model.⁴⁰ They reflect a particular type of wisdom, or perhaps better, cleverness, which Boyarin suggests was adapted by the diasporic Jew as an alternative to martyrdom, allowing those without power to survive. This seems to be a good description of the orphan and Eliezer, who enter a city without any evident means of survival and yet outwit those who would wish to destroy them. The first part of this section, up to the judgment for injury, shows greater uniformity across manuscripts than the last part. It is also more structured, as shown below:

1. Unjust laws:

דאית ליה תורא... דלית ליה תורא

דעבר במברא... דלא עבר במברא

2. Unjust practices:

דהוה ליה דלבני אתי כל חד וחד שקיל חדא, אמר ליה: אנא חדא דשקלי

דהוה שדי תומי או שמכי, אתו כל חד וחד שקיל חדא, אמר ליה: אנא חדא דשקלי

39. J. Rubenstein, 'The Thematization of Dialectics in the Bavli Aggadah', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 54, no. 1, 2003, pp. 71-84.

40. D. Boyarin, *Dying for God. Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1999, pp. 42-66.

3. Judgements:

דמחי ליה לאיתתא דחבריה ומפלא ליה. אמרי ליה: יהבה ניהליה

דפסיק ליה לאודנא דחמרא דחבריה, אמרו ליה: הבה ניהליה

דפדע ליה לחבריה אמרי ליה: הב ליה אגרא

There are two examples of unjust laws, which are structured in the same way: 'Who has... who does not have' and 'Who passes... who does not pass'. There are also two examples of unjust practices, which are almost identical except in what is taken: 'If someone had... they would come by one and take one. They would say to him, "I only took one"'.⁴¹

Three judgements follow, which are also all structured similarly: 'Who did X to the Y of his fellow, they would say to him, "Give..."⁴¹ The word for 'Give' becomes progressively shorter in each judgement, perhaps reflecting decreasing politeness in the way the claimant is addressed. Altogether, there are three parts to this section: unjust laws, unjust practices and unjust judgements, giving another example of threes in Talmudic narrative.

There are significant variations among manuscripts, especially following the judgements. The different episodes vary in their content and order. Table 2 (overleaf) sets out these differences.

41. In the Jerusalem manuscript, the second judgement has נקטיה instead of הבה. This manuscript represents a different tradition from the others, and they and the printed edition may have unified the language.

Table 2: Order of Episodes in Narrative Section of Men of Sodom Passage
in Different Manuscripts and Printed Edition

<u>Romm- Vilna</u>	<u>Florence</u>	<u>Jerusalem</u>	<u>Munich</u>	<u>Karlsruhe</u> ⁴²
	רעים וחטאי/riches/wall/sniffing out balsam/Rav Yose (Yosef)			
	Payment for oxen/orphan/ford/bricks			
Garlic and onion	Garlic and onion	Garlic only	Garlic and onion	Garlic
4 Judges	4 Judges	6 Judges	6 Judges ⁴³	4 judges
Miscarriage	Miscarriage	Miscarriage	Miscarriage	Miscarriage
Ass's Ear	Ass's Ear	Ass's Ear	Ass's ear	Ass's ear
Injury/bleeding	Injury/bleeding	Injury/bleeding	Injury/bleeding	Injury/bleeding
		(אסותא)		
Ford -fuller	Eliezer - assault	Eliezer - assault	Eliezer - assault	Ford - fuller?
Eliezer - assault	Party - Eliezer	Bed- Eliezer	Ford - fuller	Eliezer assault?
Bed - Eliezer	Ford - Laundryman	Party - Eliezer	Bed - Eliezer	Party
	Crosses	Garment		
	Assault	(Judges rule)		
Poor given coins	Bed - Eliezer	Poor given coins	Poor given coins	Bed
Party - garment	Poor given coins	-----	-----	?
Young girl	Young girl	Young girl	Young girl	Young girl

42. The Karlsruhe MS is not available on the HUJI web-site and the order is not always clear from Rabinovitz, *Dikdukei Sofrim*.

43. The Munich manuscript lists only four judges, and originally seems to have read 'four' but was corrected to 'six'. See manuscript on <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud> and Rabinovitz, *Dikdukei Sofrim*, *ad loc*.

The Florence manuscript resembles the printed Romm-Vilna edition most closely, in that it contains all the episodes which are in the printed edition, whereas in the Munich manuscript the party is missing and in the Jerusalem the episode of the fuller is missing.

However, the order in the printed edition differs from all the manuscripts. It is more coherent. The judgements for wounding and payment for the ford lead to the episode of the fuller crossing the ford (D). The fuller is made to pay for the injury that is done to him. A fuller may be specified here because his occupation would be considered lowly, involving dirty, smelly work. Fullers are also seen elsewhere as ignorant and insolent, eg. bBava Metzia 83b. It may also be because his occupation involved work at the river, and so the charge for crossing it would affect him particularly severely. The fuller is forced to pay the price exacted from him.

This episode is immediately followed by Eliezer, Abraham's servant, appearing before the judges, assaulting the judge and demanding payment (E). Eliezer uses the perverse judgement against the fuller to his advantage against the judges. This order also gives continuity to the narrative about Eliezer, as his refusal to sleep in the bed (F) follows with less intervening material.

Curiously, in the manuscripts, Eliezer claims he has taken a vow not to sleep in a bed since the death of Sarah. However, in the Romm-Vilna edition he refers to the death of his mother. The uniformity of the reading 'Sarah' in the manuscripts suggests that there was a deliberate change to 'his mother' in the printed edition.

The Eliezer narrative is then interrupted to tell us that if a poor person arrived in Sodom, he would be given a dinar by everyone, but no-one would give him a loaf of bread (G). When he died, each would reclaim his dinar. This interruption emphasises the callousness of the

Men of Sodom. They are well aware that what they do will result in the death of the poor man. This is up to now the nearest they come to direct murder, and serves to further prepare us for the climax of the narrative.

By contrast, the next episode, concerning the party (H), which returns to Eliezer, is comical. It tells of how he further subverts the customs of Sodom, where it is forbidden to invite a stranger to a feast on pain of removing one's garments. Eliezer claims that each of the guests in turn has invited him, so each is forced to remove his garments. This serves to lighten the narrative before the climax, an effective dramatic device. It also takes us back to a part of the Job verse (actually a conflation of Job 24 verses 10 and 7) which was quoted earlier and has not yet been interpreted: 'They cause him to go naked without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold'. Where this might appropriately have been used to describe the fate of visitors to Sodom, in the end it is the inhabitants of Sodom who have their garments removed. Like the episode of the orphan and the oxen, this subverts the meaning of the previously quoted verses from Job.

The final part of the section relates the fate of the young girl who offers food to a poor person (J). This is uniformly the ending in all manuscripts. It sums up the enormity of the wrongdoing of Sodom. A young girl, representing the most vulnerable segment of society, is acting with compassion and humanity, embodying all that the Men of Sodom are not. She, alone of all the inhabitants, does what should be done. Because of her act of kindness, she is subjected to a cruel punishment. The manner of her death also involves something sweet, honey. However, instead of being used for good, which should include food for the poor, it is used to inflict suffering and death. From the point of view of the Men of Sodom, there is also an element of '*middah keneged middah*' in her punishment. She provides food for another when she should not have done so, and she in turn is coated with food and made to be food for the bees.

Her punishment causes her to cry out, so that her cry reaches to heaven and the punishment of Sodom is confirmed, not only in this world but for eternity.

The section ends with a verse linking the Talmudic narrative back to scripture and serving as a fitting conclusion.

Layers of the Text

The passage about Sodom can be clearly subdivided into sections, which differ both stylistically and linguistically. As discussed previously, differences of this sort have been attributed to different stages in the development of the text, and have provided evidence for final editing by the Stammaim. Rubenstein considers how the criteria developed by Shamma Friedman for identifying Stammaitic intervention in halachic texts might be applied to aggadic material. These criteria, together with our analysis of parallel sources, may be used to recognise different layers within the present text.

The earliest layers are likely to be at the beginning of the passage. Here *baraitot* are quoted, representing Tannaitic material which is incorporated into the BT as such. The exegesis of Gen. 13:3 to explain the wickedness of Sodom seems to have been a widespread tradition, dating from as early as the time of the Mishnah, and more extensive by the time of the PT, although the BT interpretations are apparently unique to it. Louis Jacobs discusses the possibility of 'fictitious *baraitot*' and this possibility cannot be discounted here.⁴⁴

The exegesis of Job 24 is likewise found elsewhere in several midrashic collections. As discussed above, the fact that it is found in MRI and SifreiDeut, as well as the Tosefta, indicates

44. L. Jacobs, 'Are there Fictitious Baraitot in the Babylonian Talmud?' in *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud*, 2005, pp. 42-54.

that it is earlier than BT. The compiling of this part is likely to be Amoraic. A saying is attributed to Rava, an obvious change to a Tannaitic text. It is also in a combination of Hebrew and Aramaic, with short linking statements introducing the exegesis.

By contrast, the bridge passage and the remainder of the text are more characteristic of the Stammaim. Halivni sets out the characteristics of their activity: 'The luxurious and flowing texture of the Talmud is the achievement of the Stammaim; prior to them there were only short dialogues strung along the Mishnah and Braithoth'.⁴⁵ The extended narrative here accords with this description.

The section also fits several of the criteria Rubenstein lists for Stammaitic intervention.⁴⁶

1. The language is almost entirely Aramaic.
2. There is reference to proximate material from both before and after the passage. Thus, there is a narrative about Eliezer on the previous page (108b), when he is involved in a miraculous episode. R. Jose of Sepphoris appears right at the end of the chapter and the tractate, where he argues with Elijah. Both are therefore significant figures who play roles elsewhere in the chapter.
3. There is significant textual variation. This has been discussed above. It is most marked in the bridge passage about Jose of Sepphoris and in the later part of the *sugya*. In both cases, the variations affect the flow and the emphasis of the narrative.

Although this last criteria is cited as evidence for Stammaitic variation, in fact it provides evidence that the process of editing went on beyond the Stammaitic period. The Munich ma-

45. D. Halivni, *Midrash, Mishnah and Gemara*, Harvard University Press, London, 1986, p.79.

46. J. Rubenstein, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggadah', in *Creation and Composition*, pp. 417-440.

nuscript dates from the 14th century and differs significantly from the Romm-Vilna printed edition. It mentions six judges (though this appears to be a correction, see Table 2 n.43), reverses the episodes of the fuller and Eliezer's assault and omits the party episode. Whereas small variations can be explained in terms of copyist insertions or deletions, variations of the sort observed here, such as a difference in the order of incidents, suggest a more active editing process.

There are criteria which are not met by this passage. One is excessive length, although this is subjective. Certainly, the passage is unusually long for a narrative in this chapter uninterrupted by biblical quotations, but it is not over-wordy. Each individual episode is briefly set out, in a line or two, with little elaboration (see above regarding the story of the young girl).

The evidence is therefore consistent with this section being Stammaitic.

Conclusions

The *sugya* about the Men of Sodom has much in common with the *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood. Both also appear to draw on common sources. Thus, both have sections with parallel material in Tosefta Sotah, MRI and SifreiDeut on the theme of *middah keneged middah*, and which contain exegesis on verses from Job. Both *sugyot* are similar structurally in that they conclude with a narrative section in Aramaic, which is likely to be Stammaitic. However, they differ in that the Sodom *sugya* is predominantly narrative, detailing extensively the wrongdoing of the Men of Sodom. The Flood *sugya* is approximately 75% midrashic, that is, structured around scriptural verses, and 25% narrative, in which scripture is not cited. In the Sodom *sugya* the proportions are reversed. As a rough indication, the Flood section has 84 lines of midrash and 30 of narrative and the Sodom section has 17 lines of

midrash and 43 of narrative, although as line lengths differ, this is not a precise comparison. The passage about Sodom is unusual in this chapter in having such an extended narrative in Aramaic. More often, narratives are briefer, in a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic, and contain more frequent scriptural citations.

The midrashic material, as discussed, is similar to material outside the BT. It is likely to have drawn on the same sources as the *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood. However, it has been adapted to the context and forms a coherent whole. Thus, the first *baraita* on Gen. 13:3 follows the Mishnah in providing a proof-text for this world and the world to come. The subsequent *baraitot* focus on aspects of Sodom's behaviour which will feature further on, notably theft, which is not listed elsewhere but which is the major focus of most of the narrative section.

The commentary on Job is more extensive than elsewhere and sets the scene by detailing the wealth of Sodom and, fundamentally, their decision to abandon the 'law of the wayfarer'. The subsequent interpretations by Rava follow smoothly and begin to elaborate the wrongdoings of the Men of Sodom by showing how their desire for wealth led to a disregard for the life of the wayfarer.

The section about R. Jose of Sepphoris could be seen as being introduced simply because it relates to what happened when R. Jose was teaching this particular exegesis. But, although it is found in GenR, it is likely to have been inserted into the text of the BT at a late stage. The evidence for this is that it is entirely in Aramaic and that there are significant manuscript variations. It also interrupts the flow: had it been omitted, there would have been a natural transition from the exegesis of Rava to the narrative section, beginning with the law about grazing oxen. The section about R. Jose serves to make us pause and think about the consequences in

the real world of the teaching. It also prefigures the appearance of R. Jose in a significant role at the end of the chapter.

The section which follows is crafted carefully. It might be argued that it is a random sequence of events, in no significant order, or that it is a 'stream of consciousness', with one episode leading to another by association of ideas. However, the evidence from manuscripts is that the order of episodes has indeed varied. Different copyists appear to have altered the order and this is best accounted for by deliberate change, since such major change is unlikely to occur by accident. The Romm-Vilna edition has re-ordered them again, in a different way from any of the manuscripts. As indicated above, this re-ordering gives the narrative both greater coherence and greater dramatic tension. It begins with the absurdity of the law and with the petty crimes committed by the Men of Sodom with disregard for the larger consequences. It also shows that the absurdity of the laws means that they can be undermined by those they are designed to exploit. Then we are introduced to the judges who institutionalise the unjust laws. Examples are given relating to sexual relations, property and bodily harm. The judges are outwitted by Eliezer. He is introduced in the previous page of Talmud, where he talks to Shem, and thus provides a link between the Generation of the Flood and Sodom. The order of episodes in the printed edition gives greater continuity to Eliezer's role in Sodom, with the description of Eliezer's refusal to sleep in the bed following immediately from the subversion of the judgement. Comedy alternates with horror, as his escape from sleeping on the bed is followed by the giving of dinars, not bread, to the poor. This in turn is followed by the episode of the party, and then the final horror of the young girl being consumed by bees.

Thus, the behaviour of the Men of Sodom is detailed in a way which leads from small sins to terrible ones, whilst the horror of their wrongdoing is both lightened and heightened by comic episodes.

The narrative section takes further the development of the exegetical narrative in the BT which was noted in the Flood chapter, as described by Levinson.⁴⁷ Here, there is a series of episodes, none of which is directly related to a biblical verse, which are imaginative and create dramatic tension. Story-telling rather than exegesis seems the impulse behind its creation.

However, the narrative section does not represent story-telling for its own sake, but rather has a polemical force. It may be seen as a satire, 'Literature which exhibits or examines vice and folly and makes them appear ridiculous or contemptible'.⁴⁸ Satire is directed against a target and uses laughter to make the target appear ridiculous. The section satirises those who make law. Its motive or aim may be seen as amendment of those who administer the law to the letter, without concern for the human consequences or the morality that should underlie law. It does this by accentuating the literal application of the law, taking it to its logical but absurd conclusion.

Satire and parody are frequently found in rabbinic literature, which makes use of 'serious playfulness'.⁴⁹ Humour is employed critically, here to highlight the abuse of justice. It does so partly by creating an incongruity, that the law becomes the means of creating injustice

47. J. Levinson, *הסיפור שלא סופר. אמנות הסיפור המקראי המורחב במדרשי חז"ל* (*The Twice Told Tale. A Poetics of Exegetical Narrative in Rabbinic Midrash*), Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2005.

48. M. Gray, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2nd edn., Longman York Press, Harlow, 1992, p. 255.

49. H.M. Zellentin, *Rabbinic Parodies of Jewish and Christian Literature*, Mohr Siebeck, Tuebingen, 2011, p. 12-13.

rather than maintaining justice as it should. This is striking in the very names of the judges, which are about dishonesty rather than honesty.

The relationship between satire and parody is complicated, as Zellentin discusses. However, parody is usually understood as the mocking of a specific work, for example by exaggerating its features. Here, there is not an obvious single work which is mocked, but rather a style of rabbinic discourse. In setting out the rulings of the judges of Sodom, the style resembles that of halachic decisions. For example, it is terse in style and makes use of analogy: 'Just as at the beginning... so at the end'. It is clearly satirical, but not a parody of a specific work.

Another model which has been used to describe rabbinic works is Menippean satire, a particular type of satire which makes use of grotesque imagery and humour alongside serious discourse.⁵⁰ This makes a dialogical text, in which a critical voice undermines the serious discussion, which in turn opposes the humour. Boyarin presents striking parallels between grotesque Talmudic stories about rabbis and the stories of Philostratus, a second-century Sophist. Whilst Boyarin considers this satire typical of the BT, Kiperwasser points out that there are also parallels in the PT.⁵¹ In any case, the stories here are, at least overtly, not about the rabbis but rather about the law-makers of Sodom, and they are not set beside halachah, but are rather part of a whole chapter of aggadah. The satire is therefore closer to Juvenalian

50. D. Boyarin, 'The Talmud as fat Rabbi: A novel approach', *Text & Talk* vol. 28, no. 5, 2008, pp. 603-619; *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009.

51. R. Kiperwasser, 'Daniel Boyarin: Socrates and the Fat Rabbis (review)', *Jewish History* vol. 25, 2011, pp. 377-397.

than Menippean satire.⁵² Such satire was used by critics of Roman penal policy to highlight its perceived inhumanity.⁵³

There are various possibilities as to the target of the satire. As the audience would have been rabbis engaged in debates about the law, they may also have been the 'self-satisfied' against whom the satire was directed. The passage may have served as a warning to them about how they applied the law.

It is uncertain how far the rabbis were responsible for actually putting into practice the law they debated. If, as argued above, the narrative section was the product of the Stammaim, it would not have been earlier than the fifth century CE, and is more likely to have been between the mid sixth and the second half of the eighth century, a more extended and later period than Halivni first suggested.⁵⁴ In the earlier part of this period, the Exilarch would have exercised power. Neusner suggests that the tensions between the rabbis and the Exilarch had lessened by the end of the fifth century, so that as persecutions were beginning, there was a closer alliance between the two,⁵⁵ and they may have both exerted authority over the Jewish population. However, by the end of the sixth century, as persecutions intensified, the Exilarch no longer functioned, and there was no Jewish Government recognised by the State.⁵⁶ Thus, neither the rabbis nor the Exilarch would have been putting the law into practice at the time the narrative was compiled.

52. M. Gray, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, p. 256.

53. R. Bauman, *Crime and Punishment in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, New York, 1996, pp. 142-145.

54. D. Halivni, 'Aspects of the Formation of the Talmud', in J. Rubenstein (ed.) *Creation and Composition*, pp. 339-360.

55. J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia Vol. IV Later Sassanian Times*, Brill, Leiden, 1970, Ch. 2.

56. *Ibid.*, Ch. 3.

There are two other possibilities: It may have been directed against the Sasanian Government or it may be an attack on the rabbis' theoretical discussions of the law. Relations with the Government were mostly good and the BT is not generally critical of the Sasanian government.⁵⁷ It also tends to be more concerned with internal Jewish affairs. Whilst it is possible that this was a veiled attack on the Sasanian Government, the second possibility seems more likely: that it is a theoretical warning about the study and application of the law. It serves as a warning that law is not only a theoretical concern, but has had consequences in the past, and may have in the future.

The Men of Sodom applied the law, but it was a harsh law that, instead of working to protect those it should, the poor and needy, protected those who formulated the law and held power. This is *middat Sedom*: to apply the law in its form without regard for the content. It warns those who make laws and apply them, those in positions of power, who may be self-satisfied, that it is not enough to apply the law. They must ensure the laws work not for their benefit but for the benefit of the powerless.

Elsewhere in this chapter, we have warnings against scholarship without morality, for example in the persons of King Menasseh (103b) and Doeg and Ahitophel (106b-107b), who were great scholars but misused their learning and shed innocent blood. Here, it is the making of law that is the subject of warning. Like learning Torah, making law has to be approached with humility and with the right intention. As Rava observed when asking why Rav Judah's prayer was heeded more readily than his, when he was the greater scholar, 'God requires the heart' (San. 106b).

57. R. Brody, 'Judaism in the Sasanian Empire: A Case Study in Religious Coexistence', *Irano-Judaica* vol. II, 1990, pp. 52-62.

In the context of Sanhedrin, which is concerned with the exercise of power and the authority to impose capital punishment, the passage about Sodom is especially telling. Throughout the tractate, there is an awareness of the responsibility that the exercise of power entails. This section serves, in its satire, to highlight the dangers of power and delivers a powerful warning to those who exercise it.

CHAPTER 4

THE GENERATION OF THE DISPERSION

Introduction

In the previous chapters, on the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom, I examined the *sugyot* in relation to parallel material, primarily in the Palestinian Talmud, Tosefta and midrashim and analysed their literary structure. There are strong similarities between the two. Both begin with a midrashic section, predominantly in Hebrew, and conclude with a narrative section in Aramaic which would appear to belong to the period of the Stammaim. As might be expected, given the overall theme of the chapter, justice is the focus in both. In the case of the Flood, God's justice is questioned. The Sodom *sugya* presents a satire on the distortion and abuse of justice. Both elaborate on the theme of *middah keneged middah* and play on verses from Job, in passages which are paralleled in the halachic midrashim of MRI (Shira-Beshallach 2) and SifreiDeut (Ekev 7).

The Generation of the Dispersion is the third group from Genesis listed in the Mishnah. Two terms are used for this group in rabbinic literature: *Dor Haflagah*, the Generation of the Dispersion, and *Anshei* or *Dor haMigdal*, the Men or the Generation of the Tower (of Babel). Lieberman considers the former is the more usual term.¹ This is found in the Mishnah, BT, GenR and Sifrei. The Tosefta and MRI, on the other hand, use *Anshei Migdal*, the Men of the Tower.² In contrast to the long *sugyot* about the Flood and Sodom, which precede and follow

1. S. Lieberman, תוספתא כפשוטה, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1973, on tSot. 3:3 , p. 638.

2. MRI includes *Anshei Dor Haflagah* alongside *Anshei Migdal* in the Venice 1545 edition - see Horovitz-Rabin

it, the *sugya* about the Babel is brief, sandwiched between the two. A major reason for this is likely to be that the Generation of the Dispersion is not listed at all in the Parma and Budapest manuscripts of the Mishnah (the Cambridge MS cannot be deciphered), which represent the Palestinian tradition.³ As a consequence, there is no gemara on the subject in the PT. Its exclusion may reflect debate in general about which groups were excluded from the world to come. A similar situation can be seen in the groups from the Book of Numbers, where the Spies are included in the BT but not the PT.

Although the Generation of the Dispersion does not feature in the manuscripts of the Palestinian version of the Mishnah, it was part of the Palestinian tradition. In addition to being included in tSan 13, it is in MRI Beshallah-Shira 2 and tSotah 3:3. It is also listed together with the Generation of the Flood, and once also with the Men of Sodom, in other lists of evil-doers, e.g. GenR 12:6, 16:7 and Sifrei Haazinu 5.

Even in the Babylonian version of the Mishnah, the Generation of the Dispersion appears to be an interpolation. It is placed between the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom. A quotation in the Mishnah of the BT, in the name of R. Nehemiah, states 'these and these', clearly referring to the Flood and Sodom and not to the Generation of the Dispersion. This internal evidence suggests that the Generation of the Dispersion was inserted later into the Babylonian version of the Mishnah, perhaps following its inclusion in the gemara of the BT.

The Generation of the Dispersion thus seems to have been a later and deliberate insertion into the BT. This may be accounted for by the Tower of Babel being linked to Babylonia -

note on line 5, p. 122.

3. See G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 140, about the various Mishnah traditions.

the two in fact being synonymous. It is likely that the report about the remains of the reputed Tower would have been known to the Babylonian sages. Isaiah Gafni has suggested that in asserting their independence, the sages of Babylonia emphasised their proximity to biblical sites linked with the history of the beginning of humanity, and so assigned greater importance to Babylonia.⁴ The Tower would have been one such site. A further such example, the spring of Biram, was discussed in the chapter on the Flood. In Yoma 10b this kind of sacred geography is also very much in evidence.

Following my stated method, I will compare the text of the BT with the Tosefta (as mentioned above, there is no PT text to compare). I will then analyse the text in more detail and compare it with other parallel texts. Finally, I will examine the literary structure of the text and consider why the content might have been selected and structured as it is.

The Text of bSan. 109a

Mishnah (107b)

The Generation of the Dispersion have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'And the Eternal One scattered them from there across the face of all the earth' (Gen. 11:8). 'And the Eternal One scattered them' - in this world. 'And from there the Eternal One scattered them across the face of all the earth' (*ibid.*, 9) - in the world to come.

4. I. Gafni, 'Expressions and Types of "Local Patriotism" among the Jews of Sasanian Babylonia', *Irano-Judaica* vol. 2, 1990, pp. 63-71.

Gemara (109a)

I The Generation of the Dispersion have no share in the world to come... What did they do [to justify such a punishment]? The School of Rav⁵ Shela said, '[They said] "Let us build a tower so that we can go up to the firmament and attack it with axes, so that its waters may flow out from it"'. In the West (i.e. Palestine) they laughed at them and said, 'If so, they should have built it on a mountain!' Rather, R. Jeremiah b. Elazar said: They were divided into three groups. One said, 'Let us go up and dwell there'. One said, 'Let us go up and perform idolatry'.⁶ One said, 'Let us go up and make war'. The one that said, 'Let us go up and dwell there', God scattered. The one that said, 'Let us go up and make war', God made into apes and spirits and demons and night-demons. The one that said, 'Let us go up and worship idols', - 'For there the Eternal One confused the language of all the earth' (Gen.11:9).⁷

It is taught [in a *baraita*]: R. Natan said, 'All of them intended to perform idolatry. It is written here, "Let us make a name for ourselves" (Gen. 11:4) and it is written there, "And you shall not mention the name of other gods" (Ex. 23:13). Just as there it means idolatry, so here it means idolatry'.

II R. Yochanan said, 'A third of the tower was burnt, a third sank into the ground⁸ and a third remained standing'.

5. The printed text reads 'רבי' but all the manuscripts read 'ר'. Rav Shalah was a Babylonian Amora (1st generation) and in the context a Babylonian sage is clearly meant, since his view is mocked by Palestinian sages.

6. עבודת כוכבים Here, its literal translation, 'worship the stars' is relevant, as they built upwards towards the stars. However, all manuscripts (Florence, Jerusalem and Munich) read עבודה זרה, probably because of censorship.

7. In all manuscripts 'Let us go and make war' precedes 'Let us go up and perform idolatry' in the first half of this section. This is consistent with the order in the second half, which relates the punishment, and is therefore likely to be the correct order.

8. נבלע, literally 'was swallowed'.

Rav said, 'The air surrounding the tower causes forgetfulness'.⁹ R. Joseph said, 'Babel and Borsif are bad omens for Torah study'.¹⁰ What does 'Borsif' signify? R. Assi said, 'An empty cistern'.

Mishnah and Tosefta

The Hebrew text of the Tosefta is found in Appendix 3.

The mishnah follows the form of other *mishnayot* in the section in offering a proof-text for the exclusion of the Generation of the Dispersion from the world to come. It uses the apparently redundant repetition in Gen. 11:9 of the the preceding verse, where the content is the same but the word order is reversed. As is typical of midrash, the two incidences of the word 'earth' are interpreted as referring to different concepts: this world and the world to come.

Tosefta San. 13:2 (in both the Berlin and Vienna manuscripts) uses the term 'Generation of the Tower.' It also adds the phrase 'will not live in the world to come', as it does for the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom. It uses a different proof-text from the Mishnah for the world to come: 'And they ceased to build'. This is the second half of Gen. 11:8, and is redundant, since if they were scattered they would have ceased to build. Building a city may also have been seen as a reference to building a life in the world to come. However, the redundancy is less obvious than that played on by the Mishnah.

9. The Karlsruhe manuscript adds 'of the Torah' and the Jerusalem manuscript adds 'Talmud'.

10. Borsif has been identified with present day Birs Nimrud, southwest of the site of Babylon. See A. Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1983, pp. 100-104.

The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and textual analysis

The parallel texts cited here are found in Appendix 3.

The *sugya* can be divided into two parts thematically. The first (I) is a discussion of the wrong-doing of the Generation of the Dispersion. As with the *sugyot* about the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom, the concern is to discover the crime which befits exclusion from the world to come. The second part (II) appears incidental to the main question and is concerned with the historical remains of the Tower. However, there is not a clear break between the two parts; rather there is a transition from one idea to another.

Section I. The Wrongdoing of the Generation of the Dispersion

The *sugya* starts with the question 'מאי עבדו' (What did they do?). In this, it differs from the other *sugyot* on this mishnah, which all start with a *baraita*. This again suggests that it was composed separately from the others.

The answer given suggests that the attack on heaven had the purpose of releasing water, rather than being a direct challenge to God. There is no direct parallel in other sources, but in the closest parallel, in GenR (38:6), the challenge to God is more explicit. The men question God's right to sole occupation of heaven and set up an idol with a sword in its hand. TanB Vayera 24 describes the builders of the tower proposing to set idols on the top of the tower and make war with God. A similar idea may be implicit here in order to justify the punishment. In any case the BT, in common with the other texts, sees the Tower as posing a threat to God.

The saying of R. Jeremiah b. Elazar in BT about the three groups has an almost exact parallel (which is unattributed) in Tan Noah 18. The statement 'Let us go up and make war' precedes that about idolatry, which conforms to the readings in the manuscript versions of BT (see note 7 above). As discussed in the previous chapters, the uncertain dating of the Tanhuma means it is not possible to say whether this or the BT came first, or whether they drew on a common tradition.

The *gezerah shavah* on 'name' meaning 'idolatry' is found in both GenR (38:8) and MRI (Mishpatim 20). In GenR it is attributed to R. Ishmael but in MRI, as in BT, it is attributed to R. Natan.

Section II. The Remains of the Tower

The idea that the remains of the Tower of Babel still existed is already present in the Book of Jubilees (10:26), which states, 'The Lord sent a wind at the tower and tipped it to the ground. It is now between Asshur and Babylon, in the land of Shinar'.¹¹

The remains are described in GenR 38:8 and in Tan Noah 18 and 25. In both, R. Hiyya bar Abba, a fifth generation Tanna, is the tradent. The BT attributes the description to R. Yochanan. This is consistent with the changes in attribution to R. Yochanan noted in the *sugya* about the Flood. One of those attributions concerned the remains of hot springs after the Flood, and here, likewise, R. Yochanan comments on sites of primaeval origin. One might have expected the ruins of Babylon to be described by a Babylonian source, but the fact that

11. Translation from J.T. A.G. M. Van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted. The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the Book of Jubilees*, Brill, Leiden, 2000.

there is a description in GenR, and even earlier, in the Book of Jubilees suggests a long-standing Palestinian tradition about them.

GenR and the Tanhuma both add a comment, not found in the BT, about the height of the tower, which enables one to see as far as the palm trees of Jericho from the ruin - very far indeed!

The last section, about the air surrounding the tower, has no direct parallels. However, Borsif and Bavel are also linked together at the end of the chapter on the tower in GenR (38:11). Here, R. Yochanan questions a student who is absent minded and the student admits he is homesick for Borsif. R. Yochanan makes a link between Borsif and Bavel, commenting that Borsif should be called 'Bolsif - for there the Eternal One confused languages'. In bAvodah Zarah 11b, it is considered identical to Babylon. This is consistent with R. Yochanan's statement.

This *sugya* differs from the *sugyot* about the Flood and Sodom. Unlike them, it is not clearly divisible into a 'midrashic' and a 'narrative' section. The first section begins with a question in Aramaic but the remainder of the *sugya* is almost entirely in Hebrew, except for the phrase 'In the West (i.e. Palestine) they laughed at them and said, "If so, they should have built it on a mountain"'.

Like the previous *sugyot*, the *sugya* on Babel draws on earlier Palestinian sources, which are found mainly in GenR but also in the halachic midrashim. It also has a concluding section, about Bavel and Borsif, that appears to be entirely Babylonian on the basis that it has no precedents and cites only Babylonian Amoraim. However, this section does have similarities to GenR. It differs from the other concluding sections in that it is not an extended narrative and is predominantly in Hebrew. There is thus no clear evidence that there is a Stammaitic layer

to this *sugya*. Manuscript variation, another indicator of Stammaitic activity, is generally minor and is not more prominent in any one part of the *sugya*.

The first part of the *sugya* shows a preference for the opinion in Palestine over the opinion of a Babylonian sage and may reflect a more favourable attitude to Palestine after the third generation of Amoraim, as suggested by Kalmin.¹² The three categories of those who rebelled reflects a frequent preference for threes in BT.¹³ This is also found in the description of the ruins of the Tower.

The three categories are given three different punishments. One might have expected these to reflect the idea of *middah keneged middah*, the punishment fitting the crime, as is found both in this chapter and elsewhere throughout rabbinic literature, but this is not always the rule, nor made explicit. However, it can be seen in the punishment for those who wished to make a home in heaven. They are scattered so that instead of settling permanently together in one place they are forced to find another place to dwell, apart from each other.

The link between making war and turning into apes and various forms of demon is not so obvious. Apes and various demons and evil spirits are a perversion of normal human beings. Apes have human characteristics, which may make them appear like distorted and degraded human beings. According to GenR (23:6), one sign of the degradation of human beings in the Generation of Enosh was that their faces were made ape-like. Spirits and demons and night demons are seen as resulting from human wrong-doing. Thus, bEruvin18b, linking the three types of demon in the same order as BT, states, 'All the time that Adam was banned [from sexual relations from Eve] he gave birth to spirits and demons and night-demons'.

12. R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994, pp. 46-59.

13. Louis Jacobs, *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud*, Vallentine Mitchell, Edgware, Middx, 2005, pp. 56-59.

Making war is a perversion of human behaviour, involving the crime of shedding blood, which may explain the punishment. It is also fitting in that the various demons are seen as being at war with human beings.¹⁴

Finally, the link between idolatry and confusion of language is also not obvious. It may be that the clue is further on, in the identification of idolatry with the word 'name', and the play on the words for 'there' and 'name', both שם in unpointed Hebrew. The 'measure for measure' nature of their punishment is made clearer in the Tosefta and Halachic midrashim, which draw on verses from the book of Job as proof-texts. According to these sources, the people wish to make themselves a name (שם) and 'were scattered from there' (שם). These sources were a prominent feature of the other two *sugyot*, and material about the Tower of Babel is found alongside the Flood and Sodom in the Tosefta (Sotah 13:10) MRI (Beshallah-Shira 2) and Sifrei (Ekev 7), so one might have expected such material here (see Appendix for these texts). Their omission contributes to a sense that the Babel *sugya* is an afterthought, which is not considered as important as the other two Genesis subjects. As discussed above, the Tower may have been introduced into the BT in order to emphasise Babylonia as the site of early human history.

Despite differing from the other two Genesis *sugyot* in some ways, the Babel *sugya* does appear to be linked with them deliberately. The main sin of the Generation of the Tower is seen as being idolatry. The main sin of Sodom is seen as being the shedding of blood, and of the Generation of the Flood as sexual immorality. Thus, all three cardinal sins are described in relation to these three episodes from the book of Genesis. Although the biblical stories did leave scope for all these sins, other combinations of group and sins were equally possible -

14. A. Unterman, *Dictionary of Jewish Lore and Legend*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1991, s.v. 'Demons', 'Lilith'.

for example, the Generation of the Flood could equally have been ascribed the sin of violence. It therefore seems likely that the three *sugyot* were edited to be linked together in this way.

Conclusions

Given the brevity of this *sugya*, it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions from it. It does, however, confirm trends already noted. It can be seen as having a section which draws on earlier sources followed by a section which is probably of Babylonian origin. It shows the tendency to present the sources more concisely. Thus, although on its own too brief for any conclusions, this section does support the conclusions concerning the other *sugyot* about Genesis narratives in this chapter of the BT.

CHAPTER 5

KORACH AND THE GENERATION OF THE WILDERNESS

Introduction

The previous three chapters have been concerned with the groups from mishnah 10:3 whose stories are found in the Book of Genesis. Here, we move to stories from the Book of Numbers, and in particular the story of Korach and his Assembly. The long *sugya* about Korach's rebellion is the main focus of this chapter, although I will also examine the brief *sugya* about the Generation of the Wilderness. Although the Ten Tribes are included in the same mishnah in Palestinian versions, in the BT they are included separately and the discussion is about whether they will return to the land of Israel, not whether they will enter the world to come. They are therefore not included in the analysis.

In my analysis of the previous *sugyot* about the Flood and Sodom, I have found a tendency to begin each *sugya* with a 'midrashic' exposition, often but not always drawing on what appears to be pre-existing material, followed by a narrative section which appears to be unique to the BT in style and often in content, which I suggest is Stammaitic in origin (this is less clear in the *sugya* about the Tower of Babel). In terms of content, the main focus of these *sugyot* is to address questions of justice. The Sodom *sugya* raises questions about how humans administer justice. The *sugya* on the Flood raises the question of God's justice in destroying innocent creatures alongside the guilty. Taken together, the Genesis *sugyot* explore how God's justice reflects the principle of *middah keneged middah*, and the larger question of whether God is being just in denying a place in the world to come to these groups.

In this chapter, I will consider how far these findings can be applied to the later part of the gemara on mishnah 3, and in particular the Assembly of Korach.

Three groups feature in the Mishnah and BT and also in PT and the Tosefta: the Spies, the Assembly of Korach and the Generation of the Wilderness. The Assembly of Korach, and Korach in particular, is the main focus of the BT, but in the other texts, the focus differs. The printed BT text reflects some of this diversity and it will therefore be helpful to set out how the groups feature in the different texts before analysing the BT text further. This is summarised in the table below:

	Mishnah	Tosefta	PT	BT
Spies	Absent ¹	Present	Absent	Present
Gen. of the Wilderness	Present	Major part	Major part	Minor part
Assembly of Korach	Present	Minor part	Minor part	Major part

The Mishnah is found in full in bSan. 108a in the Romm-Vilna edition and then the relevant *piska* is repeated, in abbreviated form, on 109b. Because of their differences, both are included in the translation below. On 108a, the spies are mentioned in parenthesis, as in the printed Mishnah, and it is likely they were added under the influence of the Babylonian ver-

1. Kaufman and Parma manuscripts and Cambridge Geniza fragments TS E2 75, as found on web-site <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud/mishna/selectmi.asp>.

sion of the Mishnah.² The spies are not listed in manuscripts of the Mishnah, which reflect the Palestinian version, and are also not in the PT, which is built around this version of the Mishnah.

On the other hand, the Mishnah mentions the Generation of the Wilderness before the Assembly of Korach, whereas in the BT it comes after the extensive discussion of the Assembly of Korach, and is dealt with much more briefly. The PT reflects the emphasis of the Mishnah, in that the discussion of the Generation of the Wilderness again comes first and is longer than the discussion of the Assembly of Korach. The Tosefta similarly reflects this priority. The focus of the BT, by contrast, is on the Assembly of Korach. This provides the impetus for a discussion of dissent and a critique of rabbinic practice.

As in previous chapters, after setting out the text, I will compare it with the parallel texts in the PT and Tosefta. This will be followed by a comparison with other parallel texts. However, here the analysis is complicated by the fact that most of the parallel texts are from the Tanhuma and NumR, whose dating is uncertain and may well be later than the BT, as discussed below. This means that few conclusions can be drawn about how the BT uses earlier material. This chapter will therefore be structured differently from the preceding chapters. I will analyse the structure and literary features of the text and then discuss the themes which emerge, leading to a consideration of how the BT uses the biblical narrative for its own purposes.

The Text of bSanh. 109b-110b

As in the previous chapters, the Gemara is divided into numbered sections, based on sub-

2. See G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, pp. 140-142.

ject matter, in order to assist in referring to it. The division is summarised as follows:

I Korach

A. Baraita concerning judgement for the world to come.

B. Word-plays on the names of the major players

1. Korach, including the exclusion of Jacob's name
2. Datan and Aviram and On

C. The wives of On and Korach

1. On's wife, who saves On.
2. Korach's wife, who incites Korach

D. Causes and course of the rebellion

1. The two hundred and fifty men of renown
2. Moses suspected of adultery
3. Polemic against disputes.

E. The wealth of Korach

F. The punishment of Korach

G. The protest of the sun and moon

H. Gehinnom

II The Generation of the Wilderness.

Mishnah (108a)³

The spies have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'And the men who had brought an evil report concerning the land died in the plague' (Num. 14:37). 'They died' - in this

3. The text here is the same as mSan. 10:3.

world; 'in the plague' - in the world to come.

The Generation of the Wilderness have no share in the world to come and will not face judgement, as it is said, 'In this wilderness they will come to an end, and there they will die' (Num. 14:35). These are the words of R. Akiva. R. Eliezer said, 'Concerning them scripture says, "Gather to me my pious ones, those who keep my covenant over a sacrifice" (Ps. 50:5)'.⁴

The Assembly of Korach will not rise up,⁵ as it is said, 'The earth covered them' (Num. 16:33) - in this world; 'and they were lost from the midst of the congregation' (*ibid.*) - in the world to come. These are the words of R. Akiva. R. Eliezer said, 'Concerning them, scripture says, "The Eternal One kills and brings to life, causes to go down to Sheol and brings up again" (I Sam. 2:6)'.

Mishnah and Gemara (109b - 110b)

Mishnah: The spies have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'And the men who had brought an evil report concerning the land died in the plague' (Num. 14:37). 'They died' - in this world; 'in the plague' - concerning the world to come.

The Assembly of Korach has no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'And the earth covered them' - in this world; 'And they were lost from amidst the congregation' - in the world to come. These are the words of R. Akiva. R. Eliezer said concerning them, 'Scripture says, "The Eternal One causes to die and to live, to descend to Sheol and to rise up" (I Sam.

4. This verse may have been used as a proof-text because of the references to fire and judgement in the preceding verses. The section on the Generation of the Wilderness is absent when the Mishnah is repeated on 109b.

5. When the Mishnah is repeated on 109b it reads, 'have no share in the world to come.'.

2:6).⁶

Gemara:

I Korach

A.

It is taught [in a *baraita*]: The Assembly of Korach has no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'The earth covered them' (Num.16:33) - in this world; 'and they were lost from the midst of the congregation' (*ibid.*) - in the World to Come'. These are the words of R. Akiva. R. Judah b. Bathyra said, 'They are like a lost object which is sought, as it is said, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; search for your servant for I have not forgotten your commandments"' (Ps. 119:176).

B

1. 'And he [Korach] took' (Num. 16:1). Resh Lakish said, 'He made an evil bargain⁷ with himself'. 'Korach' - that he depopulated Israel.⁸ 'The son of Yitzhar' - that he aroused the anger of all the world like the noon-day heat.⁹ 'The son of Kehat' - a son who made his progenitors grind¹⁰ their teeth. 'The son of Levi' - a son who was joined¹¹ to Gehinnom. Why not count him as 'the son of Jacob' - a son who displaced himself to Gehinnom?¹² Rav Samuel b. Rav Isaac said, 'Jacob sought mercy for himself, as it is said, "May my soul not enter into

6. These words said by Hannah, the mother of Samuel, are apposite as Samuel is listed in I Chron. (6:7-13) as a descendant of Korach.

7. מקח, a play on ויקח 'and he took'.

8. נעשה קרחה, lit. 'a baldness was made', hence an absence or gap.

9. יצהר, a play on צהרים.

10. הקהה, lit. 'to blunt'.

11. לוייה, a play on לוי, from the same root, לוי.

12. עקב, from which the name יעקב is derived. The root is related to 'heel' and has a variety of meanings. Here I play on the sense of 'supplant'.

their secrets and may my honour not be included in their congregation" (Gen. 49:6).¹³ "May my soul not enter into their secrets" - this refers to the spies. "And may my honour not be included in their congregation" - this refers to the Assembly of Korach'.

2. 'Datan' - he transgressed the law¹⁴ of God. 'Aviram' - he hardened himself¹⁵ against repenting. 'On' - he sat in lamentation.¹⁶ 'Pelet' - for whom wonders were performed.¹⁷ 'The son of Reuben' - a son who saw and understood.¹⁸

C

1. Rav said, 'On ben Pelet was saved by his wife'. She said to him, 'What difference does this make to you? If this one [Moses] is your master, you are the student and if the other [Korach] is your master, you are the student'. He said to her, 'What shall I do? They have sworn me into the conspiracy with them'. She said to him, 'I know that they are all a holy community, as it is written, "All the congregation, each one of them, is holy" (Num. 16:3).' She said, 'Go back, and I will save you'. She gave him strong wine to drink so that he became intoxicated and fell asleep inside. She sat at the entrance and unloosed her hair. All who saw her turned and went back.

2. In the meantime, Korach's wife joined with them [the rebels]. She said to him, 'See what Moses has done. He has made himself King; he has given the High Priesthood to his

13. Part of the blessing to Simeon and Levi, and therefore appropriate for Korach, a descendant of Levi..

14. דת, meaning law, a play on דתן.

15. איבר, a play on אבירם.

16. אנינות, a play on און. The word can mean complaint or grief or mourning, and so perhaps reflects the ambivalent status of On, who plays no further part in the biblical narrative.

17. פלאות, a play on פלל. It is not clear what the wonders were, but it is likely that this refers to the miracle of On ben Pelet being saved from the results of the rebellion.

18. The name ראוּבֵן can be seen as deriving from ראה - see - and בן - son. Here, there is a pun on בן and בינה, meaning 'understanding.' Presumably On saw and understood that he should not join the conspiracy.

brother; he has made his nephews deputy priests. If a Terumah offering is brought, he says, "Let it be for the the Priest". If they bring a tithe offering that you would take [as a Levite] he says, "Give a tenth to the Priest". Further, he has shaved your hair to make sport with you like a ball of dung.¹⁹ He is jealous of your hair'.²⁰

He said to her, 'He has done the same himself'.

She said to him, 'Since all the greatness will be ascribed to him, he said, "Let me die with the Philistines"'.²¹

'Further, he has said to you, "Go and make a blue [fringe on the corner of your garment]" .If this is an important commandment, then surely your entire academy should wear garments that are entirely blue?'

Concerning this, scripture says, 'The wisdom of women has built her house' (Prov. 14:1) - this refers to the wife of On ben Pelet. 'Through her hand she will destroy it' (*ibid.*) - this refers to the wife of Korach.

D

1. 'And they arose against Moses, and two hundred and fifty men from the Children of Israel' (Num. 16:2) - the most distinguished in the congregation. 'The appointed ones of the Assembly' - they knew how to intercalate the year and fix the new month.²² 'Men of renown' - they were renowned throughout the world.

2. 'And Moses heard and fell on his face' (Num. 16:4). What did he hear? R. Samuel bar

19. טלל see M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods*, Bar Ilan University Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press, Ramat Gan, Baltimore, London, 2002, *ad.loc.*

20. Lit. 'Has set his eyes on'.

21. The quotation alludes to Samson, who pulled the pillars down upon himself as he killed the Philistines at the feast (Jud. 16:30).

22. The phrase קריאי מועד is perhaps being interpreted as meaning 'appointers of the Assembly', i.e. the times of Assembly at the new moon.

Nachmani said in the name of R. Jonathan, 'They suspected him of adultery, as it is said, "They were jealous of Moses in the Camp" (Ps. 106:16)'. R. Samuel bar Isaac said, 'This teaches that each one was jealous for his wife because of Moses, as it is said, "And Moses took the tent and spread it outside the camp" (Ex. 33:7)'.

3. 'And Moses arose and went to Datan and Abiram' (Num. 16:25). Resh Lakish said, 'From this, we learn that one should not prolong a quarrel'. As Rav said, 'Anyone who prolongs a quarrel transgresses a negative commandment, as it is said, "You shall not be like Korach and his congregation" (Num. 17:5)'.

Rav Assi²³ said, 'He deserves to be smitten with *tzara'at*'. It is written [in this verse], 'Through the authority of Moses to him' (*ibid.*) and it is written [in that verse], 'And the Eternal One spoke to him once more, saying "Put your hand in your bosom..." (Ex. 4:6)'.²⁴

R. Jose said, 'Anyone who disputes with the dynasty of David deserves to be bitten by a snake'. It is written [in this verse], 'And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened beasts at the Zohellet stone' (I Kings 1:9) and it is written [in that verse], 'With venomous serpents in the dust' (Deut. 32:24).²⁵

23. The unpointed Hebrew רב אשי would normally be read as the sixth generation Amora Rav Ashi. However, it can also be read as Rav Assi and, although this is more often spelt with a 'samech', here it is the more probable reading. The other traditions in this section are all third generation Amoraim and the saying of Rav Assi is in the same form, consistent with it being formulated at the same time as the other sayings (as discussed further on in the chapter). The Florence and Munich manuscripts read רב אשי, but the Jerusalem manuscript has רב אמי. Rav Ami was a contemporary of Rav Assi who may have been confused with him, or the 'samech' may have been mistaken for a 'mem', but in either case this would support reading Rav Assi, as would the reading 'Rav Assi' in the parallel passage in the Tanhuma (Korach 10).

24. The quotation continues, 'and he put his hand into his bosom and when he withdrew it it was covered with *tzara'at* like snow'. The proof here is a *gezerah shavah* which depends on the juxtaposition of the word יד (meaning hand, and also authority) and לו in both verses. The skin condition *tzara'at* is often translated as 'leprosy' but is not what is known as leprosy today, but rather an unknown skin condition, perhaps psoriasis. For simplicity, I have left it untranslated.

25. Adonijah, in offering the sacrifices, is rebelling against King David. The proof-text is again a *gezerah shavah*, based on the word זוחלי, a *hapax legomenon* presumed to mean a creeping creature or serpent, in the Deuteronomy verse, which is linked to the word Zohellet.

Rav Hisda said, 'Anyone who disputes with his teacher is as if he disagrees with the Divine Presence, as it is written, "In their quarrel against the Eternal One" (Num. 26:9)'.²⁶

R. Hama b. R. Hanina said, 'Anyone who causes strife with his teacher is as if he causes strife with the Divine presence, as it is said, "They are the waters of Merivah, where Israel strove with the Eternal One" (Num. 20:13)'.²⁷

R. Hanina bar Pappa said, 'Anyone who rages against his teacher is as if he rages against the Divine Presence, as it is written, "Your complaints are not against us but against the Eternal One" (Ex. 16:8)'.²⁸

R. Abahu said, 'Anyone who conspires against his teacher is as if he conspired against the Divine Presence, as it is said, "And the people spoke against God and against Moses" (Num. 21:5)'.²⁹

E.

'Wealth kept by its owner to his harm' (Eccles. 5:12). Resh Lakish said, 'This refers to the wealth of Korach'. 'And all the substance that was at their feet' (Deut. 11:6).²⁹ R. Elazar said, 'This is the wealth of a person, which sets him on his feet'. R. Levi said, 'Three hundred white mules were required to carry the keys of Korach's treasure house, even though all the keys and straps were of leather'. R. Hama b. R. Hanina said, 'Joseph filled three treasure houses in Egypt. One was revealed to Korach, one was revealed to Antoninus b. Severus and

26. The reference is to Datan and Abiram. The implication seems to be that in quarrelling with Moses, the archetypal teacher/Rabbi, they are quarrelling with God.

27. Merivah is derived from the root מריב, meaning to strive or struggle.

28. Unlike the previous statements, which relied on a *gezerah shavah*, this link is semantic, complaining being likened to raging against someone.

29. יקום. In the flood narrative (Gen. 7:4, 23) this word refers to all living creatures, but here it applies to material wealth. Being derived from the root קום, to arise, it is perhaps best understood as being something substantial, although wealth would also have meant cattle and flocks, i.e. living things, in biblical times. The verse refers to Datan and Abiram.

one is stored up for the righteous in the future'.

F.

R. Yochanan said, 'Korach was not amongst those who were swallowed or those who were burnt'. Not amongst those who were swallowed, as it is written, 'All the people who were associates of Korach' (Num. 16:32) - but not Korach. And not amongst those who were burnt, as it is written, 'When the fire consumed the two hundred and fifty' (Num. 26:10) - and not Korach'.³⁰ It is taught [in a *baraita*]: Korach was amongst those who were burnt and those who were swallowed. Amongst those who were swallowed, as it written, 'And [the earth] swallowed them and Korach' (*ibid.*). Amongst those who were burnt, as it is written, 'And fire went out from the Eternal One and consumed the two hundred and fifty men' (Num. 16:35) - and Korach was included amongst them.

G.

Rava expounded: What does it mean by what is written, 'The sun and the moon stood in the heavens; they walk by the course of your arrows' (Habbakuk 3:11)? It teaches that the sun and the moon ascended to the the heavens and said before God, 'Master of the Universe, if you execute judgement for the son of Amram, we will go out, and if not, we will not go out' - until God cast arrows at them. He said, 'You have not protested for my honour, but you protest for the honour of flesh and blood?!' Until this day, they do not go out until they force them.

H.

1. Rava expounded: What does it mean by what is written, 'And if God should create something new and the earth should open up its mouth' (Num. 16:30)? Moses said to the

30. I.e. in both cases Korach is not explicitly mentioned.

Holy One, 'If Gehinnom is already included in creation it is well, but if not, then let it be created.' Concerning what [did he say this]? If you should say it should actually be created, then 'There is nothing new under the sun' (Eccles. 1:9). Rather, it was to bring its opening near [them].

2. 'And the sons of Korach did not die' (Num. 26:11). It is taught in a *baraita* coming from our Teachers: They said, 'A place was set aside for them in Gehinnom and they sat there and sang songs'. Rabbah bar bar Hanah said: Once I was going on the way and a certain Arab³¹ said to me, 'Come and I will show you where Korach was swallowed up'. I went and saw two breaches out of which came smoke. He took a ball of wool and soaked it in water and put it on the tip of his spear and passed it into the breach and it was singed. He said to me, 'Listen, what do you hear?' And I heard that they were saying this: 'Moses and his Torah are true, and they are liars'. He said to me, 'Every thirty days Gehinnom returns them here like meat in a pot, and they say, "Moses and his Torah are true, and they are liars"'.

II The Generation of the Wilderness

The Generation of the Wilderness have no share in the world to come, etc.

It is taught [in a *baraita*]: The Generation of the Wilderness have no share in the world to come, as it is said, 'In this wilderness they will come to an end and there they will die' (Num. 14:35). 'They will come to an end' - in this world; 'And there they will die' - in the world to come. And it is said, 'Concerning whom I swore in my anger that they would not come to my rest' (Ps. 95:11). These are the words of R. Akiva. R. Eliezer said, 'They will come to the world to come, as it is said, "Gather to me my pious ones, who have accepted my covenant

31. טייעא see Sokoloff, *Dictionary, ad.loc.* The term is derived from the Tayyi' tribe.

with a sacrifice" (Ps. 50:5). Rather, [it means to say] 'What is it I will establish?' "'What I swore in my anger" - in my anger I swore and I relented.'

R. Joshua b. Korcha said, 'This verse only applies to generations to come.' 'Gather to me my pious one' - these are the pious who in every generation accept my covenant. ['With a sacrifice'] - this refers to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who gave themselves up to the fiery furnace. 'With a sacrifice' - this refers to R. Akiva and his companions who gave themselves up to be slaughtered for words of Torah.

R. Simeon b. Menasia said, 'They will come to the world to come, as it is said, "And the redeemed of the Eternal One shall return and come to Zion in rejoicing" (Is. 35:10 and 51:11).'

Rabba bar bar Hana said in the name of R. Yochanan, 'R. Akiva forsook his kindness, as it is said, "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem saying, 'I have remembered the kindness of your youth and the love of your espousal, that you followed after me in the wilderness which had not been sown'" (Jer. 2:2)'. And just as others come on account of their merit, how much more so should they [the Generation of the Wilderness]?'

Mishnah, Tosefta, Palestinian Talmud

The Hebrew text of the PT and Tosefta are found in Appendix 4.

Mishnah

As discussed above, the Mishnah is different in its initial presentation on 108a and the repetition on 109b. The Spies are not mentioned in Mishnah manuscripts. They are likely to have been introduced on 108a in the printed edition of the BT in conformity with the version on 109b. The Generation of the Wilderness is not mentioned in the repetition of the mishnah

in the BT. The initial mishnah states that the Assembly of Korach 'will not rise up', whilst the repetition reads 'have no share in the world to come'. These differences are likely to reflect differences between Palestinian and Babylonian Mishnah types, with the mishnah on 108a closer to the Palestinian version.

The Mishnah, unlike the BT, links the world to come with judgement, a difference which has already been noted in the *mishnayot* concerning the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom. The quotation concerning Sheol is in the words of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. This is apposite, since Samuel is listed in I Chron. 6:7-13 as a descendant of Korach.

Tosefta

The Tosefta is more extensive than the Mishnah and as well as the Assembly of Korach deals with both the Spies and the Generation of the Wilderness. As with the Tosefta on the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom, the phrase 'will not live in the world to come' is added after 'have no share in the world to come'.

The Tosefta on Korach is essentially the same as the first *baraita* of the gemara. As in the *baraita*, R. Judah b. Bathyra is cited as contradicting R. Akiba, whereas in the mishnah it is R. Eliezer. Also as in the *baraita*, the proof concerns the retrieval of a lost object. The proof-text cited is from Ps.119:176, 'I have gone astray like a lost sheep', whereas the Mishnah cites Ps. 50:5, 'Gather to me my pious ones, who have accepted my covenant with a sacrifice'. In the Tosefta, the latter proof-text is applied to later generations who were willing to offer themselves as a sacrifice for God's covenant in martyrdom. A similar use of the proof-text can be found in the BT concerning the Generation of the Wilderness.

Palestinian Talmud

In the PT, the gemara on the mishnah about Korach is shorter than in the BT. The PT adds the phrase 'will not see the future world' after the phrase 'have no share in the world to come', as in the *sugyot* on the Generation of the Flood and the Men of Sodom. However, there are parallels elsewhere in the chapter too. Korach's wealth is elaborated in the gemara on mishnah 10:1 concerning the *epikoros*. Following this, Korach declares: 'Torah is not from heaven and Moses is not a prophet and Aaron is not the High Priest'. He mocks the *mitzvot* of *tzitzit* and *mezuzah* and the laws concerning the purity of skin lesions. His mocking of the *tzitzit* is in the same words used in the BT by his wife.

Although the PT is shorter, it has relatively more about the Generation of the Wilderness compared to the Assembly of Korach, as discussed above. However, the content concerning the Generation of the Wilderness closely resembles that in the BT. In particular, the first part of the PT is the same as the *baraita* concerning the Generation of the Wilderness in the BT except for the discussion concerning Ps. 95:11, 'Concerning whom I swore in my anger'. In the PT, this draws on an argument of R. Joshua, also found in pHagigah 1:8, that vows are not always irrevocable, which is followed by an explanation by Hanina ben Achi. In the BT it is terser, explaining anonymously that God will relent from what was sworn in anger.

As in the BT, both R. Simeon b. Menasia and R. Joshua b. Korcha are cited as tradents, but the order is reversed. In the BT, R. Joshua rather than R. Simeon is cited in relation to the first statement following the *baraita*, concerning the verse 'Gather to me my pious ones...'. Although both statements reflect the idea of sacrifice for the sake of God's name, the BT refers to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah and to R. Akiva. The significance of this will be discussed below. The second statement, attributed to R. Simeon in the BT and R. Joshua in the PT, draws on Is. 51:11 and 35:10 (the phrase is the same in both) which prophesies a return to

Zion in joy. Where the BT simply uses this to prove that the Generation of the Wilderness will enter into the world to come, the PT discussion is more extensive. It introduces further scriptural support and includes in the prophesy the Ten Tribes, which are dealt with separately further on in the BT.

The close resemblance between the PT and the BT concerning the Generation of the Wilderness is consistent with the suggestion of Alyssa Gray that the BT may have drawn directly on the PT.³² Whilst the *baraita* is the same in both, the second part is both terser and clearer in the BT, consistent with editing of the Palestinian material into a more concise format, as noted in previous chapters.

Regarding the Assembly of Korach, the PT is the similar to the first *baraita* of the BT, with the characteristic addition of 'will not see the future'. However, it introduces as a *baraita* only the saying of R. Judah ben Batyra, not the initial part attributed to R. Akiba. It brings this proof-text together with the prayer of Hannah which is cited in the mishnah, and also interpolates an entreaty by Moses which is not found elsewhere.

The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis

The parallel texts cited here are found in Appendix 4.

Relationship to Tanhuma

There is a great similarity between the the material on Korach in the BT and in Tan Korach. In the appendix Tan, TanB and NumR³³ are all shown as a single text, with Tan as

32. A. Gray, *A Talmud in Exile. The Influence of Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah on the Formation of Bavli Avodah Zarah*, Brown Judaic Studies, Providence, Rhode Island, 2005, pp. 231-3.

33. Tan on Numbers is essentially the same as the second part of NumR (chapters 15-23). See Stemberger, *Introduction*, p.311.

the base text and significant differences between it and the other two indicated. However, the dating of the Tanhuma is uncertain and although parts of it are undoubtedly earlier than the time of editing BT (itself uncertain), the final editing is unlikely to be so. Where the Tanhuma passages closely parallel the BT, it is more likely that they have been taken from the BT than the other way round. The evidence for this is particularly strong in Tan Korach 10 and 11. In Tan 10, the tradent for the story of On's wife is Rav. Rav is only cited in three other places in the Tanhuma and in each case there is a parallel passage in the BT.³⁴ Likewise, of the Babylonian tradents in the latter part of this chapter, which is absent in TanB, Rav Assi is not cited elsewhere and Rav Hisda is cited only once elsewhere, again with a parallel passage in the BT.³⁵

In Tan Korach 11, Rava is the main tradent. He is cited in three other places in the Tanhuma, in each case with a parallel in BT.³⁶ Rava bar bar Hanah is cited only in this passage in the Tanhuma.

The language of the last part of Tan Korach 11 is also more typical of the BT than of the Tanhuma. It is Babylonian Aramaic, almost identical to that in the BT, and includes such expressions as תנא to introduce a *baraita*, which is found elsewhere only twice in the Tan and twice in TanB. All this indicates that the Tanhuma on Korach took in material relating to Korach from the BT rather than the other way round.

The relationship of Tan Korach 10 to the BT is not as clear cut as for Tan Korach 11. As well as citing the Babylonian Amoraim Rav, Rav Hisda and Rav Assi, it also mentions Palestinian Amoraim who are cited elsewhere in the Tanhuma, in passages not found in the

34. Tan Bereishit 2 and Shabbat 11a and Taanit 12b; Tan Mishpatim 7 and Shabbat 55a and Tan Shoftim 9 and Avodah Zarah 2b.

35. Tan Bereishit 2 and Eruvin 41a.

36. Tan Bereishit 2 and Eruvin 41a; Tan Mishpatim 6 and Bava Batra 130b and Tan Hukkat 2 and Avodah Zarah 75b.

BT. The language is a mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic, as in the BT. However, the similarity of language between Tan and the BT and the citation of Babylonian Amoraim makes it likely that this passage, too, is taken from the BT. It is possible that there was a common Palestinian source which they both drew on. It is much more likely, though, given the close resemblance of the Tanhuma and the BT, that the BT edited and supplemented an earlier source and that this was then taken into the Tanhuma.

The fact that the two sections which are most evidently taken from the BT are at the end of the chapter on Korach is consistent with them having been added later. Bregman concludes that the late strata of the Tanhuma underwent redaction in the Babylonian sphere of influence during the Geonic period, and can be most clearly seen in the midrashic material unique to each of the two versions of the Tanhuma.³⁷ This would apply to the last part of Tan Korach 10, which is not found in TanB.

I will therefore make the assumption that these passages were taken from the BT and will not use them in my analysis of possible sources of the BT. On the other hand, Tan Korach 2-4 and 9 are sufficiently different from the BT that they are likely to represent a separate development, and these will therefore form part of the analysis below.

Section A. Baraita concerning judgement for the world to come

As mentioned above, the *baraita* which forms this section is the same as the first part of the Tosefta on Korach. This proof depends on the verb אָבַד occurring in both the Numbers and Psalms verses, which in the Kal conjugation can mean both 'to be lost' and 'to perish'. Whereas in reference to Korach and his Assembly, the plain sense of the verb is that they

37. M. Bregman, *The Tanhuma-Yelammedenu Literature. Studies in the Evolution of the Versions*, Gorgias Press, 2003, p. 5.

perished, the verse from Psalms is used to suggest that they were lost and, like the sheep, they will be sought by God, and restored to the world to come. The second half of the Psalms verse, 'search for your servant for I have not forgotten your commandments' serves to reinforce this argument by suggesting that, despite their rebellion, Korach and his Assembly did not forget God's commandments and therefore may yet be found by God.

Section B. Word-plays on the names of the major players

B1

This section mainly comprises word play which is not found elsewhere. Parallels are found only about Jacob's honour, which moves away from the interpretation of names. The main focus of the section is the significance of the genealogy and names of Korach. This reflects the fact that Jacob is the subject, and traditions about him are found in GenR and therefore likely to pre-date the BT. NumR, relating to Korach, on the other hand, is generally agreed to be much later, and is essentially the same as the Tanhuma. This does not mean that there were not precedents for other parts of the *sugya*, only that they are not available to us.

GenR 98:2 is not directly parallel to B1. It is closer to the Mishnah, in that it brings in the supplication of Hannah from I Samuel. Here, it is used as a prayer that the punishment of the Assembly of Korach should come to an end. In GenR, the descent of Korach from Jacob is not made clear. Rather, he and his Assembly seem to be mentioned because of the punishment they endured for disregarding God's honour.

Korach is more directly related to Jacob's honour in GenR 98:5. Here, Gen. 49:6, 'May my soul not enter into their secrets and may my honour not be included in their congregation' is interpreted as applying to 'the time when they come to take counsel at Shittim' (where they consorted with the Moabite women, as instigated by Balaam, Num. 25:1ff.), and to the

Assembly of Korach. The proof-text for Jacob's concern for his honour is the blessing for Simeon and Levi, which is appropriate for Korach, who is a descendant of Levi. B1 applies the first part of the verse to the spies, thus juxtaposing the spies and the Assembly of Korach, which are adjacent in the mishnah. GenR then explains that Jacob *is* indeed listed as the ancestor of Korach in Chronicles, when Korach's descendants ascend to bless the congregation with the priestly blessing. In this situation, they bring honour rather than shame to Jacob's name. The mention of the recital of the priestly blessing is absent from BT. This may be so as not to dilute the negative image of Korach by presenting a positive image of his descendants, or it may simply be for the sake of brevity.

GenR 99:6 explains the exclusion of Jacob's name from the genealogy of Korach, in similar wording to the last part of B1.

TanVayechi 10 and 12 are essentially the same as the GenR passages.

B2

This section, too, comprises word-play, here on the names of Korach's co-conspirators. The use of word-play is discussed further below.

Section C. The wives of On and Korach

C1

The only parallel passage is from the Tanhuma/NumR, and as discussed, it is likely that the Talmud passage is prior to the Tanhuma. The introduction to On's wife's speech is in Hebrew and the speech itself and the action she took are described in Aramaic, so are likely to be Stammaitic elaborations of an earlier Amoraic idea. On's wife's reply 'I know they are all a holy community' does not appear to be a direct response to her husband's question. It does however relate to the biblical text, as is clear from her citing (anachronistically) the

verse. In using these words, it may be that she is acknowledging his dilemma and/or that she thinks that since they are a holy community, they will not approach the tent if she is at the door of the tent with her hair loose. This interpretation is supported by the Jerusalem manuscript, which places the quotation 'For all the congregation are holy' after stating that 'When anyone came to find On, they saw her and turned back'. It is ironic, since it suggests that Korach and his Assembly are holy enough to observe the appropriate rules of separation, even whilst rebelling against Moses.

C2

As discussed above, the critique of Moses which is attributed to Korach's wife in the BT is attributed to Korach in the PT. The passages in the Tanhuma which are parallel to the BT contain the same elements but in a different order. Although it is not possible to say which is earlier, neither is it clear that the Tanhuma passages are taken from the BT, as in the case of the passage about On's wife. It is therefore possible to consider how the BT orders elements which are also found in the Tan and the PT.

In Tan Korach 3 (also TanB Korach 6 and NumR 18:4) Korach's wife is introduced in the context of exegesis of 'and Korach took' (Num. 16:1). Her role in pursuing the revolt is less clear. Although it is stated that Korach took advice from his wife, we are not told what the advice was. However, the elements are present here which, in BT, Korach's wife gives as a reason for rebellion: the tithes, the appointment of Aaron as a High Priest and the shaving of Korach.

BT takes these elements and makes them into a narrative in which Korach's wife is juxtaposed with On's. In translating the passage, I place quotation marks at the end of Rav's brief initial statement. This reflects the likelihood that Rav's statement (if it was indeed Rav) ended here, since this statement is in Hebrew, but the episode that follows is in Aramaic.

The emphasis on Korach's wife seems to be unique to the BT. In Tan the main conversation is between Korach and the Israelites who notice his shaved hair. In BT, the main conversation is between Korach and his wife. All the major elements of complaint are brought together in her words to him. The ridiculing of the fringes, which is found in Tan Korach 2 and PT is also included in BT as part of the incitement by Korach's wife. The commandment about the thread of blue is found in the Torah immediately before the story of Korach's rebellion (Num. 15:37-41), hence the text here reflects the midrashic technique of forming a thematic link between two apparently unrelated subjects which are juxtaposed.

Although I have separated the sections about the two wives, in fact they form one continuous narrative in Aramaic, which culminates in the quotation from Proverbs which juxtaposes the two wives. Here, *בית* is best understood as 'dynasty', since the continuity of families is implied and Korach's sons suffered and were destroyed alongside him. One wife built and one destroyed her husband's dynasty.

Section D. Causes and course of the rebellion

As discussed above, the main parallel for this section is Tan Korach 10 (also TanB Korach 24, except for the last part, and NumR 18:20) and it is likely that the Tanhuma has taken material from BT rather than the other way round.

The section continues a selective commentary on the Korach narrative. It introduces themes which are prominent in the *sugya* and are also developed throughout the BT. Most prominent amongst them is the issue of rabbinic power and authority. The seriousness of this is seen in how disputing with one's teacher is equated with disputing with the Divine Presence (D3). The phrase *קריאי מועד*, which at face value means 'announcers of festivals', and in particular the times of Assembly at the new moon, can also be interpreted as meaning

'appointers of the Assembly' in the sense of being able to call the people to Assembly, something Korach does in opposition to Moses. Control of the calendar, too, was a particular source of contention, as discussed further below.

Section E. The wealth of Korach

Korach's wealth is already mentioned in Josephus, although its extent and nature are not elaborated. GenR 50:1, like the BT, associates Korach's wealth with Joseph's treasure houses and states that Korach held the keys. One interpretation it offers of the verse from Ecclesiastes 'Wealth kept by its owner to his harm' is that it refers to Korach. There are thus precedents both for the extent and source of Korach's wealth and for interpreting Eccles. 5:12 as referring to Korach. However, the saying in the name of R. Hama b. R. Hanina, 'Joseph filled three treasure houses in Egypt. One was revealed to Korach, one was revealed to Antoninus b. Severus and one is stored up for the righteous in the future' appears to be unique to the BT. Both this and the description of the extent of Korach's wealth are also found in bPes. (119a), in the context of a discussion of the fate of Pharaoh's treasure.

Section F. The punishment of Korach

The idea that Korach was both swallowed and burnt is briefly stated in Sifre (Korach 4) so there is apparently a pre-existing tradition. Tan Korach 9 (and also TanB Korach 9 and NumR 18:19) also relates the dual punishment of Korach. The rationale stated is that those punished by either method would complain if Korach was not punished in the same way as they were. It is also graphic in its depiction of Korach's punishment.

In contrast, BT uses scriptural verses to argue about Korach's punishment. The juxtaposition of two opposing opinions, argued from the same proof-texts, is typical of

talmudic argumentation.

Section G. The protest of the sun and the moon

No parallels have been found for this section.

Section H. Gehinnom

The only direct parallel found to this section is in the Tanhuma (and NumR) and, as discussed above, it is likely that this was taken from the BT. However, the question of whether or not the pit was created anew for Korach is reflected in earlier traditions, which list 'the mouth of the earth' (which swallowed Korach) amongst the objects which were created on the eve of the Sabbath.³⁸ These objects are outside the natural order of creation, and thus the 'mouth of the earth' was consistent with Moses' request that Korach's punishment be by a unique means.

II The Generation of the Wilderness

No parallels have been found for this section except in the Tosefta and PT, which are discussed above. This might be expected, as the section on the Generation of the Wilderness in the BT is brief and entirely about their place in the world to come, with no elaboration of their wrong-doing, in contrast to Korach. The changes that are made in the BT are nevertheless significant. R. Joshua b. Korcha's interpretation of 'Gather to me my pious ones, who have accepted my covenant with a sacrifice' (Ps. 50:5) is that it applies to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah and to R. Akiva. Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah are the focus of

38. mAvot 5:6; ARNB 37:95; Sifre Vezot haBrachah 14; MRI Beshallah-Vayasa 5; MRS to Ex. 16:32; bPesachim 54a.

discussion earlier in the chapter (92b). The association of R. Akiva with sacrifice brings to mind his martyrdom, as is made clear here. At the same time, R. Akiva is criticised for suggesting the Generation of the Wilderness have no share in the world to come.

Literary Analysis

For this analysis, the sections on Korach and the Generation of the Wilderness will be considered as two separate units, since the latter is introduced by a separate *piska* from the Mishnah, which serves to introduce a new subject.

It is evident that the *sugya* on Korach differs from the major *sugyot* based on Genesis, which have a clear structure, beginning with a midrashic section and concluding with a narrative section, which is probably Stammaitic. This does not hold true for the section on Korach, which is less clearly structured. Whilst it does conclude with a section which is likely to be Stammaitic, this is a brief anecdote. The longest narrative section, concerning the wives of On and Korach, is much shorter and in the middle of the *sugya*,

I Korach

The *sugya* begins, as is usual, with a *baraita* on the same subject as the mishnah, but often offering a different opinion. The rest of the *sugya* is largely exegetical. Each section begins with a quotation from the biblical narrative of Korach (Num. 16). As in the *sugya* on the Generation of the Flood, the order of the sections follows the order of the verses cited, but only certain verses are cited.

The main part of the *sugya* begins with a series of interpretations of the names of the main protagonists in the Korach episode, based on word-plays. The biblical text gives the ancestry of Korach to the fourth generation, which is unusual, and in addition has several

names in a single verse. The rabbinic response to this seemingly superfluous information is to find reasons why it is given. Here, the names are interpreted in ways which add to our understanding of Korach and his followers. The exegesis follows the order of names in Num. 16:1, but also comments on why Korach's ancestry extends back to Levi but not to Jacob.

Plays on names are common in rabbinic literature, and are also found throughout this chapter, e.g. Baalam (105a) and Doeg (106b). Alexander suggests that in general such plays on words are not a 'strong' exegetical technique, that is to say, the interpretation of a text does not depend on the exegesis, nor is it used to read theological ideas into the biblical text. Rather, it serves as homiletic wordplay for its own sake.³⁹ In this *sugya*, the plays on the various names bear out this suggestion to some extent. They serve to explain the plethora of names in Num. 16:1 and in doing so supplement the information on the characters, but they are not essential for the purposes of the *sugya*. The main themes and messages of the *sugya* could be conveyed without this section. On the other hand, the *sugya* conveys more than merely homiletic wordplay for its own sake. The explanations of the names deepen our understanding of the main characters in the Korach narrative, and particularly Korach who, according to the BT, had such a devastating effect that he depopulated Israel and aroused the anger of all the world. It is here that the effect of Korach's rebellion is most explicitly elaborated.

The interpretation of On's name leads naturally to the narrative about On's wife and then to Korach's wife, who is contrasted unfavourably with her. The quotation from Proverbs serves to emphasise this contrast and link the two wives explicitly. Both wives are discussed in a continuous passage in Aramaic, making it likely the passage was edited by the Stammaim

39. P. Alexander, 'The Etymology of Proper Names as an Exegetical Device in Rabbinic Literature', *Studia Philonica Annual* vol. 16, 2004, pp. 169-187.

in order to contrast them.

The narratives about the wives have other similarities. Both reflect the widespread rabbinic tendency to merge different periods of time, as discussed in chapter 2. Thus, biblical characters are portrayed as functioning in a rabbinic world, with rabbis, students and study houses. On's wife refers to the student/teacher relationship, pointing out that either Moses or Korach would be the master no matter what On did. The student is clearly subservient. Korach's wife, in contrast, refers to Moses as king. However, she also makes reference to the academy, another anachronism referring to the rabbinic world.

This section is the only part of the *sugya* where criticism of Moses is actually voiced. Yet it is Korach's wife rather than Korach himself who voices in detail the reasons for Korach's opposition. Why this should be, rather than Korach as in the Tanhuma and PT, is unclear. It could be that in putting the arguments into the mouth of a woman, the argument is weakened, but this device is not usually found in the BT and opposition voices are almost invariably male. Rather, it may be that this fits best with the literary crafting of the narrative, which juxtaposes Korach's and On's wives. By giving Korach's wife words which instigate Korach's rebellion and which belittle Moses, the power of women to undermine their husbands, and therefore their danger, is emphasised. The emphasis here on the power of women to influence their husbands reflects attitudes to women found elsewhere in the Talmud. There is extensive literature on the subject, and it will not be explored further here, other than to note that here the women represent different tendencies. Korach's wife's wisdom is dangerous but On's wife's wisdom saves her husband.

Both stories also include the motif of hair. On's wife unbinds her hair to discourage Korach's company from approaching her. In contrast, Korach's hair is shaved off. The unbinding of hair is here used paradoxically, since it is the woman who lets her hair go loose,

usually a sign of 'loose' morals, who is here acting righteously. The use of Samson's words 'Let me die with the Philistines' also alludes to this theme, since Samson's strength depended on his hair. There is a particularly close parallel with the story of Kushta (97a), where a Sage wards off a visitor by telling him that his wife is washing her hair.

The section about On's wife also forms a contrast with the seduction by the Moabite women of the Israelite men (San. 106a), where the image of women at the tent door is associated with the Israelites' wrong-doing. The depiction of On's wife subverts this image, as she saves On by standing at the tent door.

Stammaitic editing is most evident in this section. There is a linguistic unity, the entire section being in Babylonian Aramaic. There is also evidence of literary crafting. The two wives are juxtaposed to highlight the merit of one and the wrong-doing of the other. The section also raises themes and motifs which are found elsewhere in the chapter, notably the woman washing her hair in Kushta and the intoxication of men in tents in the Balaam *sugya*.

Section D begins with an exegesis of Num. 16:2 and 4 and appears to draw on earlier traditions. The phrase 'the appointed ones of the Assembly' here has a dual meaning. It is understood as referring to the two hundred and fifty men who joined Korach's rebellion but also means those appointed to determine the calendar. This is significant in that the intercalation of the year and the fixing of the new month was a particularly important aspect of rabbinic authority, as discussed below.

The section then jumps to an exegesis of Num. 16:25 which leads to a series of hyperbolic statements about the wrongs of engaging in a quarrel, both with a teacher and with the dynasty of David. Here, the monarchy and the rabbis are linked together, as they are in the previous section where Moses is depicted as both a king and a teacher. They are also linked in the character of David, earlier in the chapter, who is both scholar and king (107a).

The section is carefully structured. After Resh Lakish's initial statement, in the name of Rav, which makes no specific reference to rabbis, there are two statements regarding the punishment for disagreement, one in general terms and one with the dynasty of David. The statements which follow are all in the names of Amoraim from the following generation (see note 23 on Rav Ashi). The language of the statements is Hebrew but the connecting statements are in Aramaic. This suggests that the statements are from the middle generation of Amoraim but they were linked at a later, probably Stammaitic, stage.⁴⁰ The introduction of the dynasty of David seems out of place in this section, but does relate to the prominent part that David and the Messiah, descended from David, play in the chapter as a whole.

The four statements about various degrees of conflict with one's teacher all have a similar form. They also all use quotations which are taken from the context of rebellions against Moses. The first quotation (Num 26:9) in its context refers back to Datan and Aviram. Thus, they reinforce the link between Moses and the rabbis, which is found throughout the *sugya*. These serve again to emphasise the importance of the teacher and one can infer from the comparison with the Divine Presence that the teacher is regarded more highly than the dynasty of David. The rebellious behaviour is listed in increasing order of severity. Conspiring might seem the most mild, but is the last in the list. Inner disagreement which is not expressed seems to have been viewed more seriously than open rebellion. Deceitful behaviour is viewed particularly unfavourably, as is clear from the way Korach and Ahitophel are depicted in the chapter. The seriousness of disagreeing with a teacher is seen earlier in the chapter (100a) when a dire punishment is inflicted on a student of Rabbi Yochanan's who is sceptical of his teaching.

40. See J. Rubenstein, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggada' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, p. 424.

The section on Korach's wealth does not appear to fit in naturally at this point. Unlike the preceding sections it does not build on a verse from the Korach narrative, but instead starts with a verse from Ecclesiastes, in the style of homiletical midrash. However, the concluding statement of this section, by R. Hama b. R. Hanina, which describes treasure houses for Korach, Antoninus and the righteous in the future, is significant in that it points to links within the whole chapter. It points back to Antoninus and his debates with R. Judah haNasi (91a-b) and forward to the end of the chapter, which describes the future reward of the righteous.

The following sections link Korach's punishment with the order of creation. Whereas the first statement by Rava in both sections is in Hebrew, the argument about new creation in the second section is in Aramaic, indicating that this is a Stammaitic addition.

The last part of the *sugya* begins with a *baraita* about the sons of Korach. It is followed by a story attributed to Rabbah bar bar Hanah, who is often depicted as describing his discoveries on his journeys (e.g. Bava Batra 73a-74a). This episode is related in Aramaic and is likely to have been a Stammaitic addition which brought the *sugya* to a close. Like the final section of the *sugya* about the Generation of the Dispersion, which depicts the ruins of the Tower of Babel (109a), it describes a place which is said to still exist at the time of its description, and so reinforces the apparent reality of the narrative. It ends with a rousing affirmation of Moses and his Torah. The intention is polemical and reinforces one of the key themes of the chapter, as seen especially in the first mishnah of the chapter, which is about various types of heretic.

In summary, this *sugya* appears much less clearly structured than the *sugyot* on Genesis. Although within the various sections of the *sugya* on Korach there is often evidence of editing which both structures the material and fixes it within the chapter as a whole, the

reasoning behind the order of the sections, if any, is not always clear. Some sections appeared to have been edited and inserted in order to bring together elements from the chapter as a whole, but do not seem to fit naturally into the flow of the *sugya*.

The *sugya* does, however, clearly fit into the chapter as a whole in terms of its themes, and these will be discussed further below.

II The Generation of the Wilderness

This section is entirely a debate about whether the Generation of the Wilderness will have a share in the world to come, in contrast with the section on Korach which is wide-ranging and discusses issues beyond the wrong-doing of Korach. Although based on a mishnah which states they will not enter the world to come, the thrust of the argument, which is found also in the Tosefta and PT, is that they *will*. This is established in a *baraita* by a debate beginning with an elaboration of R. Akiva's statement in the mishnah. The BT makes a significant addition compared to the PT at this point, that the words 'with a sacrifice' refer to R. Akiva and his companions. There is a further addition at the conclusion of this section, in the name of Rabbah bar Hanah, citing R. Yochanan: 'R. Akiva forsook his kindness...'

Heineman links the views of Akiva to his messianic hopes.⁴¹ He suggests that Akiva had hopes for the coming of the Messiah and the redemption in this world. He therefore wished to distance any supernatural hopes or events on which the redemption might depend, such as the return of the ten tribes, and so denied that the ten tribes would return (bSan. 110b). Heineman sees R. Akiva's view about the Generation of the Wilderness in the same light, although the rationale for this is less clear. Heineman's analysis of Akiva's statement from a historical viewpoint is no longer tenable, since it is generally agreed that narratives about

41. J. Heineman, *אגדות ותולדותיהם: עיונים בהשתלשלותן של מסורת*, Keter, Jerusalem, 1974, pp. 103-116.

Akiva and other rabbis were compiled in the Amoraic period or later and do not reflect the history of the Tannaim.⁴² However, the picture of Akiva wishing and working for the redemption in this world is one which is found throughout the BT and leads to a sometimes critical view of Akiva.

Themes

A number of themes emerge from the *sugya*. However, it is also noteworthy that the theme of justice, which I argued was the central theme of the Genesis *sugyot*, is not prominent here. It is implicit in the justification of Korach's punishment, but even here there is no suggestion of '*middah keneged middah*'. The punishment endured by Korach is not related in a clear way to his crime, other than that an exceptional crime, rebellion against Moses, is met with an exceptional punishment, as Moses requests that Korach be punished in an entirely new way. Even here, it is Moses who requests the exceptional punishment, not God who metes it out. Whereas in the Flood and Sodom *sugyot*, the punishment is seen to be brought on by, and related to, their wealth and plenty, there is no such link here between Korach's arrogance and his punishment. There is simply an emphasis on Korach's wickedness. The *sugyot* on Genesis seemed to draw on a tradition, found in the halachic midrashim, which justifies the *middah keneged middah* punishment of the Generations of the Flood and the Dispersion and the Men of Sodom. No such pre-existing tradition has been identified for Korach. The concerns of this *sugya* appear to be different, but both are central to the chapter as a whole.

42. S. Friedman, 'A Good Story Deserves Retelling: The Unfolding of the Akiva Legend' in Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition*, pp. 71-100; J. Neusner, 'In Quest of the Historical Rabban Yohanan ben Zakai' in M. Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 255-275.

Two related themes can be identified as particularly significant in this chapter:

1. Rabbis and their opponents.
2. Scholarship and the pupil-teacher relationship.

These are both introduced anachronistically, with Moses depicted as the rabbinic figure at the centre of the debate and Korach his archetypal opponent.

Rabbis and their opponents

It is likely that the depiction of Korach as the archetypal opponent of the rabbis reflects a long-held tradition. For example, in Pirke Avot, the dispute of Korach is said to be the exemplar of disputes which are 'not for the sake of heaven' (mAvot 5:17). The core of the depiction in this chapter is the section about Korach's wife, which is the only place in the *sugya* where criticisms of Moses are actually voiced.

I have suggested above that the section about Korach's wife was Stammaitic, and therefore edited in the context of Babylonia from the sixth century onwards. However, there are parallels to this section in the PT as well as the Tanhuma, so some of the ideas are of Palestinian origin. Whilst it is possible that the BT adapted this critique to represent the criticism of particular opponents, it is more likely that Korach represented a generic 'anti-rabbi', although there are elements which may reflect the criticism of specific groups.

In both the BT and the PT, the absurdity of the law concerning fringes is highlighted. Since the blue fringes, *tzitzit*, are in accord with biblical law, which states 'you shall make fringes on the corners of your garment and you shall have a thread of blue' (Num. 15:37-41), they are unlikely to have been the subject of a dispute with other Jews. Nevertheless, the question about whether they were required on a blue garment was in fact a matter of rabbinic debate, as found in the minor tractate Tzitzit, which states, 'if a cloak (*tallit*) is all blue, does it

need *tzitzit*?'

Hayes suggests that the rabbis sometimes displayed their self-consciousness by displacing the questioning onto their opponents.⁴³ Whilst her analysis is primarily concerned with anxieties about their exegetical methods, it is equally likely that here their anxieties are projected about practices which they feared might have been mocked. Equally, this passage may reflect actual mocking of Jewish practices. In either case, by the time of editing of this passage, in Babylonia from the sixth century onwards, such mocking may have been by a number of non-Jewish groups, including Christians, Romans and Zoroastrians.⁴⁴ The criticisms by Korach's wife are therefore likely to represent self-awareness by the rabbis (both Palestinian and Babylonian) about practices and internal debates which might have seemed absurd. Rather than being directly polemical, they are self-mocking and project their anxieties onto Korach and his wife.

One of the other complaints of Korach in the PT and his wife in the BT is about the allocation of key leadership positions, and in particular the High Priesthood. In the BT, this may reflect leadership struggles that were ongoing, in particular between the Exilarch and rabbinic leadership. The Davidic dynasty, from which the Exilarch was reputedly descended, features in the *sugya* on Korach, as in the chapter as a whole. Here, in section D3, respect for the Davidic dynasty is emphasised next to respect for rabbis. The section begins with the Davidic dynasty and builds from it to the rabbis, which suggests that respect for the rabbis was considered more important than respect for the Davidic dynasty. This would serve to reinforce the rabbinic right to make appointments independent of lineage. This is consistent

43. C. Hayes, 'Displaced Self-Perceptions: The Deployment of Minim and Romans in B. Sanhedrin 90b-91a' in H. Lapin (ed.), *Religious and Ethnic Communities in Later Roman Palestine*, University Press of Maryland, Maryland, 1998, pp. 249-289.

44. J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, Brill, Leiden, 1970, vol. 5, ch. 3, pp. 73-112.

with Goodblatt's finding that whilst the 'Jewish masses' were concerned about Davidic descent, the BT tended to downplay such claims.⁴⁵

The allocation of tithes is the third cause for complaint of Korach's wife. This was a feature of earlier leadership struggles in Palestine, particularly following the destruction of the Temple. Whilst the debate diminished in importance with time in Palestine, a high proportion of the heads of Babylonian academies were of priestly descent so the status of priests may have continued to be a matter of debate in Babylonia.⁴⁶

The opposition is also represented by the two hundred and fifty men of renown, who are said to have known how to intercalate the calendar and proclaim the new moon. Having the ability to control the calendar would represent both knowledge and power, and was depicted as a cause of bitter dispute in rabbinic literature, as exemplified by the story of Rabban Gamliel exerting his authority over R. Joshua about the New Moon (mRH 2:8-9 and bRosh Hashanah 25a). In PRK the authority and ability to intercalate years and announce the new moon was a divine prerogative, given from God to Moses after the Exodus from Egypt.⁴⁷ Sacha Stern has demonstrated how the notion of 'calendar orthodoxy' in Judaism stood out as unique in the ancient world.⁴⁸ In particular, the idea developed during the rabbinic period that a single rabbinic court must determine the calendar. Thus, the ability to intercalate and announce the new moon was both an indication of the men's learning and the danger that their position posed to Moses' leadership.

The opposition of Korach and his followers to the Torah of Moses is further emphasised

45. D. Goodblatt, *The Monarchic Principle: Studies in Jewish Self-Government in Antiquity*, JCB Mohr (P. Siebeck), Tübingen, 1994.

46. J. Rubinstein, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, London, 1999, pp. 202-3.

47. PRK 1:2.

48. S. Stern, *Calendars in Antiquity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012, pp. 377-380.

in section H, where the sons of Korach proclaim, 'Moses and his Torah are true, and they are liars'. Since the rabbis saw themselves as the inheritors of the Torah of Moses, this would serve to show that the punishment meted out to the sons of Korach reflected the punishment due to those who opposed Torah as interpreted by Korach. The slogan 'Moses and his Torah are true' is, according to Kalmin, characteristic of Babylonian sages. This reflects non-rabbinic use of the term 'The Torah of Moses' to designate the Torah. Palestinian sages, by contrast, avoid suggesting that the Torah is of human origin.⁴⁹ This may account for the wording of Korach's criticism in the PT, 'Torah is not from heaven, and Moses is not a prophet and Aaron is not the High Priest'. On the other hand, Korach's denial of 'Torah from heaven' serves to confirm that he has no place in the world to come, in accordance with mishnah 10:1. In the *sugya* about Balaam (see next chapter) in both the PT and the BT the Moabite women ask the Israelites to deny 'the Torah of Moses', but this accords with Kalmin's thesis that the phrase *is* used by non-Jews in the PT.

In summary, it is most likely that the *sugya* is not aimed at particular opponents of the rabbis but is a general response to criticism, either voiced by various groups or imagined by the rabbis, in response to a practice which seemed strange and illogical.

Rabbi and students

The theme of rabbis and students is focused in section D3. Although it is only in this section, apart from a mention by On's wife, it is important to the *sugya* as a whole. Section D3, about disagreement between student and teacher, is at the centre of the *sugya*. Moreover, comparison with the Tanhuma indicates that this section is unique to the BT. It reflects the

49. R. Kalmin, *The Sage in Jewish Society in Late Antiquity*, Routledge, London and New York, 1999, pp. 94-97.

BT concern with rabbinic teaching and the hierarchy of the academy. The subservience of student to teacher is underlined by On's wife's remark to On that whatever happens he will be the student, suggesting that whether Moses or Korach leads, as the teacher they will be firmly in charge.

The authority of the teacher is emphasised earlier in the chapter, in passages severely critical of those who question rabbinic authority (bSan. 99b-100a). The *epikoros* is defined as one who insults a scholar and Rav Nachman even suggests that an *epikoros* is one who calls his teacher by name. A student who ridicules R. Yochanan is turned into a heap of bones. Questioning is not always viewed unfavourably - Resh Lakish was particularly valued by R. Yochanan because instead of agreeing with his opinion he would offer refutations (bBava Metzia 84a). Perhaps it is the spirit in which the questioning was done that matters, or perhaps Resh Lakish was held in special esteem by R. Yochanan or those who depicted him. Most likely, there was simply a tension between the rabbinic wish to emphasise the honour shown to teachers and their emphasis on argument and disputation as a way of learning.

Kalmin has suggested that the Babylonian talmud particularly developed stories of rabbis and their students by transferring stories about criticism of the rabbis by non-Jews to stories of criticism by students or fellow rabbis.⁵⁰ He suggests this reflects the fact that by and large Babylonian rabbis were more secluded from non-Rabbinic circles and depicted their world as separate and exclusive. In portraying Korach as the 'anti-rabbi' who disagrees with the ultimate teacher, Moses, the wickedness of disagreeing with the rabbis is further underlined. Although this is presented as an internal issue, it reflects an awareness of how their Judaism might have appeared to outsiders.

50. R. Kalmin, *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006, Ch. 4, pp. 87-101.

Summary and Conclusions

The *sugya* on Korach differs from the Genesis *sugyot* both in structure and content. Its structure is not as clearly defined. Whereas all the Genesis *sugyot*, to a greater or lesser extent, began with a midrashic section and concluded with a narrative section which I have argued is Stammaitic, here although there is a brief Stammaitic section at the end, the major Stammaitic narrative is in the centre of the *sugya*. The *sugya* as a whole is much less clearly structured, with an absence of features which are often marks of talmudic editing, such as three-fold structures or chiasm.

In terms of content, the Genesis *sugyot* are about justice, and specifically build on the concept of *middah keneged middah*. They explicitly address the question of why the various groups were punished as they were. Justice does not appear to be a central concern here. Rather, the *sugya* addresses issues of rabbinic authority. Moses is portrayed as the archetypal rabbi, and Korach as anti-rabbi who dares to challenge Moses. The subservient role of the student is also emphasised, with a polemic against questioning the teacher. These are themes throughout the chapter.

Thus, although editing to create a structure is not as evident in this *sugya*, there is clear evidence of purposeful editing in terms of content. This is seen in the apparent altering and addition of elements to link the *sugya* with the chapter as a whole. As well as relating to the themes of the chapter, individual elements relate to other parts of the chapter. These appear to be purposeful rather than coincidental, since they are changes that are introduced when compared to earlier parallel texts. In the discussion of Korach's wealth, one treasure house is said to be for Antoninus, who features earlier in the chapter, and one is said to be for the righteous in the future, which will form a theme towards the end of the chapter. In the section

about the wives of On and Korach, Korach's wife is given a more significant role than in the PT, allowing her to be juxtaposed with On's wife. The motif of hair also appears throughout the chapter. The introduction of the Davidic dynasty also links with much of the chapter, where not only are incidents in David's life elaborated but there is a long section about the Messiah, the descendant of David.

This editing is also evident in the much briefer *sugya* on the Generation of the Wilderness. When compared to the parallel passage in the PT, it is more concise, focussing on what appears to be of concern and omitting elements such as the Ten Tribes, which will form a part of the chapter further on. Here, Hananiah, Mishaël and Azariah, who appear earlier in the chapter, are introduced.

A clear feature of this *sugya* is the rabbinisation of the past, which Gafni points out is a particular feature of Amoraic, as opposed to Tannaitic, literature.⁵¹ Moses is depicted as a rabbi and a king. The two hundred and fifty men of renown were able to intercalate the year and fix the new month - markers of particular authority in the rabbinic world. Gafni compares this tendency to that of Christian writers to depict biblical figures as their predecessors. Whether or not the rabbinisation is a particular feature of a response to Christianity, rather than to other opponents of rabbinic Judaism, it does serve to reinforce rabbinic authority. For Jews of whatever group, there could be no greater authority to appeal to than Moses. If Moses was a rabbi, and Korach was his opponent, then opposition to rabbinic authority could be depicted as particularly wicked and deserving of punishment, as Korach and his followers were.

51. I. Gafni, 'Rabbinic Historiography and Representation' in C.E. Fonrobert & M.S. Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 295-312.

CHAPTER 6

BALAAM

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have shown how the editors of the *sugyot* I studied communicated different views from those expressed in other, mainly Palestinian, texts. I have also found that there are similarities in structure and content amongst the Genesis *sugyot* but the Korach *sugya* has a different structure and a different emphasis. The *sugya* on Balaam is based on a different mishnah (10:2), but like the Korach *sugya*, draws on narratives from the Book of Numbers. The aim of this chapter will be to explore the *sugya* on Balaam, using the same methods as in previous chapters, with two questions in mind:

- 1) How does it compare with parallel and probably earlier texts?
- 2) Is its structure and emphasis more similar to the *sugya* on Korach, or to the other *sugyot*, or different from either? In answering the second question, this chapter can further illuminate the editing process and in particular whether different *sugyot* relating to the same biblical book are more closely related to each other than *sugyot* relating to the same mishnah.

Balaam is included in mishnah 10:2 amongst the three kings and four commoners who have no share in the world to come. The list seems idiosyncratic and the reasons for the inclusion of the commoners are far from obvious, as discussed more fully by Levine.¹ The *sugya* on Balaam is similar in length to the *sugya* on the Flood. It is not clearly divisible into different

1. B.A. Levine, 'The Four Private Persons Who Lost Their Share in the World to Come: The Judgement of m. Sanh. 10:2' in NS Fox, D.A. Glatt-Gilad & M.J. Williams (eds.), *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and its Cultural Environment in Honour of Jeffrey H. Tigay*, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, 2009, pp. 487-508.

sections, but for the sake of clarity I have divided it into sections thematically. As in previous chapters, I will present the Mishnah and Gemara in translation. I will then compare the Gemara with parallel texts and analyse the texts in detail. This will be followed by a literary analysis of the entire *sugya* and a discussion of its structure and themes.

The *sugya* on Balaam has also been analysed recently by Nikolsky.² However, she compares only two parallel texts, relating to small sections of the *sugya*, whereas I examine parallel texts for the entire *sugya*. I will offer a different interpretation from hers on some points, as will be indicated below.

The Text of bSanh. 105a-106b

For ease of reference, the Gemara is divided into sections. The division is summarised as follows:

- A. Exegesis of Balaam's name
- B. Balaam and the world to come
- C. Moab and Midian
- D. Balaam's physical and moral defects
- E. 'Knowledge of the Most High' and God's anger
- F. Ancestors and their descendants
- G. Balaam's intended curse

2. R. Nikolsky, 'Interpret Him as You Want: Balaam in the Babylonian Talmud' in G.H.van Kooten & J. van Ruiten (eds.), *The Prestige of the Pagan Prophet Balaam in Judaism, Early Christianity and Islam*, Brill, Leiden, 2008, pp. 213-230.

H. Exegesis of Num. 24:21-24

J. The seduction of the Israelites

K. Exegesis of Num. 25:1-2

L. The death of Balaam

Mishnah (90a)

Three kings and four commoners have no share in the world to come. Three kings: Jeroboam, Ahab and Manasseh. R. Judah said, 'Manasseh does have a share in the world to come, as it is said, "He prayed to God and he was heard, and God returned him to Jerusalem and to his kingdom (II Chron. 33:13)"". They said to him, 'God returned him to his kingdom, but not to the world to come'. Four commoners : Balaam, Doeg, Ahitophel and Gehazi.

Gemara (105a - 106b)

A

1. Balaam - without a people.³ Another interpretation: Balaam - that he ruined a people.⁴ The son of Beor - that he committed bestiality.⁵ It is taught, 'He is Beor, that is Cushan Rishatayim,⁶ that is Laban the Aramean. Beor - that committed bestiality; Cushan Rishatayim⁷ - that

3. בלא עם.

4. שבלה עם.

5. שבא על בעיר.

6. King of Aram Naharaim, Jud. 3:8.

7. רשעים could be understood as רשע - 'wickedness' - in the dual form.

he did two wicked things against Israel, one in the days of Jacob and one in the days of the judges. What is his real name? Laban the Aramean is his name.

2. It is written, 'The son of Beor' (Num. 22:5) and 'His son, Beor'⁸ (Num. 24:3). R. Yochanan said, 'His father was [like his] son in the matter of prophecy'.

B

1. [Since it is specified that] Balaam will not enter the world to come,[we might deduce that] others [from amongst the nations] will enter. Whose opinion does this teaching follow? R. Joshua's. For it has been taught: R. Eliezer said, "'The wicked will return to Sheol, all the nations who forget God" (Ps. 9:18). "The wicked will return to Sheol" - these are the transgressors of Israel. "All the nations who forget God"- these are the transgressors amongst the idolators'.⁹ [These are] the words of R. Eliezer. R. Joshua said to him, 'It is not said, "amongst all the nations" but rather, "all the nations" and this can only mean "all the nations who forget God". But "The wicked will return to Sheol", who are they? "All the nations who forget God"'.

2. Even that wicked one gave a sign concerning himself. He said, "'May my soul die the death of the righteous" (Num. 23:10).' If I die the death of the righteous 'may my end be like his' (*ibid.*) and if not, 'behold I go to my people'(Num. 24:14).

C

8. בעור and בן בעור, two different ways of saying 'the son of Beor'. In the second, there is a redundancy, or alternatively it could be read, Balaam, his son is Beor'.

9. According to Rabinovitz, (*Dikdukei Sofrim*, New York, 1976) the word פושעי, transgressors, was added as a result of censorship. Without this insertion, the first half of the *baraita* make sense, as R. Eliezer identified *all* among the nations as idolators. However, R. Joshua's saying remains confusing, as discussed more fully below.

1. 'And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian went' (Num. 22:7). It has been taught [in a *baraita*]: Midian and Moab never had peace. This can be compared to two dogs that were enclosed together and were angry with each other. A wolf came against one of them. He said, 'If I do not help him, today he [the wolf] will kill him and tomorrow he will come against me'. Together they went and killed the wolf. Rav Papa said, 'This is what people mean when they say, "The weasel and the cat made a feast on the fat of the unfortunate"''.¹⁰

2. 'And the Princes of Moab dwelt with Balaam' (Num. 22:8). And where did the Princes of Midian go? When he [Balaam] said to them, 'Stay overnight here and I will give you an answer' (*ibid.*) they said, 'There cannot be a father who hates his son'. Rav Nachman said, 'Audacity, even towards heaven, can bring benefit. At first it is written, "Do not go with them" (Num. 22:12) and in the end it is written, "Arise, go with them"(Num.22:20)'. Rav Sheshet said, 'Audacity is like sovereignty without a crown, as it is written, "I am today vulnerable but anointed king and these men, the sons of Tzeruyah, are too cruel for me" (II Sam. 3:39)'.

D

R. Yochanan said, 'Balaam was lame in one leg as it is said, "And he stumbled"(Num. 23:3). Samson was lame in both his legs, as it is said, "A snake by the path, that bites the horse's hooves" (Gen. 49:17)'.¹¹ Balaam was blind in one eye, as it is said, 'Whose eye is closed' (Num. 24:3). He used his male organ for sorcery: It is written in one place, 'Who falls and his eyes are uncovered' (Num. 24:4) and in another place it is written 'And behold, Haman fell on the bed' (Est. 7:8).¹² It is said: Mar Zutra said, 'He used his male organ for sorcery'. Mar the

10. M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic periods*, Bar Ilan University Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press, Ramat Gan and Baltimore, 2002, s.v. גדא.

11. שפיפון, a pun on שפי in the preceding quotation. The meaning of both words is uncertain. The reference in Gen. 49:17 is to Dan, from whom Samson was descended.

12. A *gezerah shavah* based on the verb נפל in both verses. Haman is understood to be attempting to rape

son of Ravina said, 'He would [have sexual relations with] his ass.' The view that he used his male organ for sorcery is explained above. The view that he had sexual relations with his ass is supported [by these verses]: In one place it is written: 'He knelt and lay down' (Num. 24:9) and in another it is written: 'Between her feet [105b] he knelt and fell down' (Jud. 5:27).¹³

E

1. 'Who has knowledge of the most High' (Num. 24:16). He had no knowledge of beasts, yet he had knowledge of the most High!? What does 'knowledge of beasts' mean? They would say to him, 'Why do you not ride a horse?' He said to them, 'I have sent it into the meadow to graze.' The ass said to him, "'Am I not your ass?'" (Num. 22:30). He said, 'For carrying burdens.' "'On whom you have ridden'" (*ibid.*). 'Only by chance'. "'From when you were born until today" (*ibid.*), and not only that, but I serve you like a human at night'. It is written in one place, 'Did I ever endanger you?' (*ibid.*) and it is written in another 'And she was for him a companion' (I Kings 1:2).¹⁴

2. What, then, does 'knowledge of the Most High' mean? He knew how to determine the exact hour when the Holy One was angry [with Israel]. And this is what a prophet said to Israel: 'My people, remember what Balak, the King of Moab, counselled, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteousness of the Eternal One' (Micah 6:5). What does it mean by 'that you may know the righteousness of the Eternal One'? The Holy One said to Israel, 'Know how many times I acted righteously for

Esther, therefore Balaam is understood to be misusing his male organ.

13. The reference here is to Yael and Sisera. The proof is again made with a *gezerah shava*, this time based on the verb כרע.

14. סוכנת from the same Hebrew root as סכן, to endanger. The second quotation relates to finding a companion for David in his old age. The quotation is used here to prove that, rather than meaning 'endanger', the ass is saying that it provided comfort for Balaam at night as David's companion, Avishag, did for him.

you, that I did not grow angry with you all that time, in the days of the wicked Balaam. For if I had grown angry all that time, then there would not have remained even a small remnant of those that hate you'.¹⁵ As Balaam said to Balak: 'How shall I curse whom God has not cursed?' For 'God may rage every day' (Ps. 7:12) but how long does God's rage last? But a moment, as it is said, 'For God's anger is for a moment, God delights in life' (Ps. 30:5). Or, if you like, I can say, 'Go, my people, enter into your rooms and close your doors behind you. Hide for a moment, until rage has passed' (Is. 26:20). When is God angry? In the third hour, when the cock's comb is white. But is it not always white? At all other hours it has red streaks, but at that moment it does not have red streaks.

3. A certain heretic in the neighbourhood of R. Joshua ben Levi was troubling him. One day he [Joshua ben Levi] took a cockerel and tied it by its leg and sat down. He said, 'When that moment comes, I will curse him'. When that moment came, he dozed off. He said, 'Learn from this that it was not fitting to do this, as it is written, "Even for the righteous, it is not good to punish" (Prov. 17:26)'. One should not speak in this way, even of heretics.

4. It is taught in the name of R. Meir: At the time when the sun shines and the kings put on their crowns and bow down to the sun, immediately God is angry.

5. 'And Balaam arose in the morning and saddled his ass' (Num. 22:21). It is taught in the name of R. Simeon b. Elazar, 'Love overturns the protocol of greatness, as can be seen from Abraham, as it is written, "And Abraham arose in the morning" (Gen. 22:3).¹⁶ Hatred over-

15. 'Those that hate you' is a euphemism for Israel herself. Euphemisms are frequently used in rabbinic literature for expressions of anger against Israel.

16. The verse continues, 'and saddled his donkey', thus providing a parallel with Balaam.

turns the protocol of greatness, as it is said, "And Balaam arose in the morning and saddled his ass".

F

Rav Judah said in the name of Rav, 'Let a people always occupy themselves with Torah study and good deeds, even if not for their own sake, for from doing so, they will come to do them for their own sake. For, as a reward for the forty-two sacrifices which Balak brought he merited that Ruth would be descended from him'. R. Jose bar Huna said, 'Ruth was the daughter of Eglon, the grandson of Balak, the king of Moab'. Rava said to Rabah bar Meri, 'It is written, "And God will make the name of Solomon more renowned than your name and raise his throne above your throne" (I Kings 1:47). Is it fitting to say such a thing to a king?' They said to him, 'They meant to say to him: "of the same essence", for if you did not say so, [how could you say] this: "May you be blessed above women, Yael the wife of Hever the Kenite, above women in the tent may you be blessed" (Jud. 5:24). Who are the women in the tent? Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. Is it fitting to say this? But rather, it means, "of the same essence", and so too, here it means "of the same essence"'.

Rav Jose bar Huni differed. He said, 'One is jealous of everyone except one's son and one's pupil'. 'His son' - this refers to Solomon. And who is the pupil? If you like, I could say, 'May your spirit rest twofold upon me' (II Kings 2:9)¹⁷ and if you like I could say, 'He put his hands upon him and commanded him' (Num. 27:23).¹⁸

17. Elisha speaking to Elijah.

18. Referring to Moses and Joshua.

G

1. 'And he set a word in Balaam's mouth' (Num. 23:5)¹⁹. R. Eliezer said, '[This was an] angel'. R. Jonathan said, '[It was] a hook'. R. Yochanan said: From the blessing of that wicked one, you learn what was in his heart. He wanted to say that they would not have synagogues and houses of study, [but he was forced to say]: 'How good are your tents, Jacob' (Num. 24:5). May the Divine Presence not rest upon them - 'Your dwelling places, Israel' (*ibid.*). May their kingdom not endure - 'Like valleys spread out' (Num. 24:6). May they have no olive groves or vineyards - 'Like gardens by a river' (*ibid.*). May their perfume not be fragrant - 'As aloe trees planted by the Eternal One' (*ibid.*). May their kings not be tall - 'As cedars by the water' (*ibid.*). May they not have a king the son of a king - 'Water will flow from its branches' (Num. 24:7). May their kingdom not prevail amongst the nations - 'And their seed in many waters' (*ibid.*). May their kingdom not be strong - 'May their king be exalted above Agag' (*ibid.*). May their kingdom not inspire terror - 'And may their kingdom be exalted' (*ibid.*). R. Abba bar Kahana said, 'All of them turned into curses except that referring to synagogues and study houses, as it is said, "And the Eternal One your God turned the curse into the blessing for you, for the Eternal One loves you" (Deut. 23:6).²⁰ "The curse", not "the curses"'.

2. R. Samuel bar Nachmani said in the name of R. Jonathan: What does it mean by what is written, 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful' (Prov. 27:6)? The curse of Achiyah the Shilonite was more of a blessing than the blessing of the

19. In the biblical text, 'word' is clearly meant as Balaam is given the words he is to say. However, דבר also means an object, hence, the interpretation here.

20. The complete verse reads: 'And the Eternal One was not willing to listen to Balaam, the Eternal One your God turned the curse into the blessing for you, for the Eternal One loves you.'

wicked Balaam. Achiyah the Shilonite cursed Israel [by comparing it to] a reed, as it is said, 'And the Eternal One has smitten Israel as a reed is shaken in the water' (I Kings 14:15). Just as a reed stands in a well-watered place and its stump [106a] is renewed and its roots multiply, and even if all the winds of the world come and blow on it, they do not move it back and forth but it moves with them and when the winds cease the reed remains standing [so does Israel]. But the wicked Balaam blessed them [by comparing them to] a cedar. A cedar does not stand in a well watered places, and its roots are few and its stump does not renew itself, and even if all the winds of the world come and blow on it, they do not move it from its place, yet when the south wind comes and blows on it, it immediately uproots it and overturns it. And not only this, but the reed merited that a pen could be made from it to write scrolls of the Torah, Prophets and Writings.

H

1. 'And he saw the Kenite and he took up his proverb' (Num. 24:21). Balaam said to Jethro the Kenite, 'You were not with us in that plan. Who made you sit with the eternal mighty ones?' This is what R. Hiyya bar Abba said in the name of R. Simai: Three took part in that plan, and this is who they were: Balaam, Job and Jethro. Balaam, who gave counsel, was killed. Job, who was silent, was afflicted as a punishment. Jethro, who fled, merited that his children sit in the hewn chamber [in the Temple], as it is said, 'And the families of the scribes are the dwellers of Yabetz, the Tiratites, the Shimatites and the Sucatites; they are the Kenites who come on account of²¹ the father of the House of Rechav' (I Chron. 2:55). And it is writ-

21. The word מחמת is understood in standard translations as meaning 'from Hamat'. However, I suggest that it is here being read as meaning 'on account of' to explain that on account of Jethro, his descendants were given the privilege of being scribes.

ten, 'The children of the Kenite, the father-in-law of Moses, went from the city of palm trees' (Jud. 1:16).

2. 'And he took up his parable and said, "Alas, who can live unless God has decreed it?"' (Num. 24:23). R. Yochanan said, 'Alas for the people that finds itself at the time when the Holy One redeems his children. Who would set his garment between a lion and a lioness at the time when they couple with each other?'

3. 'And ships from the coast of Kittim' (Num. 24:24). Rav said, 'This refers to Libun Aspir'.²²

4. 'And they oppressed Asshur and oppressed Ever' (*ibid.*). They killed as far as Asshur and from then onwards they enslaved them.

J

'And now I am going to my people, go and I will advise you what this people will do to your people' (Num. 24:14). Shouldn't it say, 'Your people to this people'? R. Abba bar Kahana said, 'It can be compared to a man who curses himself, but he hangs his curse on others'.²³ He said to him:²⁴ 'Their God hates licentiousness²⁵ and they yearn for fine linen. Come, I will advise you. Make for them tents and set prostitutes by them, an old prostitute outside them and a young one inside, and they shall sell them fine linen garments inside. He made tents for them from Mount Sheleg as far as Beit Yeshimot and set old prostitutes outside and young

22. The meaning of this phrase is uncertain and the text varies amongst manuscripts. It is not listed as a place in Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica*. Rashi's text reads לִיבָא אֶסְפִּיר. The main point of Rav's comment seems to be to identify the biblical Kittim with a known geographical location.

23. I.e. he doesn't wish to openly curse himself. Rashi interprets this as meaning that Balaam doesn't wish to be seen to openly advise Balak since Balak is a king.

24. The printed text has 'to them' but 'to him' makes more sense since Balaam is addressing Balak. It is found in the Jerusalem manuscript, which adds 'Balaam to Balak'.

25. The Hebrew זִמָּה can also mean counsel, especially in the sense of an evil plan, and this may be an intentional double meaning, since here Balaam is plotting with Balak.

prostitutes inside and when the Israelites ate, drank and made merry and went out to stroll into the market place, the old woman said, 'Are you looking for linen garments?' The old woman gave them the market price and the young woman offered less. [This would happen] two or three times. After that, she would say to him, 'Behold, you are like a man of the house, choose for yourself flasks of wine'. Flasks of Ammonite wine were by her - and the wine of foreigners was not yet forbidden. She would say to him, 'Would you like to drink a cup of wine?' When his passion became inflamed, and he said to her, 'Listen to me!' she would take an idol out from her breast and say 'Worship this!' He said to her, 'Am I not a Jew?' She said to him, 'What does it matter to you? We only ask of you to uncover yourself²⁶ - and he did not know that [the Moabite god] was worshipped in this way. [She continued] 'And not only this, but I will not leave you alone until you deny the teaching of Moses your teacher.' As it is said, 'And they came to Baal Peor and they devoted themselves to shame and they became abominable as they had been loved' (Hos. 9:10).²⁷

K

1. 'And Israel dwelt in Shittim' (Num. 25:1). R. Eliezer said, 'Shittim was its name'. R. Joshua said, 'They occupied themselves with foolish matters'.²⁸
2. 'And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods' (Num. 25:2). R. Eliezer said, 'They met them naked. R. Joshua said, 'They all became polluted'.²⁹

26. פיעור is understood in this way by Freedman, (*Babylonian Talmud: Sanhedrin*, Soncino Press, London 1935) perhaps based on Rashi, and also on the context which is about licentiousness. However, there is also a play on Baal Peor, the place where the Israelites were led to idolatry by the Moabites (Num. 25).

27. The Masoretic text reads כַּאֲהֵבָם but the Romm Vilna edition of the BT reads בַּאֲהֵבָם.

28. שטות, a pun on שטים.

29. בעל קרי, a euphemism for one who has ejaculated semen. The use of קרי is play on ותקראנה.

3. What does 'Refidim' mean? R. Eliezer said, 'Refidim was its name'. R. Joshua said, 'Because they loosened themselves from the words of Torah,³⁰ as it is said, "The parents did not turn to their children because their hands were weak" (Jer. 47:3)'.³¹

4. R. Yochanan said: In every place where it says 'and they dwelt' it denotes trouble, as it is said, 'And Israel dwelt in Shittim and the people began to consort with the daughters of Moab' (Num. 25:1). [And it is said], 'And Jacob dwelt in the land where his fathers had sojourned, the Land of Canaan, and Joseph brought an evil report to their father' (Gen. 37:1). And it is said, 'And Israel dwelt in the land of Goshen and the time drew near for Israel to die' (Gen. 47:27). [And it is said], 'And Judah and Israel dwelt in security, each person beneath their vine and beneath their fig tree' (I Kings 5:5), 'And the Eternal One set up Hadad the Edomite, a descendant of the King in Edom, to oppose Solomon' (I Kings 11:14).

L

1. 'And they killed the kings of Midian with their swords, etc., and they killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword' (Num. 31:8). What did Balaam want there? R. Yochanan said, 'He went to get his reward for the 24,000 Israelites he had felled'. Mar Zutra bar Tuviah said in the name of Rav, 'This is what people mean when they say "The camel went to ask for horns and its ears were cut off"'.
2. 'And Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer' (Josh. 13:22). A soothsayer? Wasn't he a prophet? R. Yochanan said, 'At first he was a prophet but in the end he became a soothsayer.' Rav Papa said, 'This is what people mean when they say "One who has descended from chiefs and rulers has consorted with carpenters"'.

30. ריפו, a pun on רפידים.

31. רפיון, also a pun on רפידים.

3. 'The Children of Israel killed by the sword' (*ibid.*). Rav said, 'They subjected him to the four types of death penalty: Stoning, burning, killing by the sword and strangulation'.

4. A certain heretic said to R. Hanina, 'Have you heard how old Balaam was?' He said to him, 'It is not written explicitly, but from what is written, "Men who shed blood and act deceitfully, they will live not even half their days" (Ps. 55:24), he could not have been more than thirty-three or thirty four'.³² He said to him, 'You have spoken well, for I myself found Balaam's notebook, in which it is written "Balaam the Lame was thirty-three when Pinchas the Bandit killed him"'.

5. Mar the son of Ravina said to his son, 'Concerning all those [who have no share in the world to come] you should not use them to expound scripture, except Balaam the Wicked. Concerning him, the more you find to expound, the more you should expound'.

Mishnah, Tosefta, Palestinian Talmud

The Hebrew text of the PT is found in Appendix 5

Mishnah

The Mishnah simply states: 'Three Kings and four commoners have no share in the world to come... Four commoners: Balaam, Doeg, Ahitophel and Gehazi'. Unlike mishnah 10:3, on the different groups, there is no elaboration or scriptural support.

32. This is on the basis that the normal life-span is considered seventy, so Balaam would have lived less than half this.

Tosefta

The four commoners are absent from the Tosefta. Four, rather than three, kings are mentioned, Ahaz being added.

The absence of the commoners is surprising. Although there is not a strict correspondence between the structuring of subjects in the Tosefta and the Mishnah and BT, it does have generally parallel subject matter. All the other categories and groups listed in the Mishnah Perek Helek are mentioned at some point from the end of chapter 12 to chapter 14 of the Tosefta.

There are various possibilities as to why the commoners are absent. One possibility is that they were added to the Mishnah some time after the compilation of the Tosefta, just as the opening statement of the chapter ('All Israel has a share in the world to come') was probably a later addition. However, this is unlikely. The opening statement has no gemara to it, whereas the commoners are found in both the BT and the PT, indicating that they were at least present by the time of the PT. Moreover, they seem integral to the structure of the mishnah, in that the three kings and four commoners are linked together as a unit at the beginning of the mishnah.

Another possibility is that the Tosefta deliberately omitted the four commoners. However, it is difficult to see what reasons there would be for the exclusion.

The most likely possibility is that the Tosefta represents a different list of those who were excluded from the world to come. In this list, rather than there being four commoners there were four kings and the commoners were not included. Houtman suggests that the Tosefta represents a collection compiled shortly after the Mishnah and containing material much of which was excluded from the Mishnah.³³ Hauptmann suggests that the Mishnah and the

33. A. Houtman, *Mishnah and Tosefta. A Synoptic Comparison of the Tractates Berakhot and Shebiit.*, JCB

Tosefta are both derived from earlier collections of *baraitot*.³⁴ Both these theories allow for the possibility that the tradition of 'Four Kings' was included rather than the tradition of 'Three Kings and Four Commoners'. In support of this idea, ARN has two different lists of those who were excluded from the world to come. In ARN 36:1, the list is the same as in the Mishnah. In 41:1, the list is of five kings and six commoners (the additional commoners being Cain and Korach).

Balaam is linked with the other commoners in tSotah 4:5 (also found in GenR 20:5). Here, it is said (concerning the serpent): 'What he sought was not granted to him and what he had in his possessions was taken from him. And so we find concerning Cain and Korach and Balaam and Doeg and Ahitophel and Gehazi and Adonijah and Uzziah and Haman, that what they sought was not granted to them and what they had in their possession was taken from them'. However, since the list includes others not found in Mishnah Sanhedrin, it is more likely that this list was compiled separately and is unrelated to the group of four in the Mishnah.

There is a parallel passage in the Tosefta to the *baraita* in section B1 which demonstrates that it was R. Joshua's view that the righteous of the nations have a share in the world to come. Whereas in the BT, the *baraita* is secondary, used to attribute a view, in the Tosefta the discussion between R. Joshua and R. Eliezer is central to the argument about who enters the world to come.

Mohr, Tübingen, 1996, pp. 234-237.

34. J. Hauptman, 'Mishnah As a Response to "Tosefta"' in S.J.D. Cohen (ed.), *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature*, Brown Judaic Studies, Providence, RI, 2000, pp. 13-34.

Palestinian Talmud

The section in the Palestinian Talmud about Balaam is extensive. However, only the initial part of the PT, about the seduction of the Israelite men by the Moabite women, and a short passage about Balaam's death have a parallel in the BT. Otherwise, the PT mainly narrates episodes about the worship of Baal Peor.

The PT passage about the seduction follows immediately from the initial question: 'What did Balaam do?' By contrast, this episode is narrated towards the end of the BT *sugya*, and develops from a discussion about Balaam's knowledge of how to provoke God's anger. Both accounts are almost entirely in Hebrew, but there are differences in vocabulary, for example קלעים in the BT and קנקלים in the PT for 'hangings' and the PT also uses Palestinian Aramaic (e.g. קומי, 'before him', היין 'yes' and also בור 'choose').³⁵

On the whole, the two accounts are similar in terms of both language and the details of the narrative: the setting up of tents from Beit haYeshimon to Har haSheleg; old women outside and young inside; the use of Ammonite wine, including the comment that Ammonite wine was not yet forbidden; and the offering of the statue of Baal Peor for worship in return for sexual favours. In both, the young women demand of the men 'Deny the Torah of Moses'. The BT adds the word רבך, 'your master' or 'your rabbi,' which may reflect the emphasis in the BT on Moses as the archetypal rabbi or simply be an expression of scorn at Moses ruling over the Israelites.

35. Y. Breuer, 'Aramaic in Late Antiquity' in S.T. Katz (ed.), *Cambridge History of Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, pp. 457-491.

The overall similarity between the two suggests that there may have a common source. The introduction of some Palestinian Aramaic indicates that PT may have reworked the original narrative in the same way that the BT did.

The Babylonian Talmud - Sources and Textual Analysis

The parallel texts cited here are found in Appendix 5

There are relatively few parallel passages and of these, the majority are found in the Tanhuma or NumR, both of which may be later rather than earlier than the BT. However, those passages that are found can inform our understanding of the editing process in the BT.

Section A. Exegesis of Balaam's name

No parallels have been found for this section, which contains various plays on the names of Balaam and his father Beor. The first suggestion, that 'he committed bestiality', is later exemplified by Balaam's conduct with his ass (section E1). The second accords with the often-used midrashic technique of identifying an unusual name with a more well-known character - in this case, Laban, who is also depicted as wholly wicked in rabbinic literature. Cushan Rishatayim was the King of Aram Naharaim (Jud. 3:8). This is both the place where Laban and his family dwelt (Gen. 24:10) and where Balaam came from (Deut. 23:5), hence the identification of Cushan Rishatayim with both the family of Balaam, more precisely his father Beor, and with Laban.

Section B. Balaam and the world to come

As discussed above, the Tosefta contains a parallel passage to the *baraita* (B1), about whether the nations will enter the world to come. The purpose of the *baraita* is ostensibly to identify whose opinion it was that non-Jews, other than those listed, *will* have a place in the world to come. The extant printed text makes little sense since R. Eliezer is made to agree with R. Joshua that the sinners of the nations will have no share in the world to come.

The Jerusalem manuscript omits the word 'transgressors' in R. Eliezer's opinion and reads: 'The nations of the world'. This then forms a contrast with R. Joshua's opinion and makes more sense. Although the Jerusalem manuscript is later than the Florence and Munich manuscripts, which have the same version of the *baraita* as the Vilna edition, it may nevertheless reflect an earlier tradition, as discussed in the Introduction ('Manuscripts'). It seems likely that the word 'sinners' was added as a result of censorship, in order to avoid saying that *all* non-Jews have no place in the world to come.

The Tosefta, San. 13, has a parallel to this *baraita*. As with the BT, there is some textual confusion, possibly reflecting censorship amidst concerns about stating that all nations have no share in the world to come. However, the Zuckermann edition attributes the same opinions to R. Joshua and R. Eliezer as the *baraita*.

The following sentence about Balaam supports R. Joshua's opinion, since it is understood as meaning that if Balaam were righteous, he would have a place in the world to come although he is from among the nations. The text juxtaposes Num.23:10 and 24:14. In the first, the phrase 'May my end be like his' is understood to mean 'May I enter the world to come, as Jacob will'. In the second, the phrase 'my people' implies the wicked who go to Gehinnom. There is also a discussion of Balaam's place in the world to come in NumR 14:1. Here, there

is a direct statement, as in the Mishnah, followed by a discussion of whether Solomon would also be denied a place in the world to come. The midrash goes on to demonstrate that all the commoners *except* Balaam do in fact have a place in the world to come. This may reflect the opinion in B1 that 'Balaam will not enter the world to come, but others will enter'. However, if 'others' is understood as applying to the other commoners, it would be a direct contradiction of the Mishnah which would be unlikely to go unremarked in the Gemara. More likely, in the *baraita*, 'others' means 'others apart from the commoners listed', although the contradiction of NumR with the Mishnah remains. Although NumR may be later than the BT, it does reflect the sense in both the BT and rabbinic literature in general of Balaam's extraordinary wickedness.

Section C. Moab and Midian

The *baraita* in C1 comparing Moab and Midian to two dogs can be found in Sifrei Mattot 5. BT is much briefer, as if it had edited an earlier version to eliminate repetitions, for example of the phrase 'there had never been peace' between Moab and Midian until they united to fight Israel. Sifrei explains the *nimshal*, where as the BT leaves it to be deduced by the reader from the *mashal*. This is consistent with the tendency noted previously for the BT to be terser in its language than the parallel Palestinian sources.³⁶ BT adds a short proverb about the weasel and the cat, cited in the name of Rav Papa who is often the tradent of such proverbs. There is also a version of this *mashal* in NumR 20:4. The wording is closer to that in BT, al-

36. See the discussion of the episode of the maiden in Ch. 3 (Men of Sodom) and the discussion on the passage by G. Hasan-Rokem in *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2000, pp. 34-36.

though not identical, and it may be that both drew on Sifrei or an earlier source, or that one drew on the other.

The *baraita* is followed by an explanation of why the Princes of Midian are not included in Num. 22:8 with the Princes of Moab: they realise that God will not curse Israel because 'Is there a father who hates his son?' Balaam, on the other hand, persists and God allows him to go. This is seen as effrontery, which Rav Sheshet compares to 'sovereignty without a crown'. The proof-text juxtaposes David, who is anointed king but is vulnerable, with the sons of Tzeruyah, whose cruelty is equated with effrontery.

Section D. Balaam's physical and moral defects

The only parallel found is in the BT, Sotah 10a, where the *baraita* about Balaam is repeated, this time in the context of Samson being the main subject of the *sugya*. As in Sanhedrin, the *baraita* is attributed to R. Yochanan. Physical defects are frequently seen in the Talmud as a mark of some wrong-doing. For example, according to Ned. 20a, children are born lame because their parents had sexual relations in an unconventional way. Samson is also attributed with physical defects and this may be a reflection of his moral ambiguity.

The sayings of Mar Zutra and Mar the son of Ravina appear to be unique to the BT and the concept of using the male organ for sorcery is not found elsewhere. The phrase קוסם באמיתו is a pun, since אמיתו can also mean 'his truth'. More than Balaam performs bizarre forms of magic, he conjures with the truth. The perversions are both established by means of a *gezerah shavah*. The proof that Balaam used his male organ for sorcery is derived from the use of נפל, to fall. Haman fell on Esther's bed in a presumed attempt to rape her. Balaam fell in a prophetic stupor. The proof that Balaam had sexual relations with his ass is derived from the use of

כרע, to kneel down. Sisera knelt down between Yael's legs prior to having sexual relations with her. A different proof for Balaam's bestiality is used in the next section, which continues to ridicule Balaam and emphasise his sexual perversion.

Section E. 'Knowledge of the Most High' and God's anger

The conversation with his ass, which begins this section, continues the ridicule of Balaam, as his ass outwits him. Ironically, although Balaam is said to have 'knowledge of beasts', his ass has more knowledge of him than vice versa. However, the following section makes it clear that Balaam did have important knowledge, with the potential to bring about Israel's destruction.

Again, the only parallels found are in the BT, in bAvodah Zarah 4a-b and bBerachot 7a. In both cases, the passage comes in the context of discussions about God's anger, and are immediately preceded by the question of how long God's anger lasts. In some respects these two passages are closer to each other than to Sanhedrin. For example, both give R. Eleazar as the tradent for God saying, 'Know how many times I acted righteously for you...' Both also give tradents for the proof-text from Ps. 30 for the short duration of God's anger, in bAvodah Zarah 'Amemar, and some say Ravina', and in bBerachot 'Rav Avin and some say Rabbi Avina'.³⁷ However, bBerachot also differs from the other two accounts, particularly in omitting the conversation between Balaam and his ass. There is also other variation in wording which suggests that each passage was altered within its context. The citation of Amemar and Ravina suggests that some editing took place during the last generation of Amoraim or later.

37. These are most likely to be variants of the same name.

The quotation from Micah refers to the effect of Balaam's actions 'from Shittim to Gilgal' (i.e. the time of Micah) and so serves to emphasise the enduring effect of Balaam's intent to harm Israel. This also emphasises God's patience. Despite all the provocation from Israel, God is angry for only a very brief moment and unless Israel is cursed at that very moment, the curse will do them no harm. The story of R. Joshua b. Levi also illustrates forbearance.

Elman suggests that the description of the kings bowing down to the sun (E4), reflects Zoroastrian practice, and that the sporadic quality of Divine anger resembles that of the Zoroastrian demon of anger.³⁸ However, this section is a *baraita* in the name of R. Meir so it seems more likely that it is a Tannaitic polemic against pagans.³⁹ The sun god was also the central figure in mosaics in Palestinian synagogues in late antiquity. Goodman suggests that the mosaics may have been meant to depict the Jewish God, who incorporated the highest god of pagans, although Stern considers they may simply have been decorative images adopted from non-Jewish buildings.⁴⁰ In either case, the Tannaitic attack on sun worship may therefore have also been an attack on those who created these particular depictions, which appeared to conflate the Jewish God and a pagan god.

There are parallels to E5 in GenR 55:8, MRI Beshallah 1 and MRS Beshallah 21:5. MRI and MRS are almost the same, except that a saying that is anonymous in MRI is attributed to Simeon bar Yochai in MRS. In both, the starting point is a comparison between Pharaoh and

38. Y. Elman, 'The World of the "Saboraim": Cultural Aspects of Post-Redactional Additions to the Bavli.' in J. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammam) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tuebingen, 2005, pp. 383-415.

39. E. Urbach, Israel Abrahams, *The Sages*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, England, 1979, pp. 59-60 and 275-6.

40. M. Goodman, 'The Jewish Image of God in Late Antiquity' in *Judaism in the Roman World. Collected Essays*, Brill, Leiden, 2007, pp. 133-145; S. Stern, 'Pagan Images in Late Antique Palestinian Synagogues' in S. Mitchell, & G. Greatrex (eds.), *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*, Duckworth and the Classical Press of Wales, London, Swansea, 2000, pp. 241-252.

Joseph. Like Abraham and Balaam, they do what would normally be beneath their dignity because of their haste.

GenR begins with Abraham at the time of the Akedah, hastening to sacrifice Isaac. The tradent is given as Simeon b. Yochai whereas in BT it is Simeon b. Elazar. Where GenR has מקלקלת, BT has מבטלת and GenR adds the question, 'Did he not have servants?' to make explicit what the problem was with Abraham and Balaam saddling their asses. The parallels indicate that there were precedents for the BT, which picked up on the striking parallel in wording between the biblical descriptions of Abraham and Balaam.

Tan Balak 8 and TanB Balak 11 also state that Balaam saddled his ass instead of his servants because of hatred. Unlike GenR and the BT, God rebukes Balaam by telling him that Abraham had set a precedent in saddling his own ass when he went to bind Isaac.

Abraham and Balaam are linked in mAvot 5:19, where the disciples of Abraham are contrasted with the disciples of Balaam. The link between the two is discussed further below.

Section F. Ancestors and their descendants

No parallels have been found to this section. It does relate to other parts of Perek Helek. Ruth, the ancestor of David, is said to reflect the merit Balak acquired from building altars. Solomon also recalls the Davidic theme. The meaning of the David/Solomon comparison is made clear by using the verse about Yael to illustrate that a comparison does not always mean 'greater than'. The expression מעין is hard to translate precisely, but is used in rabbinic texts to express the essence or essential properties of something, but also something less e.g. מעין שמונה עשרה (bBer. 17a), a shortened summary of the eighteen blessings. The verse about Yael is therefore not, as Nikolsky suggests, out of place here, but rather makes a clear point about

the nature of the comparison between Solomon and David, namely that it does not mean that Solomon was greater than David.⁴¹

Section G. Balaam's intended curse

G1 and G2

The interpretation of זכר (Num. 23:16) as 'hook' is similar to NumR 20:20, which understands the word as meaning a bit set in the mouth of a beast in order to master it. Given that it is not clear which text is earlier, no conclusions can be drawn about the provenance of the idea. It is, however, associated with punishment of criminals in the BT. Lieberman points out bEruvin 19a, 'In human relationships when a man is sentenced to death by the government a hook is inserted into his mouth in order that he might not curse the king', and links it to a similar Roman practice carried out by the *officiales* of Caesarea, as recorded by Eusebius.⁴² Knowledge of this practice may have passed from Palestine to Babylonia. Here, it is appropriate in its association with cursing the government, which hints at Balaam cursing God.

The following section addresses the problem of how Balaam, a wicked man and an enemy of Israel, can utter words which seem clearly to be in praise of Israel and suggests that his words were intended for harm but God transformed them. Despite this, R. Abba bar Kahana suggests that they did in fact turn to curses, with the exception of the prophecy about synagogues and study houses. This reflects the reality of a time when Jews no longer had political power.

41. Nikolsky, 'Interpret Him as You Want', p. 219.

42. S. Lieberman, 'Roman Legal Institutions and Early Rabbinics and the Acta Martyrum' in *Texts and Studies*, Ktav Publishing House, New York, 1974, pp. 100-104.

There is a parallel to G2 in bTaanit 20a, which is essentially the same. The comparison between the reed and the cedar recalls sayings from mAvot such as 'One whose deeds are more numerous than his wisdom, to what can he be compared? To a tree whose branches are few and whose roots are many, so that even if all the winds of the world come and blow it, they do not move him from his place...' (Avot 3:17).

Section H. Exegesis of Numbers 24:21-24

I have found no parallels for this section, except for ExR 27:6, where 'Balaam the wicked' observes that Jethro has repented and has received his reward. However, it is likely that ExR is later than the BT,⁴³ so this provides no indication as to any earlier sources. The section continues the exegesis of selected verses from Num. 24 which was begun in the previous section.

Section H1 seeks to explain the phrase 'And he saw the Kenite...' (Num. 24:21). The verse is understood as referring to Jethro the Kenite. Jethro is here juxtaposed with Balaam. Balaam is the ultimate wicked gentile, whilst Jethro becomes a convert to Judaism and as a reward, his descendants sit in the hewn chamber in the Temple. Job is intermediate between the two. He has no evident righteousness and is punished for staying silent.

H2 continues the sexual theme which runs through this *sugya*. There is a play on the phrase מִשְׁמוֹ אֵל, the meaning of which is uncertain. The word מִשְׁמוֹ is from the root meaning 'to put' and seems to be applied to a people (the Moabites) which is put between Israel and God. Israel and God are compared to a lion and a lioness mating with each other. No one should dare to come between them, but this is what Balaam tries to do.

43. G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 309

H3 is consistent with a tendency noted in Chapter 4 (Generation of the Dispersion) to identify biblical place names with actual locations. H4 plays on the repetition of ענו which appears redundant and therefore is understood as referring to two different means of punishment.

Section J. The seduction of the Israelites

As discussed above, the PT contains a very similar account of Balaam's advice and the plan he proposes. A parallel passage is found in NumR 20:23. Some of the wording is the same, particularly "'Behold, you are like a man of the house, choose for yourself flasks of wine". Flasks of wine were by her - and the wine of foreigners⁴⁴ was not yet forbidden'. However, there are details in NumR which are not found in BT or PT. For example, the women offer to kill calves and chickens according to the laws of the Israelites. This again suggests that there was a common source, which PT, BT and NumR all drew on in different ways.

This story has antecedents going back much further than PT, as a similar idea is already found in both Philo (Moses I, 54)⁴⁵ and Josephus (Antiquities IV, 6-9).⁴⁶ These can both be seen as an imaginative elaboration of what is already in the biblical text:

'And Israel dwelt in Shittim, and the people began to commit prostitution with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined to Baal Peor, and the anger of the Eternal One was kindled against Israel' (Num. 25:1-3).

Both envisage Balaam advising Balak that the only way to overcome Israel is to use sexual temptation to lure them to idolatry in order to anger their God. The young women of Moab

44. BT has נכרים and NumR has גוים but the wording is otherwise exactly the same.

45. Philo, *De Vita Mosis*, trans. F. H. Colson, Loeb Classical Library 289, Heinemann, London 1935.

46. Josephus, *Antiquities* 1-4, trans. L. H. Feldman, Brill, Leiden, 2004.

are the means to do this. Philo particularly emphasises that the temptation should be gradual, inflaming the young men's lust.

The accounts in Philo and Josephus are of similar length to those in PT and BT, but the details differ. This suggests that PT and BT represent an independent elaboration of the brief account in Numbers.

The reference to Ammonite wine addresses a similar problem to that of Gen. 18, where Abraham brings milk and meat to the strangers contrary to halachah. However, whilst generally commentators try to reconcile what Abraham did with halachah, here they have a historical solution, that Ammonite wine was not yet forbidden. It is not clear when non-Jewish wine became forbidden, although there are indications it was forbidden in Daniel (1:8) and Judith (12:1-4). The rationale, that it might be used for idolatrous purposes, appears only in rabbinic literature.⁴⁷

Another curious feature of the BT is the use of the word יהודי, Jew (found in all manuscripts). In both PT and NumR, when the women ask that the men worship an idol, they respond rhetorically, 'Am I an idol worshipper?' In the BT, on the other hand, they say, 'Am I not a Jew?' This is particularly curious since, apart from quotations from the Book of Esther, the word appears only once more in the BT. This is in San. 64a, which again is about the worship of Baal Peor. There is a parallel story in the PT (San. 52a), but again the appellation 'Jew' is not used. The term 'Jew' is found more in the PT (29 times, twice as a quotation). It may be that the sources on Peor which entered the BT had a common origin, in a place where the term 'Jew' was used or had a polemical force, but it is unclear what its significance is here.

47. S. Stern, 'Compulsive Libationers: Non-Jews and Wine in Early Rabbinic Sources', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 64, no. 1, 2013, pp. 19-44.

Section K. Exegesis of Numbers 25:1-2

This section continues the exegesis of the Balaam narrative. The only parallel found to these passages of brief exegesis is Tan Vayeshev 1, which, like BT, gives examples of the word יָשַׁב denoting trouble. As might be expected, the order differs: Tan starts with Joseph, since it is focused on Genesis, and BT starts with the episode at Baal Peor, which is its focus. More surprisingly, BT omits the episode of the Golden Calf, which one might have expected since it, like the episode of Baal Peor, relates the feasting, drinking and idolatry of the people.

Section K4 draws on various examples of the use of the verb יָשַׁב to show that it denotes trouble to come. Nikolsky suggests that the paragraph represents a Babylonian point of view because it suggests that trouble can come to Israel whether or not they are dwelling in the Land of Israel, so the Land offers no protection.⁴⁸ However, the exegesis is presented in the name of R. Yochanan, a Palestinian Amora, and although the attribution is not conclusive, the passage is also found in the Tanhuma. There is therefore no reason to suppose it is more than a typical rabbinic exploration of the implication of a word.

Section L. The death of Balaam

This section moves towards the end of Balaam's life and an evaluation of him. L1 has a parallel in Tan Balak 14 and also Tan Mattot 3. The first two mention that Balaam is killed because he returns to claim his reward for the death of 24,000 Israelites in the plague. Tan Mattot 3 also has the proverb about the camel whose ears are cut off.

48. Nikolsky, 'Interpret Him as You Want'.

There are no other direct parallels to this section. However, in Sifrei Mattot 5, R. Natan is cited as saying that the Bet Din condemned Balaam to death, seeing the statement in Numbers that he was killed by the sword as referring to a judicial death.

In NumR 14:1, the reference to 'Men who shed blood' (Ps. 55:24) is seen as referring to Balaam, Ahitophel, Gehazi and Doeg, the four commoners denied a place in the world to come according to BT. According to NumR, all but Balaam *will* enter the world to come. This echoes the debate at the beginning of the *sugya* about whether non-Jews will enter the world to come and ambiguity about whether this includes Ahitophel, Gehazi and Doeg. However, unlike NumR, the BT does not reflect this ambiguity about them.

Literary Analysis

The *sugya* on Balaam, like that of Korach, has no obvious structure. Rather, it appears to be a series of linked sections, both of exegesis and narrative. The exegetical sections are on verses from the biblical narrative which are presented in the order of the verses as they occur in the Torah, but with no clear reason for the selection of some verses rather than others.

I will here trace the *sugya* through, indicating where there are other patterns and links which indicate purposeful composition rather than the random joining together of passages about Balaam.

Unlike most *sugyot*, which open with a *baraita*, this *sugya* opens with an exegesis of Balaam's name, 'he committed bestiality', which prefigures Balaam's reputed behaviour with his ass (section E1) and the theme of sexual perversion which permeates the chapter. The *baraita* debating the mishnah follows.

Section C deals with Moab and Midian. C1 has a parallel in Sifrei, which makes it likely it is based on an earlier source. However, the saying by Rav Papa is likely to be a product of Stammaitic editing. The choice of a verse which refers to the early monarchy of King David and his being 'anointed' may be deliberate, since there are extensive discussions of King David and the Messiah in this chapter, and particularly in the *sugya* dealing with Doeg and Ahitophel which follows the *sugya* on Balaam. This may be coincidental, but cumulatively the frequency of allusions in this chapter to David and the messiah suggests they are deliberate.

Section D is in Aramaic and the tradents, Mar Zutra and Mar son of Ravina are sixth generation or later Babylonian Amoraim, so it is likely to date from the late Amoraic or Stammaitic period. The section emphasises Balaam's sexual proclivities. It is a curious reversal of the emphasis in the *sugya* on the Men of Sodom. In this, the biblical story gave ample room for exegesis regarding sexual sin but this was virtually ignored and the emphasis was shifted to violence and injustice. With regard to Balaam, his sexual wrong-doing has been emphasised on slender biblical evidence. The possible reasons for this will be considered below.

Section E1 provides more evidence for Balaam's sexual wrong-doing. It leads naturally to E2, which picks up on the idea that Balaam had 'knowledge of the Most High'. E3 is a story concerning R. Joshua b. Levi. It is incidental to the main arguments of the text, which relate to Balaam and his wrong-doing. The obvious reason for the introduction of the story is that it relates to the idea that God's anger is at its most fierce when the cock's comb is white. However, it also relates to what has gone before about God's forbearance and teaches that Joshua b. Levi, too, should show forbearance and not curse heretics. This short narrative is in Aramaic and is likely to be a later insertion, although it relates to a first generation Palestinian Amora. It is similar in style to the short narrative concerning R. Jose of Sepphoris in the *sug-*

ya about the Men of Sodom, and like it, is placed mid-way through the *sugya*. Both narratives concern the relationship of the sage with non-Jews, and in both they are taught a lesson about appropriate ways of exerting their authority, although in R. Joshua's case the result is not harmful, but rather humorous. However, whilst the narrative about R. Jose of Sepphoris appears to be pivotal in the structure of the Sodom *sugya*, the narrative about R. Joshua ben Levi does not have a similar role.

Section E5 returns to the exegesis of verses about Balaam, with a passage that has parallels both in GenR and in the Tanhumas. It demonstrates Balaam's overpowering hatred of Israel. Section F again appears to be a diversion, taking as its starting point Balak rather than Balaam. However, it does relate to other material within the chapter, particularly Ruth as the ancestor of David, a fact that is indirectly related in bSan. 93a-b, where Boaz is named rather than Ruth. Similarly, the relationship between David and Solomon is discussed. The last part of the section is about the pupil-teacher relationship, a frequent theme within this chapter, as well as throughout the BT.

Section G returns to an exegesis of the biblical text, this time focussing on Balaam's blessing, which is seen as an intended curse. This continues the trend of interpreting the biblical narrative, which is at worst ambiguous about Balaam, as wholly critical of Balaam's words and deeds. Even the apparently favourable comparison of Israel to a cedar is interpreted as being harmful to Israel.

Section H brings together Balaam, Job and Jethro. The tradition that Balaam, Job and Jethro all served at Pharaoh's court is attributed to R. Simai, a fifth generation Tanna, and the language of the statement is consistent with this. Placing Balaam alongside Job and Jethro, who made different choices when faced with Pharaoh's requests regarding Israel, serves again to

emphasise his wickedness. Baskin points out that, 'As Pharaoh's counsellors, each became a model of one kind of gentile the rabbis encountered or postulated: Job epitomised the righteous gentile, Jethro the proselyte to Judaism, and Balaam the villain and failed prophet. Rabbinic exegesis of these symbolic figures, therefore, goes beyond an elucidation of the passages in which they appear to a general revelation of views about gentiles'.⁴⁹ The presence of Job and Jethro makes the picture of non-Jewish prophets in this *sugya* more nuanced than it would otherwise have been.

In this section, there is exegesis of a series of phrases from Num. 24:21-24. They have in common that they predict the downfall of Israel's enemies, although it is not clear who will carry out the punishments. Nevertheless, this section emphasises that God will exact vengeance for Israel.

The next section is the longest and has the most evident antecedents.⁵⁰ Whereas in the *sugyot* discussed in previous chapters, the long narrative sections have been in Aramaic and I have concluded that they are likely to be Stammaitic, here the longest narrative is likely to be Amoraic, at the latest from the fourth century when PT was for the most part compiled. The way the narrative is built up, with a vivid depiction of the gradual seduction of the Israelite men, is therefore not a feature of the editing of the BT. Rather, the narrative has been incorporated almost straightforwardly into the BT.

Section K continues the exegesis of the Balaam narrative. Although no earlier parallels have been found for this section, it is essentially midrashic in character and may draw on earlier

49. J. Baskin, *Pharaoh's Counsellors: Job, Jethro and Balaam in Rabbinic and Patristic Tradition*, Scholars Press, Chicago, 1983, p. 115.

50. Goldin presents an amusing modern parallel to this story - see J. Goldin, 'In Defense of Balaam: Not Entirely Midrash', *Judaism* vol. 40, no. 4, 1991, pp. 455-460.

sources. The interpretation of Refidim (K3) has no obvious connection with Balaam. It may be that it is placed here because it is another incident in which Israel turned away from God. In fact, Refidim was the place where Israel first began to rebel, almost immediately after the Exodus, when they had no water. It is therefore particularly significant in Israel's history, and presages their later rebellions, including their turning astray with the Moabites.

Section L is likewise midrashic. However, L1 and L2 both have sayings in the name of Babylonian, Mar Zutra bar Tuviah,⁵¹ a sixth generation Amora, and Rav Papa of the fifth generation, who is known for his citation of popular proverbs. This suggests at least some late editing of this section. In L1, the reason for Balaam going to the Midianites is attributed to R. Yochanan, whereas in the PT it is anonymous. This is consistent with my earlier finding of a tendency to change attributions to R. Yochanan (see Chapter 2).

L4 and L5 are likely to be late. The language of this section is talmudic Aramaic, as it is in the following section, in which Mar the son of Ravina, of the last generation of Amoraim, is the tradent. L4 follows the pattern noted regarding the Tower of Babel and the Korach *sugyot* in which towards the end of the *sugya*, concrete evidence is adduced to confirm a conclusion, in this case the finding of Balam's notebook. In both the Korach and Balaam *sugyot*, the concrete is undermined by the fantastic: Korach's sons turning below the ground and Balaam recording his own death.

Mar's comment in L5 that one should not expound scripture concerning those who have no share in the world to come except for Balaam, is cryptic. Does this mean that may expound scripture concerning Balaam to shame him, as Rashi (*ad.loc.*) suggests, or that one may derive general lessons? There does seem a particular attempt to vilify Balaam in rabbinic liter-

51. Assuming this is the same as Mar Zutra known commonly without the patronymic.

ature, including BT, which would support Rashi's conclusion. Also in support of this is NumR 14:1 which demonstrates that all the commoners *except* Balaam do in fact have a place in the world to come. This singling out of Balaam as especially wicked will be considered further below.

In conclusion, although the structure of this *sugya* is loose, there is evidence of late editing which serves to emphasise certain themes and link the *sugya* with other parts of Perek Helek.

Comparison with other *Sugyot*

The structure of the *sugya* is much looser than the structures of the Genesis *sugyot*. In this it is similar to the Korach *sugya*. There are also positive similarities with this *sugya*. The exegesis of names, of Korach and his associates and of Balaam and his father Beor, appears near the beginning of each *sugya*. There is also a Tannaitic debate about entry into the world to come, in the Korach *sugya* at the very beginning and in the Balaam *sugya* after the exegesis of names. In both cases, the debates are also found in the Tosefta. Both end with an episode which attempts to concretise the biblical narrative and bring it into a contemporary Babylonian context. In the Korach *sugya*, it is the Arab relating that he found the place where Korach was swallowed and in the Balaam *sugya* it is the finding of Balaam's notebook. Although the latter relates to an incident involving R. Hanina, a Palestinian Amora,⁵² it is related in Babylonian Aramaic, which suggests Stammaitic editing.⁵³ In support of this is the fact that just further on in the chapter, Doeg and Ahitophel are also said to live less than half the

52. It is not obvious which R. Hanina is referred to in M4. However, the most likely is R. Hanina ben Papai, even though he is not designated as such, since this R. Hanina spent some time in Babylonia and is frequently glorified in legends in the BT.

53. Breuer, 'Aramaic in Late Antiquity', pp. 473-476.

allotted life span. As noted in previous chapters, the reference to proximate material from both before and after the passage has been suggested by Halivni as one of the characteristics of Stammaitic editing.⁵⁴

As discussed above, the story of Joshua ben Levi resembles the story of R. Jose of Tsippori in the Sodom *sugya*. However, it does not occupy a similar pivotal role in the story and appears rather to be an inserted at this point by association, as stories frequently are in the BT. Overall, the Balaam *sugya* has much greater similarity with the Korach *sugya* than any of the Genesis *sugyot*.

Themes

In this *sugya*, Balaam himself is the central concern. In the previous *sugyot*, major themes such as the perversion of justice and the questioning of authority could be identified. Here, whilst there are also other themes, notably God's limited anger and protective love for Israel, these are not elaborated to the extent that Balaam's character, perversions and wrong-doing are.

Balaam is an enigmatic figure in the Bible and the rabbis appear fascinated by him. His depiction in the BT reflects a number of concerns. Four in particular will be explored here: Balaam as a non-Jewish prophet and sage; Balaam as magician; Balaam's sexual perversion and the portrayal of Balaam in relation to Jesus.

Balaam as prophet

54. D. Halivni, *Midrash, Mishnah and Gemara*, Harvard University Press, London, 1986, p.79.

Balaam as a figure of wisdom and prophecy posed a problem for the Rabbis, who felt they had to account for why a non-Jew appeared to have God-given powers. In other rabbinic sources, as reviewed by Baskin and Urbach, Balaam is seen as a prophet to the non-Jews, together with other non-Jews.⁵⁵ Sifrei Devarim (Vezot Habrachah 16) suggests that Balaam was even a greater prophet than Moses in some respects. The BT also recognises Balaam's power as a prophet, who had the wisdom to know the exact moment when God could be provoked, and whose words could have done serious harm to Israel had not God altered their meaning. Yet, at the same time as recognising Balaam's prophetic gifts, the rabbis, and the authors of the BT in particular, transformed a figure who was ambiguous in the Torah to one who was wholly wicked.

Vermes and Baskin both trace this process back to the Torah itself.⁵⁶ Vermes points to Num. 31:8, 16. Verse 16 in particular links Balaam directly with the loss of life at Baal Peor. Baskin points to Deut. 23:5-6 and Josh. 24:9-10, both of which describe how God was unwilling to let Balaam curse Israel. However, although these sources suggest Balaam's wrongdoing, they do not go beyond the main account of him in Num. 22-24 and depict him as wholly wicked.

The vilification of Balaam is evident already in Philo and Josephus. In Tannaitic literature, Urbach suggests it developed from the contrast between Abraham and Balaam, as found also in BT (section E5 in my analysis) and the parallels discussed above. There is an obvious verbal parallel between the biblical accounts of Abraham and Balaam saddling their don-

55. E. Urbach, *מעולמת של חכמים*, Jerusalem, 1988, pp. 537-555; Baskin, *ibid.* pp. 75-93.

56. Baskin, *Pharaoh's Counsellors*, pp. 75-76; G. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, Brill, Leiden, 1961, pp. 175-6.

keys.⁵⁷ Following from this, Abraham and Balaam came to be juxtaposed, as is evident also in mAvot 5:19. Balaam came to be seen as the complete antithesis of Abraham, and it was for this reason, Urbach suggests, as well as being chronologically earlier, that Balaam is listed first amongst the commoners who are denied a place in the world to come.⁵⁸ Whilst this reason for Balaam's priority seems unlikely, since all the other lists are in chronological order, it is clear that the prophetic ability of Balaam posed a challenge to the rabbis, which they responded to by portraying him as totally wicked, and therefore abusing his gifts. This can be seen also in the rabbinic portrayals of Doeg and Ahitophel (see next chapter), who were considered great Torah sages, and all the more responsible for their own wickedness to the extent that they were denied a place in the world to come.

Balaam as magician

The references to Balaam as magician are brief in this *sugya*, but none the less significant. Other enemies of Israel, Pharaoh and Amalek, are described in the Talmud as sorcerors and Pharaoh is specifically called a Magus.⁵⁹ They contribute to the rabbinic view of Balaam, and they have also been used as evidence in the debate about Balaam in relation to Jesus, as discussed below.

There is an ambivalent attitude in the BT towards magic. On the one hand, magic formulae, amulets and divination bowls are described, but on the other, scepticism is expressed of magic practices, for example the healing practices described as 'the ways of the Amorites' which

57. This may be a deliberate undermining - see J. Klitsner, *Subversive Sequels in the Bible*. Maggid Books, Jerusalem, 2011.

58. Urbach, *ibid.*, p. 547.

59. Urbach, *The Sages*, p. 116.

are thought to have no rational basis (Shabbat 67a). When it came to non-Jewish practitioners of magic, the scepticism became suspicion and condemnation. Balaam, as the most eminent of non-Jewish prophets and soothsayers in the Torah, therefore made a suitable target for attacks on non-Jewish practitioners of magic and similar arts.

There are two references in this *sugya* to Balaam as magician. In section D, he is said to use his male organ for sorcery. In section L2, Balaam is said to be a *kosem*, a soothsayer, which is met by a question, 'Was he not a prophet?!'. His magic is therefore dismissed as degrading and unworthy of someone who was a prophet, just as consorting with a carpenter is seen to be unworthy of a woman who is the daughter of a ruler.

Bohak points out that *kosem* is a perjorative term, but one that is used to make fun of other rabbis, and not considered as dangerous as a *mechashef* (another category forbidden in Deut. 18:10). It therefore ridicules Balaam. However, it is also an accusation that is frequently made against *minim*, and especially Christians, some of whom the rabbis accused of healing Jewish patients 'in the name of Jesus the son of Pandera' (a derogatory designation of Jesus who was accused of being the son of a Roman general).⁶⁰

Balaam's Sexual Perversion

Balaam's sexual perversion plays a major part in his vilification. This starts in Section A with his father, Beor, whose name is said to mean 'he committed bestiality'. Balaam follows his father in this, by committing bestiality with his ass. The ass, rather than a human female, serves as Balaam's companion, underlining not only his perversion but his inadequacy in

60. G. Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic. A History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 398-399.

maintaining a normal human relationship. Balaam's use of his male organ for sorcery also points to his misdirection of normal sexuality.

The depiction of Balaam's perverse sexuality is consistent with what Rosen-Zvi describes as the 'hypersexualisation' of the Babylonian Talmud.⁶¹ It is found also in the *sugya* about the Generation of the Flood, where the corruption of that generation is defined by inter-species mating and bestiality. Rosen-Zvi points out that not only is the BT positive about sexuality but also that it tends to 'multiply and increase sexuality itself'. Thus, it sees references to sexuality where they are not immediately evident and often depicts sexuality in an exaggerated fashion. In part, this is the same phenomenon examined by Boyarin in his depiction of the grotesque, but it points specifically to a concern with the sexual which is in striking contrast to the PT.⁶² Rosen-Zvi links this phenomenon in part to a positive view of sexuality in Persia, but points out that this does not account for the 'hypersexualisation'.

In the case of Balaam, this phenomenon accounts in part for the depiction of his perceived sexual perversion, but not entirely. Other figures in this chapter whose wickedness is described, notably Doeg, Ahitophel and Gehazi, are not characterised in this way. The idea may have arisen from the derivation of his father's name, Beor or because of Balaam's close association with his ass. The word plays used to prove that he lay with her as a companion allows for this elaboration. There may, too, be an association with magic, since both magic and sexuality are dangerous, powerful and mysterious. The combination of magic and sexuality came to be associated in the BT with Jesus, which may have contributed to the picture.

61. I. Rosen-Zvi, 'Hyper-Sexualization in the Bavli: An Initial Survey' in L. Teugels & R. Ulmer (eds.), *Midrash and the Exegetical Mind*, Gorgias Press, Piscataway NJ, 2010, pp. 181-205.

62. D. Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009.

Balaam and Jesus

There has been much debate about whether Balaam in this *sugya* was meant to represent Jesus. There are clear parallels which led scholars as early as Abraham Geiger to make the suggestion. One is that Balaam, like Jesus, was thirty-three at his death. However, Doeg and Ahitophel were said to have died at the same age, for the same reason, and there is no suggestion that they were 'Jesus figures'. Rather, like Balaam, they misused their wisdom to counsel others for evil. More convincingly, 'One who has descended from chiefs and rulers has consorted with carpenters' (section L) may be understood as a reference to Mary and Joseph. Later in Perek Helek (107b, in a passage absent from the Romm Vilna edition due to censorship) Jesus is described as a magician who deceives and leads Israel astray.

Urbach cautions against too close an identification of Balaam with Jesus.⁶³ He claims that although Balaam was frequently the subject of Jewish-Christian polemic, both using him for their own ends, he was not intended to symbolise Jesus. In fact, as a magician, he may rather have been identified with the Zoroastrian Magus.

However, whilst not directly making the identification of Balaam and Jesus, Schaefer presents more compelling evidence. In bSan. 43a, Jesus is condemned to death as a magician who seduced Israel to idolatry. Jesus is also portrayed in BT as sexually promiscuous.⁶⁴ This combination of magic, sexual perversion and seducing to idolatry is what characterises Balaam and condemns him to lose his place in the world to come. In bBerachot 17a-b, Jesus is grouped together with Doeg, Ahitophel and Gehazi as wicked disciples. Balaam replaces Je-

63. Urbach, *מעולמם של חכמים*, pp. 537-555.

64. P. Schaefer, *Jesus in the Talmud*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007, pp. 64-5, 97-102.

sus in this group in the list of commoners denied a place in the world to come.⁶⁵ Whilst this is not necessarily a direct correspondence, the overall picture of Balaam makes it likely that he is indeed a cipher for Jesus. Schaefer speculates that the rabbis in Babylonia may have felt it safer to criticise Jesus openly than their Palestinian counterparts and may have used this freedom to attack a rival religion within the Sasanian empire. If this were so, then whilst the attack on Jesus did not need to be masked, the figure of Balaam provided another opportunity for mocking Jesus, through the similarity of their depiction.

Conclusions

In this *sugya* I have found that the structure is loose, with no obvious links between sections other than where they are about successive biblical verses. In this, it most closely resembles the *sugya* on Korach.

Like all the other *sugyot* so far examined, the *sugya* on Balaam shows evidence of Stammaitic editing. This can be seen in the number of Amoraim of the last generations who are cited. There is also reference to proximate material throughout the *sugya*.

Also in common with the other *sugyot*, this *sugya* serves to emphasise a particular aspect of wrong-doing. Here, Balaam's sexual immorality is emphasised, and is mirrored in the sexual immorality of the Israelites at Baal Peor. The vilification of Balaam is the major theme of the *sugya* in the BT. It contrasts with the parallel section of the PT, where the emphasis is on the worship of Baal Peor and there is very little about Balaam himself, except for his planning the seduction at Baal Peor and his death.

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-33.

The differing emphases of the PT and BT may reflect the different milieux in which they were compiled. Idolatry was a greater feature of life in Palestine, where the Jews were surrounded by a mixture of Roman, Christian and other religions which were perceived as idolatrous. By contrast, in Babylonia the main religion was Zoroastrianism and the Babylonian Jews showed less concern about idolatry.⁶⁶ The depiction of Balaam as a magician reflects a milieu in which the dominant religion was led by Magi, who were known for their wisdom and believed magical powers. On the other hand, the depiction of Balaam is also likely to reflect criticism and mocking the figure of Jesus, who is depicted in similar terms to Balaam in the BT.

In conclusion, although the *sugya* on Balaam is not tightly structured, the selection and presentation of material suggests that the *sugya* has been edited in order to emphasise certain concerns of the BT. The *sugya* is much closer in structure and content to the *sugya* on Korach than to the Genesis *sugyot*.

66. A. Oppenheimer, 'Relationships between Jews and Non-Jews in Talmudic Babylonia', *Proc. 9th World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem* vol. Div. B, Vol 1, 1986,

CHAPTER 7

DOEG AND AHITOPHEL

Introduction

With Doeg and Ahitophel we move out of Torah into the Books of Samuel and specifically the chapters about King David. The story of Doeg is found in I Sam. 21-22 and relates to the period before David becomes King. Ahitophel is found in II Sam. 15-18, the story of Absalom's rebellion. The BT views them similarly and a large part of the discussion takes them together. I will therefore also discuss them together, especially as the main focus of the *sugya* is not either of them, but rather King David. There are stories about David earlier in the chapter, in San. 95a-b, and this *sugya* appears to resume his story. King David is also pervasive in the earlier part of Perek Helek as the purported ancestor of the Messiah.

In the *sugyot* on Genesis, which I examined at the beginning of this thesis, I described a clear structure, with a narrative section followed by a 'midrashic' section. In the *sugyot* on Numbers, the division was not so clear-cut, but different sections were discernible, both thematically and in terms of genre. In the *sugya* on Doeg and Ahitophel, the text is more unified. For convenience of discussion, I have divided it into two parts, one about Doeg and Ahitophel and one about King David, before further dividing the text into sub-sections, but the first section leads into the second smoothly. Since there are only a few parallel sources, I have deviated from the order used in previous chapters and have presented these and other texts relating to Doeg and Ahitophel before analysing the text of the Babylonian Talmud.

The Text of bSan. 106b-107b

Mishnah (90a)

Three kings and four commoners have no share in the world to come. Three kings: Jeroboam, Ahab and Manasseh. R. Judah said, 'Manasseh does have a share in the world to come, as it is said, "He prayed to God and he was heard, and God returned him to Jerusalem and to his kingdom (II Chron. 33:13)"". They said to him, 'God returned him to his kingdom, but not to the world to come'. Four commoners : Balaam, Doeg, Ahitophel and Gehazi.

Gemara (106b-107b)

A

1. It is written DOEG and it is written DOYEG.¹ R. Yochanan said, 'At first, the Holy One sat and worried that he would turn to evil conduct. After he turned [to evil ways], God said, "Woe that he has turned away"'.
2. R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'Why do you, mighty man, boast of evil? The mercy of God endures all the day' (Ps. 52:3)?² God said to Doeg, 'Are you not mighty in Torah? Why should you boast about evil. Is not God's mercy inclined towards you all the day?'

3. And R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'And to the wicked, God says, "What business have you to teach my statutes"' (Ps. 50:16)? God said to the wicked Doeg, 'What business

1. דוּאָג and דוּיָג. In I Sam. 22:9, the spelling is דוּאָג and in 22:18 and 22, it is דוּיָג, with the *keri* given as דוּאָג. The first, דוּאָג, is related the root דאָג, meaning to worry or be concerned with. The second, דוּיָג, probably derives meaning from דוּי, woe, although it may also be a visual pun on דוּי, which has a similar meaning.

2. Psalm 52 is ascribed: 'For the chief musician, a *maskil* of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, saying, "David has come to the House of Achimelech"'.
3. And R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'And to the wicked, God says, "What business have you to teach my statutes"' (Ps. 50:16)? God said to the wicked Doeg, 'What business

have you to teach my statutes? When you reach verses concerning murder, or verses concerning slander, how can you expound them?

'Or to take up my covenant into your mouth' (*ibid.*). R. Ammi said, 'The torah of Doeg was only exterior, from his lips'.

4. And R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'Surely the righteous will see and fear, and laugh at him' (Ps. 62:8)? At first they will fear [Doeg] but in the end they will laugh.

5. And R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'He that swallowed power³ will vomit it up. God will expel it from his belly' (Job 20:15)? David said before the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, let Doeg die'. God said to him, 'He has swallowed power, he will vomit it up'. He said before him, 'God will expel it from his belly'.

6. And R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'God will destroy you for ever' (Ps. 52:7)? The Holy One said to David, 'Let us bring Doeg to the world to come'. He said to God, 'God will destroy you for ever'. What is the meaning of 'He will take you away and pluck you out from the tent and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah' (*ibid.*)? The Holy One said [to David], 'Let them repeat one of his teachings in his name in the House of Study'. He [David] said before the Holy One, "'He will take you away and pluck you out from the tent'". 'Let him have children who are scholars'. "'And uproot you from the land of the living. Selah'".

7. And R. Isaac said: What is the meaning of 'Where is the counter and where is the weigher, where is the counter of towers?' (Is. 33:18). Where is the one who counts all the letters of the Torah? Where is the one who weighs up all the lenient and strict precepts in the Torah?

3. חֵיִל. Strength or power is often interpreted in rabbinic writing as Torah, and this would appear to be the reference here, since Doeg has much Torah learning then loses it.

Where is the one who counts towers? For he [Doeg] would enumerate three hundred decided laws concerning the flying tower'.⁴

8. R. Ammi⁵ said: Doeg and Ahitophel posed four hundred problems concerning the flying tower and not one was solved. Rava said: Is there greatness in posing problems? In the years of Rav Judah, they all taught Nezikin and we learnt much of Uktzin. When he [Rav Judah] came to 'A woman who preserves vegetables in a pot...', or some say, 'Olives which are preserved with their leaves are pure...', he said, 'We see a debate between Rav and Samuel'. I, however, spent thirteen sessions on Uktzin. Rav Judah takes off his shoes and there is rain, but we pray for rain and no-one pays attention. It is because the Holy One requires the heart, as it is written, 'The Eternal One will look at the heart' (I Sam 16:7).

9. Rav Mesharsheya said: Doeg and Ahitophel did not ever reason an opinion. Mar Zutra contradicted him: Concerning whom was it said, 'Where is the counter and where is the weigher, where is the counter of towers?', and you say they did not reason an opinion? But rather, their opinion was not in accord with halachah, as it is said, 'The secret of the Eternal One is with those who fear Him'.

10. R. Ammi said: Doeg did not die until he forgot his learning, as it is said, 'He will die without instruction and in his great foolishness will go astray' (Prov. 5:23).

4. It is uncertain what is meant by the flying tower. Rashi gives three possibilities: the upstroke of the letter lamed, which can be straight or bent; a tower which carries a box from the air, which poses questions about purity and a tower which is suspended in the air by sorcery. For the purposes of this chapter, it is sufficient to note that it was an obscure and difficult halachic problem.

5. In the Vilna edition and the Florence MS, the word 'Ammi' is missing, but it is given as a variant in Ner Mitzvah (16th century commentary by Joshua Boaz) and the Jerusalem MS reads אמי. Ammi therefore seems the most likely reading, consistent with his citation earlier.

11. R. Assi⁶ said: He was struck with leprosy, as it is said, 'All who go astray from you will be destroyed' (Ps. 73:27)⁷. It is written there, 'In perpetuity' (Lev. 25:30)⁷ and we translate it 'decided'. And we have learnt, 'The only difference between a leper under trial and a decided leper is in letting his hair grow wild and his clothes be torn'.⁸

12. R. Yochanan said: Three angels of destruction were appointed for Doeg. One caused him to forget his learning, one burnt his soul and one scattered his ashes in synagogues and study houses. R. Yochanan said: Doeg and Ahitophel did not meet each other. Doeg lived in the days of Saul and Ahitophel in the days of David. And R. Yochanan said: Doeg and Ahitophel did not live out half their days. A *baraita* is in accordance with this: 'Men of blood and deceit do not live out half their days' (Ps. 55:24). Doeg lived only thirty-four years and Ahitophel lived only thirty-three.

13. And R. Yochanan said: At first, David called Ahitophel his teacher; later he called him his companion and in the end he called him his pupil. In the beginning he called him his teacher: 'And you are a like a man who is my equal, my chieftain and my acquaintance' (Ps. 55:14). Then his companion, as it is said, 'We shared a sweet secret together and we will walk in company in the House of God' (Ps. 55:15). And at the end, he was called his pupil: 'Also my ally⁹ in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, [107a] has lifted his heel against me' (Ps. 41:10).

6. R. Assi in Florence manuscript, ר אסי in Jerusalem manuscript. R. Assi seems the most likely reading, being contemporary with most of the other tradents in this section.

7. צמיתות.

8. This proof is circuitous. It depends on a) linking הצמחה in Psalm 73 with צמיתות in Lev. 25; b) translating צמיתות as לחלושין. This is the translation in the Targum Onkelos, *ad loc.*; c) making the link between לחלושין, and מוהלט, a rabbinic term for a declared (i.e. definitely decided) leper. The second and third stages rely on rabbinic tradition and Mishnah in place of a scriptural verse to make the connection. It is therefore tenuous.

9. איש שלומי which is ironic given that Ahitophel counsels violence.

B

1. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav, 'A man should never ask to be tested, for behold, David, King of Israel, asked to be tested and he failed'. He said to God, 'Master of the Universe, why do they say, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" but not "The God of David"?' He said, 'They were tested by me and you have not been tested by me'. He said before him, 'Master of the Universe, test me and try me'. As it is said, 'Test me Eternal God and try me, etc.' (Ps. 26:2). He said, 'I will test you and I will even do one thing for you which I did not do for them. I did not make known to them [the nature of the test] but I will make known to you that I will test you in a matter of adultery'.

2. Immediately, 'And it came to pass in the evening, and David arose from his couch, etc.' (II Sam. 11:2). Rav Judah said: His night-time couch turned into his day-time couch¹⁰ and he was unaware that it is the way of the world that there is a small part of a man that, if it is kept satisfied, it becomes hungry, and if it is kept hungry then it becomes satisfied. 'And he went on the roof of the palace and he saw a woman bathing from the roof, and the woman was very beautiful' (*ibid.*).

3. Bathsheba was washing her hair under a wicker screen. Satan came and appeared to him as a bird. He [David] shot an arrow against it and it struck the screen. She was revealed and he saw her. Immediately, 'And David sent to enquire concerning the woman. And he said, "Is this not Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" And David sent messengers and they took her and she came to him. And he lay with her, for she was clean from her impurity. And she returned to her house' (II Sam. 11:3-4). This is what is meant by: 'You have tested my heart, you have visited me at night, you have tried me but found noth-

10. This comment may be inserted to explain why if it was evening, David arose from his couch rather than lying down on it.

ing; I have planned that my mouth should not transgress' (Ps. 17:3). He said, 'Would that a bridle had been put in the mouth of him who hates me'¹¹ so that I had not spoken in this way'.

4. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David. I have trusted in the Eternal One. How shall I say to my soul, "Flee as a bird to your mountain" (Ps. 11:1)?'¹² David said to the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, forgive me for this sin, so that they do not say, "The mountain that is amongst you was made to flee by a bird"'.

5. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'Against You only have I sinned and I have done evil in Your sight, in order that You are justified in Your word and clear in Your judgement' (Ps. 51:6)? David said to the Holy One, 'It is revealed and known to you that had I wished to suppress my [evil] inclination I could have done so, but I said, "Let not the servant acquire more merit than the Master"'.

6. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'For I am ready for a fall';¹³ my pain is always before me' (Ps. 38:18)? Bathsheba had been appointed for David since the six days of creation, but she came to him in pain, and this is what was taught by a Tanna of the House of Ishmael: Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam had been appointed for David from the six days of creation, but he enjoyed her before she was ripe.

7. Rava expounded: What is meant by the verse: 'In my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered; slanderers gathered against me and I did not know. They tore [at me] and were not silent'¹⁴ (Ps. 35:15)? David said to the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, it is revealed and known to

11. I.e. David, himself, who had acted to his own harm.

12. The translation is uncertain, especially as 'Your' is in the plural. However, the bird is read as a reference to Satan's appearance as a bird.

13. צלע means to limp or halt, but also a 'rib' and 'side'. It is therefore a reference back to Eve, created from Adam's rib, and hence to a 'companion', here Bathsheba, who was destined to be at David's side.

14. דמו related to דם, blood. The verse could therefore be interpreted as suggested, that David did not bleed. This would refer to 'shame' which in rabbinic language is 'whitening the face', i.e. causing the blood to drain from a person, so that they would not bleed when injured (see bBava Metzia 59a).

you that if they had torn my flesh, my blood would not have flowed. And not only this, but at the time when they were occupied in studying the four death penalties of the Bet Din¹⁵ they would break off from their studies and say to me, 'David, what is the death penalty for one who commits adultery?' I said to them, 'One who commits adultery is subject to death by strangling but he has a share in the world to come, but one who shames his fellow in public has no share in the world to come'.¹⁶

8. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav: Even when David was ill he fulfilled eighteen¹⁷ marital duties, as it is said, 'I have worn myself out with my sighing; I drench my bed all night; I wet my pillow with my tears' (Ps. 6:7).

9. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav: David sought to worship idols, as it is said, 'And David came to the top [of the mountain] where he would bow down to God' (II Sam. 15:32), and 'top' can only mean idol worship, as it is said, 'And it is an image of a head of fine gold' (Dan. 2:32)¹⁸ 'And behold Hushai the Archite came towards David with his garment rent and earth on his head' (II Sam. 15:32). He said to David, 'They will say that a king such as you worships idols!' He said, 'Should a king such as I be killed by his son? Better that I should worship idols and the Divine name not be profaned in public!' He [Hushai] said, 'What is the reason you married a beautiful woman?' He said, 'Scripture permits a beautiful woman.' He said, 'Why did you not learn from this juxtaposition, for it says "If a man has a stubborn and

15. A reference to Mishnah Sanhedrin Chapter 7. This accords with the Florence manuscript. However, the Munich, Karlsruhe and Jerusalem manuscripts all read, 'They were studying Ohalot and Negaim'.

16. The Hebrew for 'shame' literally means 'blanches his face.' This is how the phrase 'my blood would not have flowed' is interpreted. David's adversaries were not silent, but spoke against him and caused the blood to drain from his face in shame.

17. 18 wives, but perhaps also a reference to the Shemoneh Esreh prayer, which David was excluded from.

18. ראש/רישיה.

rebellious son" (Deut. 21:18).¹⁹ If a man marries a beautiful woman he will have a stubborn and rebellious son'.²⁰

10. R. Dostai of Beri expounded: To whom can David be compared? To a Cuthite merchant. David said to the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, "Who can understand his errors?"'(Ps. 19:13). [God said,] 'They are forgiven'. "'Cleanse me from hidden faults'" (*ibid.*). He said, 'They are forgiven'. "'Hold back your servant back from presumptuous sins'" (Ps. 19:14). 'They are forgiven'. "'Let them not rule over me, then I shall be innocent" (*ibid.*) - that they do not discuss me in the study house'. 'They are forgiven'. "'And make me innocent of my great transgression" (*ibid.*) - that my offence is not recorded'. He said, 'It is impossible. The letter *yod* which I removed from Sarai cried out to me in protest for many years until I added it to the name of Joshua, as it is said, "And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua" (Num. 13:16). How much more so a whole paragraph!²¹

11. 'And make me innocent of my great transgression'. He said before him, 'Master of the Universe, forgive me completely for this sin'. God said, 'Solomon, your son, is already destined to write in his wisdom: "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his garments not burn? If a man walks on coals, shall his feet not be scorched? If a man takes his neighbour's wife, anyone who touches her shall not be held innocent" (Prov. 6:27-29)'. He said, 'Must I suffer so much?' He said, 'Accept your sufferings'. He accepted them.

12. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav: For six months, David was stricken with leprosy and the Divine Presence departed from him and the Sanhedrin separated themselves from him.

19. My translation follows all the major manuscripts, which have the words מאי טעמא, absent from the Romm Vilna edition.

20. The passage about the rebellious son follows the case of the captured slave girl who is beautiful (Deut. 21:10ff.). Absalom's mother, Maachah the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur, was, according to tradition, a war captive (Tan and TanB Ki Tetzei 1).

21. Sarah's name was changed from Sarai to Sarah (Gen. 17:15) with the loss of a letter '*yod*'. Joshua's name appears first as Hoshea in the verse and the *yod* is added.

He was stricken with leprosy as it is said, 'Remove my sins with hyssop and I shall be purified, wash me and I will be whiter than snow' (Ps. 51:9). The Divine Presence departed from him, as it is written, 'Return to me the joy of your salvation and with a willing spirit sustain me' (Ps. 51:14). And the Sanhedrin separated from him, as it is written, 'Return to me those who fear You (and those who know your testimonies)' (Ps. 119:79). From where do we know that it was six months? As it is written, 'The years that David ruled over Israel were forty.[107b] He ruled over Hebron for seven years and in Jerusalem he ruled for thirty-three years' (I Kings 2:11). And it is written, 'And in Hebron he ruled over Judah for seven years and six months' (II Sam. 5:5). And these six months are not reckoned. We learn from this that he was stricken with leprosy.

13. He said before Him, 'Master of the Universe, forgive me for this sin'. 'It is pardoned'. "Show me a sign for good, that those who hate me will see and be ashamed, for You, Eternal One, have helped me and comforted me"(Ps. 86:17). God said, 'In your life, I will not make it known, but I will make it known in the lifetime of your son, Solomon'. At the time when Solomon built the Temple, he sought to bring the Ark into the Holy of Holies. The gates stuck together. He uttered twenty-four supplications and they did not move. He said, 'Lift up your heads, Oh gates, and let the doors of Eternity be lifted up, that the King of Glory may enter. Who is this King of Glory? The Eternal One is strong and mighty, a man of war' (Ps. 24:7-8). And it is said, 'Lift up your heads, Oh gates, and let the doors of Eternity be lifted up, that the King of Glory may enter, etc.' (*ibid.*). And the doors did not move. When he said, 'Eternal God do not turn back on the presence of Your anointed one, remember the mercies of David Your servant' (II Chron. 6:42) they immediately moved. At that time, the faces of those who hated David turned as black as the bottom of a pot and all Israel knew that the Holy One had forgiven David for that sin.

Mishnah and Palestinian Talmud

The Hebrew text of the PT is found in Appendix 6

As discussed in the chapter on Balaam, the Mishnah simply states that Doeg and Ahitophel are amongst the four commoners who have no place in the world to come. There is no elaboration or scriptural support. As also discussed, the four commoners are absent from the Tosefta.

Palestinian Talmud

The Palestinian Talmud differs considerably from the BT. Its focus is, as might be expected from the Mishnah, on Doeg and Ahitophel, whereas the BT devotes at least half the *sugya* to King David. David is mentioned only where there is a connection with Doeg and Ahitophel and there is no mention of his sin with Bathsheba. In common with the BT, the PT depicts Doeg and Ahitophel as Torah scholars and elaborates the relationship between them and David on these terms. It sees them as rivals to David. Doeg is jealous of David's Torah knowledge and Ahitophel wishes to be king. David himself is depicted in a positive or neutral way, and not negatively as in the BT. He is not portrayed as arguing in a plaintive way against Doeg, as he is in the BT. For example, both the BT and the PT interpret 'He that swallowed power will vomit it up. God will expel it from his belly' (Job 20:15) as a reference to Doeg's loss of his Torah learning. However, in the BT, this is part of a conversation between David and God in which David pleads that Doeg be punished, whereas in the PT

David plays no part in Doeg's punishment. Kalmin has pointed out the different treatment of David in the two Talmuds, which will be discussed further below.²²

The two Talmuds also differ in the type of scholarship which they portray. In the PT, scholarship has practical application. Thus, Doeg has a debate with David about the preparation of the shew-bread on Shabbat. The choice of shew-bread as a subject is likely to be deliberate, since Doeg is responsible for the slaughter of the priests of Nob who give David the shew-bread to eat (I Sam. 21-22). Ahitophel has the means to prevent harm from the carrying of the ark but is reluctant to provide a solution. David warns him: 'One who has the knowledge to sustain (life) and does not do so is punishable by strangulation', after which Ahitophel provides a solution. Finally, in an episode which is also related in bMakkot 11b, when David is digging the foundations of the Temple the waters of the deep threaten to overwhelm the world. Ahitophel again has the knowledge to prevent the disaster and David has to use the same warning to persuade him to use his knowledge.

In contrast, the BT sets great store by purely theoretical knowledge and on dialectic.²³ Thus, Doeg and Ahitophel are both able to pose and argue about four hundred problems concerning the 'flying tower'.

It is curious that the story of the foundations of the Temple is not included in Perek Helek, although it is included in bMakkot. The story would have been relevant not only because it concerned Ahitophel but because it cast a negative light on how he used, or refused to use, his knowledge of Torah. It also indicates the shifting relationship between David and Ahitophel which is described in the BT, where Ahitophel began as David's teacher but then became like

22. R. Kalmin, *The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity*, Routledge, New York, London, 1999, pp. 83-93.

23. J. Rubenstein, 'The Thematization of Dialectics in the Bavli Aggadah', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 54, no. 1, 2003, pp. 71-84.

a pupil so that David has to warn him of the penalty for not using his knowledge for the benefit of others. One possible reason is that the compilers wished to emphasise a different type of wisdom. The BT emphasises the dialectical prowess of Doeg and Ahitophel, even as it concludes that dialectical skill is not enough, but that 'God requires the heart'.

Thus although the PT, like the BT, rabbinises Doeg and Ahitophel, it gives them authority but not dialectic ability. More importantly, David plays a role only in association with Doeg and Ahitophel, and his debates with them are for practical purposes. David is not himself the focus of discussion and his sins are not elaborated as they are in the BT.

Kalmin claims that the PT depicts Ahitophel more positively than the BT.²⁴ However, the PT is at best ambivalent about him. He is depicted as a greater scholar than David, but he is unwilling to share his knowledge. He could have helped David to save lives but has to be urged to do so. Whilst the PT gives him reasons for resenting David, this does not excuse his actions. On the other hand, Ahitophel is not depicted as wholly wicked in the BT either, even though its starting point is the Mishnah stating that he has no place in the world to come. Like Doeg, his life is said to be cut short because of his wickedness, but he is not humiliated and degraded to the extent that Doeg is. Whilst his status is reduced from David's teacher to David's student, this could equally reflect David's growing prowess and there is no suggestion he loses his learning entirely, as Doeg does.

24. Kalmin, *The Sage in Jewish Society*, pp.101-109.

The Babylonian Talmud - Sources

The parallel texts cited here are found in Appendix 6

There are few parallel texts in midrashic collections, except for the final section, about the opening of the Temple doors. There are several parallels to this section, in Tan (Tan Vayera 7, Behaalotcha 9; TanB Vaera 7) and NumR (14:3) as well as in the BT (Shabbat 30a and Moed Katan 9a). The emphasis in Tan is on Solomon. In one account, he is chased by the Temple doors until he makes clear that in saying 'The King of Glory' he is referring to God and not himself (Behaalotcha 9). In another, David even returns from the dead to vindicate Solomon (Vayera 7). The opening of the doors is attributed to Solomon calling on David's merit. There is no suggestion that the opening is a sign of forgiveness. Both the other accounts in the BT, on the other hand, conclude with the shaming of David's enemies and Israel knowing that David is forgiven. The different accounts of this episode in the Palestinian midrashim, like that in the PT, therefore accord with the distinction Kalmin makes between Palestinian and Babylonian views of David: In Palestinian sources David's wrongdoing is either ignored or justified, whereas in the BT it is acknowledged and viewed critically even if it is forgiven at the end.²⁵

Most of the references to Doeg and Ahitophel are in GenR. There are a few references in the Tanhuma and LevR, which, as discussed previously, may or may not be earlier than the BT, since their dating is uncertain. Even amongst the texts where Doeg and Ahitophel are mentioned, most do not provide parallels to the BT. However, they will be discussed as they provide insights into what are probably prior traditions about the two men.

25. *Ibid.* pp. 83-93.

GenR 20:5 begins by relating that the snake in the Garden of Eden had blessings but because it wished for more, it was cursed with having less. There follows a list of those who acted similarly, with the same result. The four commoners of the Mishnah are included in this list, along with Cain and Korach, Absalom, Adonijah, Uzziah and Haman. A parallel is found in tSotah 4:5, where it is said of the Sotah 'What she sought was not given to her, and what she already possessed was taken from her'.

In GenR 38:1, and some manuscripts of GenR 32:1, both Doeg and Ahitophel are described as permitting forbidden relationships and the shedding of blood. This is consistent with the power and wisdom that are attributed to them in the biblical narrative, and appropriate proof-texts are given. Although they are not explicitly described as Torah scholars, their ability to permit certain forbidden relationships, arguing against halachah, suggests this. The preceding sentences are an interpretation of Ps. 59:12. David apparently pleads to God 'Do not kill Doeg and Ahitophel lest my people forget'. It is surprising that David appears to be pleading on behalf of Doeg and Ahitophel, and contrasts strongly with the BT where he pleads with God to end their lives and their inheritance. However, the interpretation continues 'scatter them through your power and bring them down, Eternal One our shield'. This is consistent with David wishing that an example should be made of Doeg and Ahitophel, rather than that they should die a normal death, in which case the people might forget their wrong-doing. This is comparable to Tan Noah 17 and TanB Noah 26a, where David pleads, 'Do not let them die a normal death, lest the miracles that you performed for me be forgotten'. David's speech continues with the same quotation from Ps. 59:12, 'scatter them through your power and bring them down, Eternal One our shield'. An alternative version here has David pleading on behalf of the Generation of the Dispersion, which is curious in a historical sense, but in

a literary sense serves as another interpretation of a verse from Psalms which is hard to understand, but is attributed to David.

In summary, in the limited material about Doeg and Ahitophel in sources other than the PT, they are depicted as models of wickedness. They are linked with Balaam and Gehazi, with whom they are listed in the Mishnah. They are learned, although not in the sense of being scholars of Torah. They use their learning to wicked ends, by inciting others to bloodshed and forbidden sexual relationships. David is clearly troubled by them and pleads that they be punished and that their punishment be public, whether by exile or unnatural death, so the people will know that they are punished. The BT likewise describes their wickedness and David's pleading against them, but there is ample evidence for these facts from the biblical text and it cannot be deduced that the compilers of the BT drew on either GenR or the Tanhuma.

Textual Analysis

As mentioned above, this *sugya* is not clearly divided into sections but is more continuous and unified in style than the previous *sugyot* I have analysed. However, there are two parts. The first begins with an exegesis of the name of Doeg. It then brings in Ahitophel. Both are exemplars of the ability to reason in Torah but also of men of wisdom who have misused their learning. David is introduced as an adversary to them both.

The second half of the *sugya* is solely concerned with David. There appears to be a transition point in the *sugya* with the narrative about David's sin with Bathsheba. The position of this

incident at the centre of the *sugya* suggests that it is a major concern of the compilers of the *sugya*, as does evidence of substantial late editing, as discussed below.²⁶

Section A. Doeg and Ahitophel

The *sugya* begins with an exegesis of Doeg's name, just as the Korach and Balaam *sugyot* began with an exegesis of the names of the main protagonists. Here, the exegesis is much briefer, a single interpretation rather than the multiple interpretations in the earlier *sugyot*.

The exegesis is followed by a series of interpretations in the name of R. Isaac of scriptural verses which are related to Doeg (A2-7). Most of these verses are from Psalms, although one is from Job and one from Isaiah. Two of the verses are from Psalm 52, which is entitled: 'For the leader. A *maskil* of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and informed Saul, telling him, "David came to Ahimelech's house"',²⁷ which makes the Psalm an obvious vehicle for elaborating on the character and deeds of Doeg.

The use of Psalms here is significant, just as the use of Job was significant in the Flood and Sodom *sugyot*. Bodendorfer has pointed out that the BT uses verses from Psalms as historical sources in connection with David.²⁸ The use of them in this way would follow from the believed authorship of the Psalms by David. In this *sugya*, they are seen as autobiographical and are used as words uttered by David in his conversations with God. Sections A8-12 devel-

26. As discussed previously, I use 'later' to refer to the later layers of the Talmud, generally described as 'Stammaitic', from approximately the fifth century onward.

27. As translated in the *Tanakh - The Holy Scriptures*, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1998, *ad loc.*

28. G. Bodendorfer, 'David der Weise Toragelehrte. Zur Funktion Davids im Babylonischen Talmud' in I. Fischer, U. Rapp & J. Schiller (eds.), *Auf den Spuren der Schriftgelehrten Weisen: Festschrift für Johannes Marböck*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York, 2003, pp. 383-397.

op the idea that Doeg was a scholar and introduces Ahitophel. A8 elaborates their scholarship. It draws on the same *baraita* as bHagigah 15b, about the flying tower, but increases the number of problems they were able to pose from three hundred to four hundred. Kalmin suggests that Rava, by posing the question, 'Is there greatness in posing problems?' seeks to diminish their stature as scholars.²⁹ He considers that Rava's statement ends at this point. However, although it is often difficult to know at what point statements end, the rest of this statement makes sense only if it is seen as a continuation of the initial question. The point is not to diminish Doeg's scholarship, but rather to assert that however great he and Ahitophel may have been as scholars, this alone did not make them great men. Rava claims that he was a greater scholar than Rav Judah, having studied the tractate Uktzin. He says of Rav Judah that when he attempted to study Uktzin he had to resort to saying, 'We see a debate between Rav and Samuel'.³⁰ Nevertheless, Rav Judah's prayers were answered more easily than those of Rava, suggesting Rav Judah was closer to God.

Uktzin was a notoriously difficult tractate, which became the focus for R. Meir's attempted shaming of R. Simeon b. Gamliel (bHorayot 13b-14a), and the reference to it here recalls this other story of scholarship becoming secondary to goodness. The contrast drawn between Rava and Rav Judah makes the point that it is intention not intelligence which makes for greatness in God's eyes, for 'The Holy One requires the heart'. The choice of proof-text, I Sam. 16:7, is not coincidental, since it is what God says to Samuel when David is chosen from among his brothers to be anointed King.

29. R. Kalmin, 'Doeg the Edomite: From Biblical Villain to Rabbinic Sage' in C.A. Evans (ed.), *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition*, Sheffield University Press, Sheffield, 2000, pp. 390-405.

30. This is Rashi's explanation of the phrase.

In sections A10-12, the main focus is on Doeg, and in particular his deterioration, which is seen as a punishment for his evildoing. Three sages offer opinions as to his loss of learning and punishment. The last, by R. Yochanan, is particularly severe. This may be a reflection of R. Yochanan's views about Christianity. Doeg was an Edomite, so the use of him as a cypher for Christianity might be expected. Yuval explores this possibility, pointing out not only the significance of the designation 'Edomite' but also other parallels. For example, in bSan. 29a David is asked in Doeg's presence, 'Does the shewbread override the sabbath?', thus linking Doeg with the story of Jesus plucking grain on the sabbath. There is also a mention in bYoma 38b of a 'Doeg son of Joseph', who is slain by his mother during the siege of Jerusalem and Doeg is a rare enough name to make this remarkable.³¹ On the other hand, the parallels between Doeg and Jesus are suggestive but not conclusive and according to Kalmin, the association of Doeg with Christianity is discernible only in traditions about Doeg found in PRK, not in the BT.³² The age at death of Doeg and Ahitophel is proved in the same way as Balaam's and, as with Balaam, the coincidence of Jesus' age is likely to be just that. Their age may also serve also as an explanation of the preceding saying, that Doeg and Ahitophel did not meet each other.

The final part of section A (13) links Ahitophel and David and so serves as a transition to section B which is entirely about David.

31. I. J. Yuval, 'Christianity in Talmud and Midrash. Parallelomania or Parallelophobia?' in F.T. Harkins (ed.), *Transforming Relations: Essays on Jews and Christians throughout History. In Honor of Michael A. Signer*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2010, pp. 50-74.

32. Kalmin, *ibid.*

Section B. King David

Most of Section B , although divided into sub-sections, is a continuous narrative about David and Bathsheba, which is constructed around the biblical account. It is partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic, and an analysis of the use of the two languages sheds light on the editing process. The text is therefore set out below in translation with the Aramaic text in bold and the Hebrew in plain text, with scriptural quotations in italics. B12 and 13 are entirely in Hebrew, except for the brief question מַגִּלָּן, so are not reproduced below. Scriptural references, given above, are omitted here for clarity.

1. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav, 'Let a man never bring himself to a test, for behold, David, King of Israel, brought himself to a test and he failed'. He said to God, 'Master of the Universe, why do they say, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" but not "The God of David"?' **He said, 'They were tested by me and you have not been tested by me'**. He said before him, 'Master of the Universe, test me and try me'. As it is said, '*Test me Eternal God and try me, etc.*'. **He said, 'I will test you and I will do one thing for you which I did not do for them. I did not make known to them [the nature of the test] but I will make known to you that I will test you in a matter of adultery'**.

2. Immediately, '*And it came to pass in the evening, and David arose from his couch, etc.*' Rav Judah said: His night-time couch turned into his day-time couch and he was unaware that it is the way of the world that there is a small part of a man that, if it is kept satisfied, it becomes hungry, and if it is kept hungry then it becomes satisfied. '*And he went on the roof of the palace and he saw a woman bathing from the roof, and the woman was very beautiful*'.

3. Bathsheba was washing her hair under a wicker screen. Satan came and appeared as a bird. He [David] shot an arrow against it and it struck the screen. She was revealed and he saw her. Immediately, *'And David sent to enquire concerning the woman. And he said, "Is this not Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" And David sent messengers and they took her and she came to him. And he lay with her, for she was clean from her impurity. And she returned to her house'.* **This is what is meant by: 'You have tested my heart, you have visited me at night, you have tried me but found nothing; I have planned that my mouth should not transgress'.** He said, **'Would that a bridle had been put in the mouth of him who hates me so that I had not spoken in this way'.**

4. Rava expounded: **What is meant by the verse:** *'To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David. I have trusted in the Eternal One. How shall I say to my soul, "Flee as a bird to your mountain?"'* David said to the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, forgive me for this sin, so that they do not say, "The mountain that is amongst you was made to flee by a bird"'.

5. Rava expounded: **What is meant by the verse:** *'Against You only have I sinned and I have done evil in Your sight, in order that You are justified in Your word and clear in Your judgment?'* David said to the Holy One, **'It is revealed and known to you that had I wished to suppress my [evil] inclination I could have done so, but I said, "Let not the servant acquire more merit than the Master"'**.

6. Rava expounded: **What is meant by the verse:** *'For I am ready for a fall, my pain is always before me'*? Bathsheba had been appointed for David since the six days of creation, but she came to him in pain, and this is what was taught by a Tanna of the House of Ishmael: Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam had been appointed for David from the six days of creation, but he enjoyed her before she was ripe.

7. Rava expounded: **What is meant by the verse:** *'In my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered; slanderers gathered against me and I did not know. They tore [at me] and were not silent'?* David said to the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, it is revealed and known to you that if they had torn my flesh, my blood would not have flowed. And not only this, but at the time when they were occupied in studying the four death penalties of the Bet Din they would break off from their studies and say to me, 'David, what is the death penalty for one who commits adultery?' I said to them, 'One who commits adultery is subject to death by strangling but he has a share in the world to come, but one who shames his fellow in public has no share in the world to come'.

8. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav: Even when David was ill he fulfilled eighteen marital duties, as it is said, 'I have worn myself out with my sighing; I drench my bed all night; I wet my pillow with my tears'.

9. Rav Judah said in the name of Rav: David sought to worship idols, as it is said, *'And David came to the top [of the mountain] where he would bow down to God'*, and 'top' can only mean idol worship, as it is said, *'And it is an image of a head of fine gold'*. *'And behold Hushai the Archite came towards David with his garment rent and earth on his head'*. He said to David, 'They will say that a king such as you worships idols!' He said, 'Should a king such as I be killed by his son? Better that I should worship idols and the Divine name not be profaned in public!' He [Hushai] said, **'What is the reason you married a beautiful woman?' He said, 'Scripture permits a beautiful woman'. He said, 'Why did you not learn from this juxtaposition, for it says "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son".** If a man marries a beautiful woman he will have a stubborn and rebellious son.'

10. R. Dostai of Beri expounded: To whom can David be compared? To a Cuthite merchant. David said to the Holy One, 'Master of the Universe, "*Who can understand his errors?*"' [God said,] '**They are forgiven**'. "*Cleanse me from hidden faults*" '**They are forgiven**'. "*Hold back your servant back from presumptuous sins*". '**They are forgiven**'. "*Let them not rule over me, then I shall be innocent*" - that they do not discuss me in the study house'. '**They are forgiven**'. "*And make me innocent of my great transgression*". - that my offence is not recorded'. He said, 'It is impossible. The letter *yod* which I removed from Sarai cried out to me in protest for many years until I added it to the name of Joshua, as it is said, "And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua". How much more so a whole paragraph!"

11. '*And make me innocent of my great transgression*'. He said before him, 'Master of the Universe, forgive me completely for this sin'. God said, 'Solomon, your son, is already destined to write in his wisdom: "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his garments not burn? If a man walks on coals, shall his feet not be scorched? If a man takes his neighbour's wife, anyone who touches her shall not be held innocent"'. **He said, 'Must I suffer so much?'** He said, 'Accept your sufferings'. He accepted them.

It will be clear that most of the Aramaic is in the early part of section B. It supplies a commentary to the Hebrew narrative, which would stand alone without it but is enriched by the details. These serve to make the narrative more vivid. They also answer questions which might be raised, for example, why was Bathsheba bathing in a way that meant she might have been seen? In contrast to my previous observation that the BT tended to be terser than parallel Palestinian sources, here there is Stammaitic elaboration of earlier material.

In the later sections, Aramaic largely represents brief editorial comments such as 'What is meant by the verse?' (מאי דכתיב). The Aramaic comments also make one-sided statements into conversation. This is striking in B10, where the only Aramaic is God's responses to David's pleas (all given as verses from Psalm 19). On the other hand, in B11, it is David's comment that is supplied in Aramaic, whilst God's reply is in Hebrew. Whilst these may represent Stammaitic editorial comments, there is far less evident Stammaitic shaping of the narrative in these sections.

The Aramaic interpolation in B9 continues the dialogue with Hushai the Archite, but his comment appears unrelated to his earlier criticism. However, by making the link between Absalom's rebellion and David's marriage to Bathsheba, it heightens the consequences of David's wrong-doing. As well, Hushai provides a contrast with Doeg and Ahitophel. He remains loyal and helps David during Absalom's rebellion, and ultimately his advice brings about the failure of Ahitophel's counsel to Absalom. In this short interpolation, Hushai is shown to be a greater scholar than David, and to use his knowledge for good, in contrast to Doeg and Ahitophel.

The section and the *sugya* conclude with the apparent vindication of David at the time of the dedication of the Temple. It is the mention of David which finally moves the gates of the Temple and so at this public and historic moment, it is made clear that David is forgiven and his enemies are shamed. However, this final paragraph by no means nullifies the ambivalent or even negative picture of David which is presented in this *sugya*.

Conclusions

The sugya in the context of Perek Helek

The *sugya* about Doeg and Ahitophel has striking structural and thematic similarities to the Korach and Balaam *sugyot* within the chapter. Structurally, all begin with exegesis of the name or names of proponents. In terms of subject matter, there are parallels between the depiction of Doeg and Balaam. Both are described as wise men who are ultimately degraded because they misuse their wisdom. Doeg loses his learning entirely; Balaam is reduced from being a prophet to being a sorcerer. Both, together with Ahitophel, die at the age of 33 or 34 because 'men of blood and deceit do not live out half their days' (Ps. 55:24). Both are consigned to oblivion, although ironically, Balaam is at the same time supposed to be the subject of exegesis ever after. There are also parallels with Korach, who, whilst not depicted as a scholar, is a man of renown and power. Moses pleads for an unusual punishment for Korach, just as David pleads for an unusual punishment for Doeg, so that it is known that they are being punished by God.

The treatment of Balaam and Doeg is more severe than that of Ahitophel. Whilst, he, too, is denied a place in the world to come, the BT does not condemn him to the same degradation in this world. This may reflect the curious status of Balaam and Doeg as non-Jews who are nevertheless wise. Whilst Balaam is not explicitly a Torah scholar Doeg is and this is puzzling given that he is an Edomite. Whilst this could be resolved by interpreting 'Edomite' as depicting his place of residence, it is more likely to reflect his origin and outsider status.³³ Both

33. B. Levine, 'The Four Private Persons Who Lost Their Share in the World to Come: The Judgment of m. Sanh. 10:2' in Nili Sacher Fox, David A. Glatt-Gilad and Michael J. Williams (eds.) *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Honour in Deuteronomy and its Cultural Environment in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay*, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake,

Balaam and Doeg can be seen as intruding on Jewish territory, and therefore being more threatening to the Jews than non-Jews who are not versed in Torah.

The *sugya* also has close parallels with the earlier *sugya* in this chapter about David, which depicts his encounter with Ishbi beNob (95a-b). This also draws on the incident of the Priests of Nob, whose slaughter Doeg was largely responsible for. Here, too, Satan plays a role by appearing as an animal so that an arrow is fired, with unintended consequences. Just as Bathsheba is depicted washing her hair, another of the incidences of hair-washing which intersperse this chapter appears in the earlier *sugya*: Avishai has a vision of David's danger whilst washing his hair. The picture of David is consistent: in both he is shamed and pleads for his life and reputation and the vanquishing of his enemies. He emerges as weak, plaintive and self-interested. The two *sugyot* are so similar in style and content that they might have been parts of a single narrative. This *sugya*, although ostensibly about Doeg and Ahitophel, is for the most part about David. This is clear from the way it is structured as well as from its content. The centre point is the sin of David with Bathsheba. This shows particularly strong evidence of Stammaitic editing. The narrative about David recalls the earlier narrative in this chapter about him and there are motifs which clearly link the two.

The Characterisation of David

The picture of David in Perek Helek is consistent with Kalmin's characterisation of the BT as being more critical of David than the PT.³⁴ The comparison that Kalmin makes *within* the BT of Babylonian and Palestinian rabbis is not always reliable, since citations are not reliable.

2009.

34. Kalmin, *The Sage in Jewish Society*, pp. 83-93.

For example, I have shown in previous chapters that citations attributed to Tannaim in other sources are sometimes attributed to both Babylonian and Palestinian Amoraim in the BT. Nevertheless, the comparisons with the PT and midrashic sources are striking, as discussed above.

Kalmin suggests that the different treatment of David in Babylonian and Palestinian Amoraic sources reflects the different positions of rabbis in society. Palestinian rabbis were a part of society, mixing with non-rabbinic Jews. Babylonian rabbis, on the other hand, were separate from other parts of society, mainly mixing with other rabbis. Palestinian sages were therefore less willing to be critical of David, who, as well as being a biblical hero, was the purported ancestor of both the Patriarch and the Messiah. Shimoff also suggests that attitudes to David in BT reflect attitudes to the Patriarch, with some comments being positive and others negative.³⁵ Yet Kalmin acknowledges that Palestinian sources were critical of the Patriarchs, especially Judah haNasi, so it is difficult to see why they would be reluctant to criticise David. It may be that, as Kalmin argues, Palestinian rabbis were less critical of rabbis in general and David, who they saw as a Torah scholar, is treated similarly.

However, there are other possibilities as to why David is exonerated in Palestinian sources. One relates to differing views of the Torah. Kalmin points out that Palestinian sources emphasise the Divine origin of the Torah much more than Babylonian sources.³⁶ If so, they may also feel the need to defend biblical characters. If the Torah was divinely given, it becomes harder to defend why characters such as David, who appear to be full of flaws, should be chosen by God. Whilst Moses may have his faults, his behaviour is not as obviously immoral

35. S.R. Shimoff, 'David and Bathsheba: The Political Function of Rabbinic Aggada', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 24, no. 2, 1993, pp. 246-256.

36. Kalmin, *The Sage in Jewish Society*, pp. 112-3.

as David's. A further reason why David might be portrayed more negatively by Babylonian scholars is because he is the ancestor of the Messiah. Although messianic speculation forms an extensive part of this chapter (93a-99a), it is accompanied by scepticism and awareness of the dangers of such speculation. For example, 'R. Samuel said in the name of R. Jonathan, "Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end"' (97b) and Ulla said, "Let the Messiah come but let me not see him"' (98b).³⁷ It may be that by presenting David as less than saintly, the BT downplays the reverence in which the Messiah, too, is held. The two possibilities are not mutually exclusive, but would serve to polarise the differences in how David is viewed.

There are passages in the BT which appear to paint David in a more positive light. However, Diamond points out the use of irony in these passages (bBerachot 4a and bPesachim 119b) to subtly undermine him.³⁸ In this *sugya*, although the portrayal of David is in any case predominantly negative, Diamond suggests irony is also used (he cites a parallel passage in bBava Metzia 59a, but his analysis applies here). In B7, David claims he is being shamed by his fellows and that this is a worse sin than adultery. Yet adultery was the ultimate shaming of another man, the husband who either could not satisfy or control his wife sexually. Thus, irony plays a part in further undermining David's character.

Portrayal of Rabbis

This *sugya* provides further examples of the rabbinisation of biblical characters, which was particularly noted in the *sugya* about Korach. Doeg and Ahitophel are great scholars. David

37. Although the saying is in the name of a Palestinian Amora, I would argue that its inclusion in the BT reflects Babylonian opinion.

38. J. Diamond, 'King David of the Sages: Rabbinic Rehabilitation or Ironic Parody?', *Prooftexts* vol. 27, no. 3, 2007, pp. 373-426.

is shamed in the Bet Din as he studies the four types of death penalty. Yet the point is made that learning alone is of no value. The study house is a place of rivalry and discord. Erudition cannot replace sincerity and compassion. The rabbis use these biblical narratives to offer a critique of their own enterprise.

In conclusion, in the previous chapters, I have found evidence of careful Stammaitic editing of earlier material to link the *sugyot* with others within Perek Helek, both structurally and thematically. There is strong evidence that the *sugya* about Doeg and Ahitophel is edited in a similar way. It is integrated into the chapter reflecting its themes and concerns as well as showing literary connections. I have also found differences from Palestinian texts, reflecting different concerns and emphases in the BT.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis I have analysed six *sugyot* in Perek Helek relating to characters and groups from mishnayot 10:2 and 10:3. I have compared the material in these *sugyot* to parallel material from other, primarily Palestinian rabbinic, sources. I have also analysed their structure and use of literary devices. My findings will be set out under three headings:

1. The *sugyot* within the context of the chapter and the links which serve to highlight certain themes.
2. Similarities and differences amongst *sugyot* which enable them to be grouped according to the biblical books they are based on.
3. Differences between the BT and the PT and other Palestinian texts which highlight unique characteristics of the BT.

1. The *Sugyot* within the Context of the Chapter

My study has shown that although the *sugyot* vary in their structure and subject matter, they are integrated into the chapter as a whole through links with each other and other parts of the chapter. Sometimes these links are between adjacent material, such as the introduction of Eliezer at the end of the Flood *sugya* leading to his more prominent role in the Sodom *sugya*. Sometimes, the links are to more distant parts of the chapter. The most frequent of these are the references throughout to David, the Davidic dynasty and the Messiah, none of which is

mentioned in the Mishnah. Discussion about the Messiah and the messianic age takes up a major part of this chapter and David is the subject of narratives in the section of the chapter relating to the Messiah and in the *sugya* about Doeg and Ahitophel. The honour due to the dynasty of David is stated in the Korach *sugya*. There are also references to his ancestors Ruth and Boaz elsewhere in the chapter (105a and 93a) which, although they might be incidental, add to a cumulative picture.

The ending of the chapter provides a different vision of the end of time from the messianic age by referring to the key for the resurrection of the dead. Again, this is linked to earlier material from the *sugyot* I have studied. The chapter ends with a story about R. Jose of Tsipporis, who is pivotal in the Sodom *sugya*, and Elijah. In the Korach *sugya* there is also a reference to the end of days, when a part of the wealth of Joseph is said to be stored up for the righteous in the future. A further part of Joseph's wealth was said to be revealed to Antoninus, who features earlier in the chapter in debates with R. Judah haNasi about the resurrection of the dead. A comparison with parallel texts suggests that the references to the future and to Antoninus are original to the BT.

These references suggest that there is deliberate editing to emphasise eschatological issues. Although this might be expected in a chapter about those who are denied a place in the world to come, the emphasis is not that of the Mishnah. The punishment of the wicked is hardly mentioned. Rather, two other concepts are explored at length at the beginning of the chapter and referred back to throughout: the resurrection of the dead and the messianic age. The latter is associated with David, who is presented critically, as a sinner who bargains like 'a Cuthite merchant' (107a). No attempt is made to exonerate him from his crime with Bathsheva. Neither is the messianic age presented as unequivocally desirable. The chapter

appears to be struggling with eschatological issues rather than presenting a hopeful vision of the future.

Other themes also emerge as important in these *sugyot*. There is concern for justice and awareness of how it can be abused, particularly in the Sodom *sugya*. The Flood *sugya* questions God's justice and explores the need for compassion. The question of God's justice and compassion is also explored in the *sugya* about Balaam, where the focus is particularly on God's compassion for Israel, although it also extends to non-Jews, as exemplified by God's forbearance of the kings who bow down to the sun.

A second major theme is concern for the status and authority of the rabbis. This is accompanied by the well-recognised phenomenon of 'rabbanisation', which is apparent in portrayal of the rabbinic academy in the *sugya* about Doeg and Ahitophel. Rabbinic authority is explored especially in the *sugya* about Korach, where Korach is portrayed as the ultimate 'anti-rabbi', in opposition to Moses, the ultimate rabbi, *Moshe Rabbenu*. There is emphasis on the duty of students to respect their teacher, a duty that is dramatised in a story earlier in the *sugya* about R. Yochanan and his student. Rabbinic debate and the ability to argue are valued, as portrayed in the way that Doeg and Ahitophel are portrayed as great scholars. This ability is also exhibited, less explicitly, in the undermining of the rule of Sodom by the orphan who tends the oxen and by Eliezer, who turn the laws of Sodom on their head.

Neither of these themes is unique to Perek Helek. Indeed, both are at the heart of the BT. In many ways, the BT's enterprise is an exploration of the question 'What is just?' and so justice in Perek Helek cannot be separated from justice in the whole of the BT. Likewise, much of the BT explores the authority of the rabbis and their right to make judgements. Their rela-

tionship with their students is part of this exploration, as the students learn and develop the right to question for themselves.

What is perhaps more remarkable is that in the *sugyot* under discussion, justice and authority are not straightforward. The Sodom *sugya*, I have suggested, satirises the abuse of justice. 'Justice' is meted out by means that appear logical and reasoned. The *sugya* therefore also satirises the rabbinic enterprise, which has the potential for allowing dialectic to reach unjust conclusions. In the Korach *sugya*, the criticism given in the words of Korach's wife also demonstrates a rabbinic self-awareness that understands the potential for halachah and Jewish ritual to be viewed as absurd. In Doeg, Ahitophel and Balaam, we see characters who are skilled in dialectic and have great and esoteric knowledge, yet use their abilities to harm others, leading ultimately to their self-destruction.

This tendency for self-awareness and self-mockery has been described previously. Boyarin has written about how the juxtaposition of halachah and aggadah presents stories which undermine the seriousness of the rabbinic enterprise.¹ He compares this to the Greek *spoudogeloion*, serio-comic, the placing together of the serious and the mocking. Although the use of self-parody did not originate with the BT it is developed there.² The picture Boyarin presents of the rabbis questioning their own enterprise is convincing, as is the evidence that the BT develops the forms of parody and Menippean satire and takes them to greater length than the PT. The *sugyot* I have studied exhibit the serio-comic character which Boyarin describes, as will be discussed further below. They are deeply serious in their exploration of

1. D. Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009.

2. H. M. Zellentin, *Rabbinic Parodies of Jewish and Christian Literature*, Mohr Siebeck, Tuebingen, 2011.

justice and authority, but at the same time recognise and warn of the dangers of claiming authority and asserting justice without appropriate humility and compassion.

2. Similarities and Differences amongst *Sugyot*

The *sugyot* I have studied fall into different groups according to the way they are structured and their concerns. The grouping falls across different *mishnayot*:

a) *Genesis group*: the Generation of the Flood, the Men of Sodom and the Generation of the Dispersion (Tower of Babel) (Mishnah 10:3). The similarity is most apparent between the Flood and Sodom *sugyot*. They appear to build on the halachic midrashim and tSotah which expound the '*middah keneged middah*' principle and draw on the book of Job for exegesis. There is a clear midrashic section mostly in Hebrew followed by a narrative section, which is almost entirely in Aramaic. The midrashic section includes earlier, Palestinian material. I conclude that the narrative section is likely to be Stammaitic on the basis of criteria set out by Rubenstein and Friedman.³ As well as being in Aramaic, both have vivid narratives, which are not based on Scripture but appear to be original to the BT. There is considerable manuscript variation in the Sodom *sugya*, though less so in that on the Flood. There is also reference to proximate material, noticeably the inclusion of Eliezer in both narratives, but also R. Jose of Tsiptoris in the Sodom *sugya*, who reappears at the end of the chapter.

The *sugya* about the Generation of the Dispersion is much briefer, and appears to be an interpolation between the two other *sugyot*. There is no parallel source in the PT. It is not clearly

3. J. Rubenstein, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggadah,' in *Creation and Composition*, pp. 417-440; S. Friedman, *Sugyot be-heker hatalmud habavli*, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 2010; D. HaLivni, Introduction to *הוריות זרה, עבודה זרה, מכות, שבועות, מסכתות סנהדרין, ביארים ללמנו*. מקורות ומסורות. ביארים ללמנו, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2012.

divisible into a 'midrashic' and 'narrative' section, although it does have a concluding section mainly in Aramaic, which may be Stammaitic. Although the Tower of Babel is included with the Generation of the Flood and Sodom in the halachic midrashim and tSotah, this material has no parallel in the BT. However, the Genesis *sugyot* do appear to form a group since each represents one of the three cardinal sins: forbidden sexual relationships in the Generation of the Flood; murder in Sodom and idolatry in the Generation of the Dispersion. Together, these three committed the three most serious sins, each of which was considered so grave that a person should die rather than commit them (San. 74a). These would therefore be seen as reason enough for the groups to be denied a place in the world to come, and in emphasising these particular sins, the BT provides an explanation for the groups' exclusion.

The two major Genesis *sugyot* both explore the nature of justice. In the case of the Flood, there is a questioning of God's justice in destroying innocent creatures alongside the wicked, which is resolved in presenting expressions of God's compassion alongside the destruction. In the case of Sodom, the main theme is the perversion of justice. The *sugya* demonstrates how the strict application of justice (*middat Sedom*) can lead to injustice, cruelty and oppression. This is contrasted with the compassion of the young girl in the final episode of the *sugya*. Both *sugyot*, by drawing on the book of Job, suggest the question of theodicy. Both appear ultimately affirmative of God's justice, although this is not made explicit.

b) *Numbers group*: the Congregation of Korach and Balaam (Mishnayot 10:3 and 10:2). The structure and subject-matter of these two *sugyot* is less well defined than that of the Genesis *sugyot*. However, they have in common that they begin with an exegesis of names and end with incidents which attempt to concretise the events and characters involved: Rabba bar Bar Hannah was shown the crack in the earth where the sons of Korach could be heard and R.

Hanina met a heretic who had found Balaam's notebook. Thus, the two have structural similarities with each other and differ in structure from the Genesis *sugyot*.

The Numbers *sugyot* also differ in their subject matter from the Genesis *sugyot*. The Korach *sugya* emphasises the importance of rabbinic authority and power. Korach's wickedness is epitomised in his opposition to 'Moshe Rabbenu' and a section of the *sugya* is devoted to comparing opposition to one's teacher to opposition to God. This theme is not so apparent in the Balaam *sugya* but it does address the misuse of wisdom and learning which are a feature of the abuse of rabbinic authority.

c) *Doeg and Ahitophel* (Mishnah 10:2). This has some similarities with the Numbers group in that it begins with an exegesis of names; there are parallels between the treatment of Balaam and Doeg, who are both consigned to utter destruction, and the *baraita* stating that 'Men of blood and deceit do not live out half their days' is quoted concerning both Balaam and Doeg and Ahitophel. However, it differs from all the other *sugyot* in structure. It does not have any distinct section which is entirely in Aramaic and appears to be uniformly Stammaitic. Rather, the major part of the *sugya* is the reworking of the story of David and Bathsheva, which shows evidence of Stammaitic additions to an Amoraic passage. This *sugya* is most similar to an earlier *sugya* about David in the chapter, bSan. 95a-b and there are motifs in common.

Thus, the *sugyot* I have studied fall into different groups according to the biblical material that they are based on. This grouping occurs across mishnayot, so that the Korach *sugya* is more similar to the Balaam *sugya* than the other *sugyot* relating to the same mishnah (10:3). Equally, the Balaam *sugya* is different from the *sugya* on Doeg and Ahitophel relating to Mishnah 10:2.

The fact that the groupings are not according to the Mishnah suggests that the source material and content play a greater part in the process of editing than which mishnah they will be attached to.

The different groups may have been edited at different places and times, although this is speculative. At the very least it is likely that the *sugyot* within a group were edited together. This builds on previous work which makes it clear that the 'Stammaim' were not a single group working at one time. Kalmin and Rovner have shown that evidence of editing the early Amoraic text can already be found later in the Amoraic period.⁴ Rovner suggests that there is an 'early Stam' who edits individual stories and a 'late Stam' who brings the stories together.⁵ Boyarin argued that there were at least two groups of Stammaim: the 'Stamma of the *sugya*' who sets out the 'serious' and a 'counter-voice that *dialogizes* the *sugya*'.⁶ In his more recent work, Halivni has suggested that there were three stages in the post-Amoraic editing of the BT: the Stammaim, whose work he has previously described; the Saboraim, whose editing role was limited and the Me-asafim who brought together the various parts of the BT, which had been edited in diverse places, and created a unified work.⁷ The term Stammaim has therefore come to cover a variety of functions, among them the editing of the Amoraic text from the mid- to late Amoraic period onward; the production of the rich and flowing Stam-

4. R. Kalmin *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994, pp. 169-173; J. Rovner, 'Pseudepigraphic Invention and Diachronic Stratification in the Stammaitic Component of the Bavli: The Case of Sukkah 28', *Hebrew Union College Annual* vol. 68, 1997, pp. 11-62; 'Metasystemic and Structural Indicators of Late-Stage Babylonian Stammaitic Compositions', *Oqimta (e-journal)* vol. 1, 2013, pp. 369-419.

5. J. Rovner, "'Rav Assi had this old Mother:" The Structure, Meaning and Formation of a Talmudic Story' in J.L. Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition. The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tuebingen, 2005, pp. 101-124.

6. D. Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbin*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009, p. 202.

7. D. Halivni, *מקורות ומסורות. ביאורים ללחמיה. מסכת בבא בתרא*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2008, p.52; *מקורות ומסורות*, p.א'.סנהדרין

maitic layer in Aramaic; the dialogic voice and the final 'gatherers' of the BT, a role which has now been given the term Me-asafim by Halivni. Some of these roles e.g. those described by Halivni, are viewed as historic, others in literary terms, notably those described by Boyarin.

My findings also suggest that there is more than one Stammaitic role. There is evidence of Stammaitic editing within each *sugya*, fitting the criteria described above. However, the pattern of editing differs within each of the groups I have described. After this stage, the different groups of *sugyot* are brought together within a chapter and edited by alterations and insertions which link them together to emphasise common motifs and themes. Thus, there is at least a two-stage process: the editing within *sugyot* and the bringing together of different *sugyot* within a chapter. The second stage does not have an exact counterpart in the roles previously described by other authors, although it may relate to Halivni's 'Me-asafim'. He describes this role as applying to the whole Talmud, but a similar role would be needed to bring together material for each chapter and tractate. My preliminary findings suggest that it is not the Mishnah which affects this initial stage, but rather the original material, which is later placed with the appropriate mishnah. Further work is needed to substantiate this hypothesis, but this approach seems to be worth exploring.

3. Differences between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds

Certain characteristics of the BT emerge when compared to the Palestinian Talmud and other Palestinian texts.

a) Stories and sayings which are found in Palestinian texts such as GenR are often more concise in the BT. For example, the story at the end of the Sodom *sugya* about the girl who gave

bread is much briefer and omits human details such as her conversation with the person she feeds. The *baraita* about the two dogs in the Balaam *sugya* is briefer than its counterpart in Sifre Mattot, giving only the essential details.

b) By contrast, the BT tells vivid and imaginative stories which have no counterpart elsewhere, even when they draw on earlier material. They exhibit the trend noted by Levinson to move away from the biblical text in favour of story-telling.⁸ These stories are likely to be Stammaitic. Thus, the story of the feeding of the animals in the Ark brings together original elements, such as the legend of the phoenix, which have no place in the biblical text. The narrative technique of the final section of the Flood *sugya* is particularly complex. To use the terminology of Bal, there are four stories in this section, each relating a different fabula, and there are stories within stories. The telling of the inner stories in the first person makes them more immediate. Finally, there is the fabula of Nachum of Gimzo which is narrated to highlight the drama.

Even when elements of stories are present in earlier sources, they are re-worked using sophisticated literary techniques. This is notable in the climax of the Sodom *sugya*, where the story of the young girl, which is found in GenR, is altered and appended to produce a dramatic climax. The narrative part of this *sugya* alternates comic episodes (the party) and disturbing episodes (the poor given coins instead of bread). Analysis of manuscripts of this *sugya* shows variation in the order of episodes, which may be evidence of a process of literary refining leading to the final order which brings the most light-hearted episode to just before the climax.

8. J. Levinson, *הסיפור שלא סופר. אמנות הסיפור המקראי המורחב במדרשי חז"ל* (*The Twice Told Tale. A Poetics of Exegetical Narrative in Rabbinic Midrash*), Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2005, pp. 275ff.

The stories are particularly vivid in the Genesis *sugyot*. However, they are also original and carefully crafted in the other *sugyot*. Thus, the contrasting of the wives of Korach and On draws on earlier material but shapes it to make an additional point, about the power of women. The stories at the end of the Korach and Balaam *sugyot* are imaginative in bringing the stories to a present reality.

c) The content of the *sugya* in the BT is often quite different from the corresponding *sugya* in the PT. This is not solely because the gemara in the BT is generally much longer than the corresponding gemara in the PT, although the length of the gemara is notable in itself. Rather, the PT focuses on different subjects. This is particularly evident in the *sugyot* on Korach, Balaam, Doeg and Ahitophel. The PT has relatively little about Korach (although there is parallel material elsewhere in the chapter), and none of the material is about rabbis and their students or about respect for the dynasty of David. The PT *sugya* about Balaam is primarily about the worship of Baal Peor and has very little about Balaam himself. On the other hand, the *sugya* in the PT about Doeg and Ahitophel does concentrate on them, in contrast to the BT, in which half the *sugya* is about King David.

One difference that is common to several *sugyot* is that the both the Tosefta and the PT seem more concerned with punishment in the World to Come. The Tosefta for all the groups in mishnah 10:2 adds the words 'will not live in the World to Come'. The PT on each adds the words 'Will not see the future to come'. As discussed in Chapter 2, this may reflect divergent beliefs about life after death in the Tannaitic period. The PT is also more graphic in the gemara about the Generation of the Flood, where it describes the torments that await the wicked. Although Gehinnom and the World to Come are described elsewhere in the BT, in Perek Helek this is not a concern.

The possible reasons for these discrepancies are likely to reflect different situations at the time of editing - in Palestine up to the 4th century and Babylonia from the 5th century onwards. However, they reflect only a small sample of text, so at this stage it is possible only to make some preliminary suggestions. The greater emphasis on the afterlife in the Tosefta and PT may reflect the tendency in the early period following the Hadrianic persecutions to look to the world to come as an answer to suffering in this world. The Tosefta and PT developed in an environment that was predominantly Christian and therefore may have been influenced by Christianity in working out their own responses to questions of reward and punishment and life after death. There were different views of judgement after death, and this is reflected in the Palestinian texts.⁹ The BT is also concerned with the question of reward and punishment, but with distance in time from the Roman persecutions and a relatively secure environment these concerns seem to have diminished.

The focus of the BT on David rather than Doeg and Ahitophel reflects the Davidic theme which runs through Perek Helek, as discussed above. The focus of the PT on the worship of Baal Peor is curious, and may represent a polemic against pagan idolatry, reflecting the Roman environment. In contrast, statues were not generally a feature of life in Babylonia following the Sasanian conquest, when idols were destroyed, and idolatry was therefore less of a concern.¹⁰

9. C. Milikowsky, 'Gehenna and "Sinners of Israel" in the Light of Seder Olam', *Tarbiz* vol. 55, 1986, pp. 311-342 (Hebr.); J. Neusner, 'Death and Afterlife in the Later Rabbinic Sources: the Two Talmuds and associated Midrash-compilations' in A. J. Avery Peck, & J. Neusner (eds.), *Judaism in Late Antiquity*, vol. 4, Brill, Leiden. Boston. Köln, 2000, pp. 267-292.

10. R. Kalmin, *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006, pp. 103-120, 173ff.

d) A further feature of the *sugyot* which distinguishes the BT from the PT is what Rosen-Zvi has termed 'hypersexualisation'.¹¹ This can be seen particularly in the *sugyot* about the Flood and Balam, whereas sexuality does not feature in the corresponding sections of the PT. In the Balaam *sugya*, sexuality is associated with magic, in a dangerous combination. In both, bizarre sexual proclivities are described, particularly mating between species. A further example is in the sexual prowess of King David, who is said to have fulfilled eighteen 'marital duties'. Here, the context of the *sugya* suggests that David's prowess is viewed ironically. He is wearied by his duties, yet he cannot control his lust and is unaware of how his lust controls him. Not only does he commit adultery, but, the BT informs us, he does not realise that 'it is the way of the world that there is a small part of a man that, if it is kept satisfied, it becomes hungry, and if it is kept hungry then it becomes satisfied'. Given the self-mocking nature of much of the material I have analysed, this, too, may represent self-mocking by the rabbis who are aware of the both the attractiveness and the danger of the sexual impulse.

e) Dialectic and intellectual ability are prized and respect for rabbis is emphasised. Yet, at the same time, these are mocked and undermined. This can be seen in various ways throughout the *sugyot* presented here. The second half of the *sugya* about Sodom, I have suggested, is an extended satire on the dangers of legislating according to strict logic whilst ignoring the fundamental principle of compassion. Talmudic legal language is used to expound the laws, but also put in the mouth of the orphan who subverts them. The poor and the orphan understand better than the legislators how the law should be used.

11. I. Rosen-Zvi, 'Hyper-Sexualization in the Bavli: An Initial Survey' in L. Teugels & R. Ulmer (eds.), *Midrash and the Exegetical Mind*, Gorgias Press, Piscataway NJ, 2010, pp. 181-205.

The *sugya* about Korach also demonstrates an awareness of the apparent absurdity of halachah, this time ritual law as exemplified by *techelet*, the blue fringes on the tallit. Moses, although seen as the archetypal rabbi, is nevertheless open to suspicion of adultery, thus undermining his portrayal.

Doeg and Ahitophel are depicted as great masters of dialectic, able to argue hundreds of laws about the flying tower, an obscure halachic problem. They are caricatures of scholars, who are able to reason to great lengths about a purely theoretical issue. This contrasts with the PT, where Ahitophel's knowledge has a practical application. Yet for all their ability, they have no place in the World to Come because they forgot God and behaved wickedly. In fact, the fate that awaits scholars who go astray is even more conclusive, since the three kings who are denied a place in the world to come are also all depicted as scholars (bSan. 103b). Thus, apart from Gehazi, all the individuals who are listed in mishnah 10:3 are depicted as having great, indeed exaggerated, prowess, and even Gehazi is depicted as a rabbinic disciple. This must surely be a decisive warning that scholarship is not enough. Indeed, it imposes greater responsibility. Rather than scholarship for its own sake, 'God requires the heart' (bSan. 106b).

The rabbis of the BT thus use satire and irony to undermine their own enterprise. This is most evident in the Stammaitic layers of the text. It seems that as dialectic ability received greater emphasis in the rabbinic academies, there came a greater awareness of its dangers. This is seen in the greater emphasis in Stammaitic texts on the dangers of shaming one's fellow.¹² It is also evident in the *sugyot* in Perek Helek that demonstrate that dialectic ability is no guarantee of a place in the world to come. Self-awareness and self-mocking are pervasive.

12. J. Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories. Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, London, 1999, pp. 243, 272-7.

At the same time, the BT is polemical against opponents of the rabbis, as exemplified by Korach and earlier in the chapter the various categories of heretic who oppose what the rabbis considered essential Jewish beliefs. It juxtaposes self-justification and self-criticism. Although Perek Helek is aggadic, it demonstrates the 'serio-comic' nature of the BT which Boyarin explores, which at the same time explores halachah as a serious enterprise and uses the comic to undermine and raise questions about that enterprise.

These *sugyot* are entirely aggadic, but Boyarin himself points out that halachah is not necessarily serious, nor aggadah always comic.¹³ In these *sugyot*, the serious and the comic appear side by side in aggadah. More often than this, they are combined into the 'seriously playful', so that a comic story has a serious message. Again, this is most obvious in the Sodom *sugya*, in the description of the judicial system in Sodom. Whilst it is satirical and mocking, it depicts the (literally) deadly consequences of such a system.

In this thesis, I have begun to explore how Perek Helek uses earlier sources to create an original work of literature, and what particularly Babylonian characteristics that literature has. Within the confines of the thesis, I have been able to explore only a section of the chapter and the conclusions I draw must necessarily be limited. My work suggests that further exploration of the chapter using similar methods would help to substantiate my findings and illuminate further the nature of the Babylonian rabbinic enterprise.

In summary, my study of this section of the chapter presents some original conclusions. It suggests that disparate elements are brought together within a chapter and linked by common threads. These linking motifs are in parts of the *sugyot* I identify as Stammaitic. The *sugyot* are not all edited in a uniform way, but rather in groups according to the material they are

13. Boyarin, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, p. 186.

based on, independent of the mishnah they become attached to. A further stage in the editing brings them together in a unified chapter. Thus, what appears to be a random patchwork quilt has a clearly planned pattern. An analysis of the entire chapter would be needed to assess fully how far the disparate elements are brought together and to what effect, but on basis of this section, there is strong evidence that there is such editing. Little work has been done on contiguous *sugyot* in a single chapter of the BT and my thesis begins to address this.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Rabbinic Sources

Manuscripts

Babylonian Talmud

Florence, National Library III 7-9.

Karlsruhe, Library of Johannes Reuchlin, Badische Hof- und Landsbibliothek, Reuchlin 2: Sanh.

Munich Cod. Hebr. 95 of the State Library at Munich Cod. Hebr. 95.

Jerusalem, Yad Harav Herzog - 1.

Mishnah

Budapest Akademia - Kaufmann A-50

Cambridge University Library, TS - T-S E2.75

Parma Biblioteca Palatina - 3173

Manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud and Mishnah consulted on the web-site of the National Library of Israel (<http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud/bavly/>) and *Dikdukei Sofrim* (see below).

Printed Editions

Babylonian Talmud: Sanhedrin edn. Romm Vilna, various printings.

Babylonian Talmud: Sanhedrin, ed. Isidore Epstein with a translation by H.Freedman, Soncino Press, London, 1935.

Masekhet Avot de-Rabi Natan, ed. S. Schechter, Feldheim, New York, 1967.

Mekhilta d'Rabbi Ismael cum variis lectionibus et adnotationibus, Bamberger and Wahrman, Jerusalem, 1960, ed. HS Horovitz, and IA Rabin, Bamberger and Wahrman, Jerusalem, 1960

Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, ed. D Nelson, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 2006.

Midrash Bemidbar Rabbah, ed. AM Mirkin, Yavneh, Tel Aviv, 1964

Midrash Aychah Rabbah, ed. S. Buber, Vilna 1899

- Midrash Rabbah Genesis*, ed. Theodor-Albeck, Shalem Books, Jerusalem, 1996.
- Midrash Tanhuma (Buber recension)* ed. Solomon Buber, Ortsel, Jerusalem, 1964
- Midrash Tanhuma* Merkaz Ha-Sefer, Jerusalem, 1986/7
- Midrash Tanhuma*, ed. C Zondel, Warsaw, 1879
- Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah*, ed. M Margulies, American Academy for Jewish Research, Jerusalem, 1956.
- Mishnah*, edn. Romm Vilna, reprinted Jerusalem, 1978
- Sifra de-ve Rav*, ed. L Finkelstein, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1983.
- Siphre d'be Rab*, ed. HS Horovitz, Wahrman Books, Jerusalem, 1966.
- Synopse zum Talmud Yerushalmi*, ed. P Schäfer and H-J Becker, JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 1995.
- Tanakh - The Holy Scriptures*, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1998.
- Tosephta. Based on the Erfurt and Vienna Codices with parallels and variants*, ed. MS Zuckerman, 2nd edn., Bamberger and Wahrman, Jerusalem, 1937.
- Tosefta according to the Vienna Manuscript*, ed. S Lieberman, The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1973.

Reference Works

- Gray, M, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2nd edn., Longman York Press, Harlow, 1992.
- Hyman, A, ספר תורה הכתובה והמסורה על תורה נביאים וכתובים, D'vir, Tel Aviv, 1979, (3vols.)
- Jastrow, M, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, Pardes Publishing House, New York, 1950.
- Jones, A, *Larousse Dictionary of World Folklore*, Larousse, Edinburgh, 1995
- Rabinovitz, S, *Dikdukei Sofrim*, New York, 1976.
- Sokoloff, M, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods*, Bar Ilan University Press, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Ramat Gan, Baltimore, 2002.

Secondary and other Sources

Agus, IA, 'Ginze Talmud Babli', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 68, no. 2, 1977, pp. 123-126.

Albeck, C, מבווא לתלמודים, D'vir, Tel Aviv, 1969.

Alexander, ES, 'The Orality of Rabbinic Writing' in CE Fonrobert, and MS Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 38-57.

Alexander, P, 'Why no Textual Criticism in Rabbinic Midrash? Reflections on the Textual Culture of the Rabbis' in GJ Brooke (ed.), *Jewish Ways of Reading the Bible*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, pp. 175-190.

Alexander, P, 'The Etymology of Proper Names as an Exegetical Device in Rabbinic Literature', *Studia Philonica Annual* vol. 16, 2004, pp. 169-187.

Alexander, P, 'The Rabbis and Messianism' in M Bockmühl, and JC Paget (eds.), *Redemption and Resistance: The Messianic Hopes of Jews and Christians in Antiquity*, Tandt Clark, London, 2007, pp. 1-24.

Alexander, P, 'Using Rabbinic Literature as a Source for the History of Late-Roman Palestine: Problems and Issues.' in M Goodman, and P Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 7-24.

Avioz, M, 'Josephus' Portrayal of Lot and his Family', *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* vol. 16, no. 1, 2006, pp. 3-13.

Bakhos, C, 'Method(ological) Matters in the Study of Midrash' in C Bakhos (ed.), *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2006, pp. 161-187.

Bakhos, C, 'Recent Trends in the Study of Midrash and Rabbinic Narrative', *Currents in Biblical Research* vol. 7, no. 2, 2009, pp. 272-293.

Bakhos, C, and MR Shayegan (eds), *The Talmud in Its Iranian Context*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2010.

Bal, M, *Narratology. Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto Buffalo London, 1985.

Baskin, J, *Pharaoh's Counsellors: Job, Jethro and Balaam in Rabbinic and Patristic Tradition*, Scholars Press, Chicago, 1983.

Bauman, R, *Crime and Punishment in Ancient Rome*, Routledge, London, New York, 1996.

Baumgarten, JM, 'Form Criticism and the Oral Law', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 5, no. 1, 1970, pp. 34-40.

Becker, AH, 'Positing a "Cultural Relationship" between Plato and the Babylonian Talmud', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 101, no. 2, 2011, pp. 255-269.

Beit Arie, M, 'Publication and Reproduction of Literary Texts in Medieval Jewish Civilization: Jewish Scriability and Its Impact on the Texts Transmitted' in Y Elman, and I Gershoni (eds.), *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality and Cultural Diffusion*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2000, pp. 225-247.

Ben-Amos, D, 'Generic Distinctions in the Aggadah' in F Talmage (ed.), *Studies in Jewish Folklore*, Association for Jewish Studies, Cambridge, MA, 1980, pp. 45-71

Biale, D, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History*, Schocken Books, New York, 1986.

Bloch, R, 'Methodological Note for the Study of Rabbinic Literature' in WS Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Theory and Practice*, Scholars Press, Missoula Montana, 1978, pp. 51-75.

Bodendorfer, G, 'David der weise Toragelehrte: Zur Funktion Davids im Babylonischen Talmud' in I Fischer, U Rapp, and J Schiller (eds.), *Auf den Spuren der schriftgelehrten Weisen: Festschrift für Johannes Marböck*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York, 2003, pp. 383-397.

Bohak, G, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008.

Bokser, BM, 'Talmudic Form Criticism', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 31, no. 1, 1980, pp. 46-60.

Boyarin, D, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1990.

Boyarin, D, *Carnal Israel*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1993.

Boyarin, D, 'המדרש והמעשה: על החקר ההיסטורי של ספרות חז"ל' in S Friedman (ed.), *ספר הזכרון*, לרבי שאול ליברמן, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, Jerusalem, 1993, pp. 105-117.

Boyarin, D, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1999.

Boyarin, D, *Sparks of the Logos: Essays in Rabbinic Hermeneutics*, Brill, Leiden, 2003.

Boyarin, D, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2004.

Boyarin, D, 'The Yavneh-Cycle of the Stammaim and the Invention of the Rabbis' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 237-289.

Boyarin, D, 'Hellenism in Jewish Palestine' in CE Fonrobert, and MS Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge, 2007, pp.

336-363.

Boyarin, D, 'The Talmud as Fat Rabbi: A Novel Approach', *Text and Talk* vol. 28, no. 5, 2008, pp. 603-619.

Boyarin, D, 'Patron Saint of the Incongruous: Rabbi Me'ir, the Talmud, and Menippean Satire', *Critical Inquiry* vol. 35, no. 3, 2009, pp. 523-551.

Boyarin, D, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2009.

Bregman, M, *The Tanhuma-Yelammedenu Literature. Studies in the Evolution of the Versions.*, Gorgias Press, Piscataway, NJ, 2003.

Breuer, Y, 'On the Hebrew Dialect of the *Amora'im* in the Babylonian Talmud', *Scripta Hierosolymitana* vol. 37, 1998, pp. 129-150.

Breuer, Y, 'Aramaic in Late Antiquity' in ST Katz (ed.), *Cambridge History of Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, pp. 457-491.

Brody, R, 'Judaism in the Sasanian Empire: A Case Study in Religious Coexistence', *Irano-Judaica* vol. 2, 1990, pp. 52-62.

Brody, R, *The Geonim of Babylonia and the Shaping of Medieval Jewish Culture*, Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 1998.

Brody, R, 'The Epistle of Sherira Gaon' in M Goodman, and P Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 253-264.

Brown, R, 'Tracing Oral Elements in Genesis Rabbah' in F Talmage (ed.), *Studies in Jewish Folklore*, Association for Jewish Studies, Cambridge, MA, 1980, pp. 109-115.

Chernick, M, 'Introduction' in M Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 3-23.

Chernick, M, 'Contemporary Talmudic Studies: The Continuing Agenda' in AJA Peck (ed.), *Vol. 4. The Literature of Early Rabbinic Judaism: Issues in Talmudic Redaction and Interpretation*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York, London, 1989, pp. 73-80.

Cohen, A, *Rereading Talmud: Gender, Law and the Poetics of the Sugya*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1998.

Cohen, A, 'Non-chronological Sugyot in the Babylonian Talmud: The Case of Baba Qamma 41a', *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* vol. 9, 2006, pp. 75-91.

Cohen, BS, '"In Nehardea Where There are No Heretics": The Purported Jewish Response to Christianity in Nehardea (a Re-examination of the Talmudic Evidence)' in D Jaffé (ed.), *Studies in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity. Text and Context*, Brill, Leiden, 2010, pp. 29-44.

Cohen, SJD, 'The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature', *Brown Judaic Studies* 326, Providence, Rhode Island, 2000.

Cohen, SJD, 'Parallel Historical Tradition in Josephus and Rabbinic Literature', *Proceedings of the 9th World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Div. B Vol. 1, 1986, pp. 7-14.

DeVries, B, *מחקרים בספרות התלמוד*, Mossad haRav Kook, Jerusalem, 1968.

Diamond, J, 'King David of the Sages: Rabbinic Rehabilitation or Ironic Parody?', *Prooftexts* vol. 27, no. 3, 2007, pp. 373-426.

Dimant, D, 'Noah in Early Jewish Literature' in ME Stone, and TA Bergren (eds.), *Biblical Figures outside the Bible*, Trinity Press International, Harrisburg, PA, 1998, pp. 123-150.

Dor, Z, *Torat Yisrael Be-Bavel*, D'vir, Tel Aviv, 1971.

Draper, JA, '"Korah" and the Second Temple' in W Horbury (ed.), *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, 1991,

Eagleton, T, *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983.

Einhorn, DM, 'Sanhedrin 93a and the Third Chapter of Daniel', *CCAR Journal* vol. 16, no. 2, 1969, pp. 24-25.

Elman, Y, *Authority and Tradition: Toseftan Baraitot in Talmudic Babylonia*, Yeshiva University Press, Ktav, New York, New Jersey, 1994.

Elman, Y, 'Righteousness as its own Reward: An Inquiry into the Theology of the Stam', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, vol. 57, 1991, pp. 35-67.

Elman, Y, 'How Should a Talmudic Intellectual History be Written? A Response to David Kraemer's Response', *Jewish Quarterly Review of Near-Eastern Studies* vol. 89, no. 3-4, 1999, pp. 361-386.

Elman, Y, 'The World of the "Saboraim"': Cultural Aspects of Post-Redactional Additions to the Bavli.' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 383-415.

Elman, Y, 'Middle Persian Culture and Babylonian Sages: Accommodation and Resistance in the Shaping of Rabbinic Legal Tradition.' in CE Fonrobert, and MS Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 165-197.

Elman, Y, and I Gershoni, 'Transmitting Tradition: Orality and Textuality in Jewish Cultures' in Y Elman, and I Gershoni (eds.), *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality and Cultural Diffusion*, Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 2000, pp. 1-25.

Evans, CA, 'Mishnah and Messiah "in Context"; Some Comments on Jacob Neusner's

Proposals', *Journal of Biblical Literature* vol. 112, no. 2, 1993, pp. 267-289.

Feldblum, MS, 'The Talmud: Abraham Weiss' s Views' in M Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, pp. 88-126.

Finkelstein, L, 'The Sources of the Tannaitic Midrashim', *Jewish Quarterly Review of Near-Eastern Studies* vol. 31, 1941, pp. 211-243.

Finkelstein, L, מבוא למסכתות אבות ואבות דרבי נתן, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1950.

Fishbane, M, *The Exegetical Imagination: on Jewish Thought and Theology*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, 1998.

Fishbane, M, 'Anthological Midrash and Cultural Paideia: the Case of Songs Rabba 1:2' in P Ochs and N Levene (ed.), *Textual Reasonings*, SCM Press, London, 2002, pp. 32-51.

Fishbane, M, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003.

Fishbane, S, *Deviancy in Early Rabbinic Literature*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2007.

Fishman, T, *Becoming the People of the Talmud*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2011.

Fonrobert, CE, and MS Jaffee, *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007.

Fraenkel, Y, 'שאלות הרמוניות בחקר ספרות-האגדה', *Tarbiz* vol. 47, 1978, pp. 139-172.

Fraenkel, Y, 'האגדה שבמשמה' in Y Sussman, and D Rosenthal (eds.), מחקרי תלמוד; קובץ מחקרים, בתלמוד ובתחומים גובלים. כך ג: מוקדש לזכרו של פרופ' אפרים א' אורבך. כר' א-ב, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 1990, pp. 655-681.

Friedman, S, 'A Talmudic Fragment of the Gaonic Type', *Tarbiz* vol. 51, no. 1, 1982, pp. 37-48.

Friedman, S, 'לאגדה ההסטורית בתלמוד הבבלי' in S Friedman (ed.), ספר הזכרון לרבי שאול ליברמן, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1993, pp. 119-164.

Friedman, S, 'הסוגיה ומרכביה' in תלמוד ערוך: השוכר את האומנים Pt. I, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1996, pp. 7-23.

Friedman, S, 'Uncovering Literary Dependencies in the Talmudic Corpus' in SJD Cohen (ed.), *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature*, Brown University, Providence RI, 2000, pp. 35-57.

Friedman, S, 'הברייתות בתלמוד הבבלי ויחסן למקבילותיהן שבתוספתא' in S Friedman, M Schmeltzner and M Hirschman (eds.), עטרה לחיים: מחקרים בספרות התלמודית והרבנית לכבוד פרופסור חיים זלמן,

דימיטרובסקי, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2000, pp. 163-201.

Friedman, S, 'A Good Story Deserves Retelling. The Unfolding of the Akiva Legend' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammam) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 71-100.

Friedman, S, סוגיות בחקר התלמוד הבבלי, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 2010.

Gafni, I, 'Rethinking Talmudic History: the Challenge of Literary and Redaction Criticism', *Jewish History* vol. 25, 2011, pp. 355-375.

Gafni, I, 'Expressions and Types of "Local Patriotism" among the Jews of Sasanian Babylonia', *Irano-Judaica* vol. II, 1990, pp. 63-71.

Gafni, I, *The Jews of Babylonia in the Age of the Talmud*, Mercas Zalman Shazar, Jerusalem, 1990.

Gafni, I, יהודי בבל בתקופת התלמוד, Mercas Zalman Shazar, Jerusalem, 1990.

Gafni, I, 'Rabbinic Historiography and Representation' in CE Fonrobert, and MS Jaffee (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 295-312.

Gafni, I, 'The Modern Study of Rabbinics and Historical Questions: the Tale of the Text' in FGM Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt and Peter J. Tomson (eds.), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2010, pp. 43-61.

Geller, M, 'Akkadian Medicine in the Talmud' in D Cohn-Sherbok (ed.), *A Traditional Question. Essays in Honour of Louis Jacobs*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, 1991, pp. 101-112.

Goldberg, A, 'The Babylonian Talmud' in S Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the Sages*, Van Gorcum, Fortress Press, Assen/Maastricht, 1987, pp. 336-345.

Goldberg, A, 'The Tosefta - Companion to the Mishnah' in *idem.*, pp. 283-302.

Goldenberg, R, 'B.M. Lewin and the Saboraic Element' in J Neusner (ed.), *The Formation of the Babylonian Talmud*, Brill, Leiden, 1970, pp. 51-60.

Goldin, J, 'In Defense of Balaam: not Entirely Midrash', *Judaism* vol. 40, no. 4, 1991, pp. 455-460.

Goodblatt, D, 'Y.I. Halevy' in J Neusner (ed.), *The Formation of the Babylonian Talmud*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1970, pp. 26-47.

Goodblatt, D, *Rabbinic Instruction in Sasanian Babylonia*, Brill, Leiden, 1975.

Goodblatt, D, *The Monarchic Principle: Studies in Jewish Self-government in Antiquity*, JCB Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 1994.

Goodman, M, 'The Jewish Image of God in Late Antiquity' in, M Goodman, *Judaism in the Roman World: Collected Essays*, Brill, Leiden, 2007, pp. 133-145.

Grabbe, LL, 'Sanhedrin, Sanhedriyyot or Mere Invention?', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 39, no. 1, 2008, pp. 1-19.

Gray, A, *A Talmud in Exile: The Influence of Yerushalmi Avodah Zarah on the Formation of Bavli Avodah Zarah*, Brown Judaic Studies, Providence, Rhode Island, 2005.

Gray, A, 'The Power Conferred by Distance From Power. Redaction and Meaning in b. A.Z.10a-11a' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 23-69.

Green, D, 'Sweet Spices in the Tomb: An Initial Study on the Use of Perfume in Jewish Burials.' in LB, and D Green (eds.), *Commemorating the Dead: Texts and Artifacts in Context*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 2008, pp. 145-173.

Green, WS, 'What's in a Name? - the Problematic of Rabbinic "Biography"' in WS Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism: Theory and Practice*, Scholars Press, Missoula, Montana, 1978, pp. 77-98.

Greene, JT, *Balaam and his Interpreters. A Hermeneutical History of the Balaam Traditions*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1992.

Greenfield, JC, 'Ben Sira 42.9-10 and its Talmudic Paraphrase' in PR Davies, and RT White (eds.), *JSOT Press*, Sheffield, 1990, pp. 167-173.

Grossfeld, B, and LH Schiffman, *Targum Neofiti 1: an Exegetical Commentary to Genesis: including Full Rabbinic Parallels*, Sepher-Hermon Press, New York, 2000.

HaKarmi, B, 'Hubris, Language and Oppression: Recreating Babel in Primo Levi's "If this is a Man" and the Midrash', *Partial Answers* vol. 7, no. 1, 2009, pp. 31-43.

Halivni, D, *Midrash, Mishnah and Gemara*, Harvard University Press, London, 1986.

Halivni, D, 'The Early Period of Halakhic Midrashim', *Tradition* vol. 22, no. 1, 1986, pp. 37-58.

Halivni, D, 'Aspects of the Formation of the Talmud' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr-Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 339-360.

Halivni, D, *מקורות ומסורות. ביארים ללחלמוד. מסכת בבא בתרא*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2008.

Halivni, D, *מקורות ומסורות. ביארים ללחלמוד. מסכתות סנהדרין, שבועות, מכות, עבודה זרה, הוריות*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2012.

Hasan-Rokem, G, *Tales of the Neighborhood: Jewish Narrative Dialogues in Late Antiquity*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 2003.

- Hasan-Rokem, G, 'משחק במילים יוונית בחידות עבריות-ארמית: מגים בין תרבויות במדרשי האגדה' in M Bar-Asher, J Levinson, and B Lifshitz (eds.), *Studies in Talmudic and Midrashic Literature in Memory of Tirtzah Lifshitz*, Bialik Institute, Jerusalem, 2005, pp. 159-171.
- Hasan-Rokem, G, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, trans. B Stein, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2000.
- Hauptman, J, 'Mishnah as a Response to "Tosefta" ' in S Cohen (ed.), *The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature*, Brown Judaic Studies, Providence, RI, 2000, pp. 13-34.
- Hayes, C, *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds: Accounting for Halakhic Difference in Selected Sugyot from Tractate Avodah Zarah*, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1997.
- Hayes, C, 'Displaced Self-Perceptions: The Deployment of Minim and Romans in B. Sanhedrin 90b-91a' in H Lapin (ed.), *Religious and Ethnic Communities in Later Roman Palestine*, University Press of Maryland, Maryland, 1998, pp. 249-289.
- Heineman, J, *אגדות ותולדותיהם. עיונים בהשתלשלותן של מסורת*, Keter, Jerusalem, 1974.
- Heller, MJ, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud*, Im Hasefer, New York, 1992.
- Heller, MJ, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Tractates Printed from 1700-1750*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, Koln, 1999.
- Herman, G, '"One Day David went out for the Hunt of the Falconers": Persian Themes in the Babylonian Talmud' in S Secunda, and S Fine (eds.), *Shoshannat Yaakov. Jewish and Iranian Studies in Honor of Yaakov Elman*, Brill, Leiden. Boston, 2012, pp. 111-136.
- Hezser, C, *Form, Function and Historical Significance of the Rabbinic Story in Yerushalmi Neziqin*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 1993.
- Houtman, A, *Mishnah and Tosefta: A Synoptic Comparison of the Tractates Berakhot and Shebit*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 1996.
- Inowlicki, S, 'Josephus' Rewriting of the Babel Narrative (Gen. 11:1-9)', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 37, no. 2, 2006, pp. 169-191.
- Jacobs, I, *The Midrashic Process: Tradition and Interpretation in Rabbinic Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995.
- Jacobs, L, *Studies in Talmudic Logic*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 1961.
- Jacobs, L, *Structure and Form in the Babylonian Talmud*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991.
- Jacobs, L, *Rabbinic Thought in the Talmud*, Vallentine Mitchell, Edgware, Middx., 2005.
- Jaffé, D, 'Existe-t-il une Littérature Censurée par les Sages du Talmud? Essai d'analyse de la

Formule Talmudique "Livres Extérieurs" (*Sefarim Hitsonim*)', *Revue Biblique* vol. 115, no. 1, 2008, pp. 105-123.

Jaffé, D, 'Représentations et Attraites du Christianisme dans les Sources Talmudiques. Proposition d'un Nouveau Paradigme' in D Jaffé (ed.), *Studies in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2010, pp. 45-66.

Jaffee, MS, 'The Babylonian Appropriation of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Redactional Studies in the Horayot Tractates' in AJ Avery Peck (ed.), *The Literature of Early Rabbinic Judaism: Issues in Talmud Revelation and Interpretation*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York, London, 1989, pp. 2-27.

Jaffee, MS, 'The Oral-Cultural Context of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Greco-Roman Rhetorical Paideia, Discipleship and the Concept of Oral Torah' in Y Elman, and I Gershoni (eds.), *Transmitting Jewish Traditions: Orality, Textuality and Cultural Diffusion*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2000, pp. 27-72.

Janowitz, N, 'Rabbis and their Opponents: the Construction of the "Min" in Rabbinic Anecdotes', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* vol. 6, no. 3, 1998, pp. 449-462.

Jones, SC, 'Lions, Serpents and Lion-Serpents in Job 28:8 and Beyond', *Journal of Biblical Literature* vol. 130, no. 4, 2011, pp. 663-686.

Josephus, *Antiquities* 1-4, trans. LH Feldman, Brill, Leiden, 2004.

Kadushin, M, *The Rabbinic Mind*, 3rd edn., Bloch Publishing Company, New York, 1972.

Kalmin, R, *The Post Rav Ashi Amoraim: Transition or Continuity? A Study of the Role of the Final Generation of Amoraim in the Redaction of the Talmud (PhD thesis)*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1989.

Kalmin, R, 'The Stam and the Final Generations of Amoraim: Assessing the Importance of Their Relationship for the Study of the Redaction of the Talmud' in AJ Avery-Peck (ed.), *The Literature of Early Rabbinic Judaism: Issues in Talmudic Redaction and Interpretation*, University Press of America, Lanham, New York, London, 1989, pp. 29-35.

Kalmin, R, 'Saints or Sinners, Scholars or Ignoramuses: Stories about the Rabbis as Evidence for the Composite Nature of the Babylonian Talmud', *Association of Jewish Studies Review (e-journal)* vol. 15, no. 2, 1990, pp. 179-205.

Kalmin, R, 'Talmudic Portrayals of Relationships between Rabbis: Amoraic or Pseudepigraphic', *Association of Jewish Studies Review (e-journal)* vol. 17, no. 2, 1992, pp. 165-197.

Kalmin, R, 'Rabbinic Attitudes Toward Rabbis as a Key to the Dating of Talmudic Sources', *Jewish Quarterly Review of Near-Eastern Studies* vol. 84, no. 1, 1993, pp. 1-27.

Kalmin, R, *Sages, Stories, Authors and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, 1994.

Kalmin, R, *The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity*, Routledge, New York, London, 1999.

Kalmin, R, 'Doeg the Edomite: From Biblical Villain to Rabbinic Sage' in CA Evans (ed.), *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition*, Sheffield University Press, Sheffield, 2000, pp. 390-405.

Kalmin, R, 'Rabbinic Traditions about Roman Persecutions of the Jews: A Reconsideration', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 54, no. 1, 2003, pp. 21-50.

Kalmin, R, *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2006.

Katsch, AI, 'Unpublished Geniza Fragments of the Tractates BM, BB and Sanhedrin in the Antonin Collection', *Jewish Quarterly Review of Near-Eastern Studies* vol. 69, 1978, pp. 193-207.

Kiperwasser, R, 'Daniel Boyarin: Socrates and the Fat Rabbis (review)', *Jewish History* vol. 25, 2011, pp. 377-397.

Kiperwasser, R, and DDY Shapira, 'Irano-Talmudica II: Leviathan, Behemoth and the "Domestication" of Iranian Mythological Creatures in Eschatological Narratives of the Babylonian Talmud' in S Secunda, and S Fine (eds.), *Shoshannat Yaakov: Jewish and Iranian Studies in Honor of Yaakov Elman*, Brill, Leiden.Boston, 2012, pp. 203-235.

Klausner, J, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 3rd edn., Allen and Unwin, London, 1954.

Klitsner, J, *Subversive Sequels in the Bible: How Biblical Stories Mine and Undermine Each Other*, Maggid Books, Jerusalem, 2011.

Koltun-Fromm, N, 'A Jewish-Christian Conversation in Fourth Century Persian Mesopotamia', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 47, 1996, pp. 45-63.

Kottek, S, '"Amra li em" : la Transmission de la Médecine Populaire par les Femmes dans le Talmud', *Revue des Etudes Juives* vol. 169, no. 3-4, 2010, pp. 419-437.

Kraemer, D, *The Mind of the Talmud: An Intellectual History of the Bavli*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1990.

Kraemer, D, 'The Intended Reader as a Key to Interpreting the Bavli', *Prooftexts* vol. 13, no. 2, 1993, pp. 125-140.

Kraemer, D, 'On the Reliability of Attributions in the Babylonian Talmud' in M Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 276-292.

Kraemer, D, *Responses to Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995.

Krupp, M, 'Manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud' in S Safrai (ed.), *The Literature of the*

Sages, Van Gorcum, Fortress Press, Assen/Maastricht, Philadelphia, 1987, pp. 346-366.

Kugel, J, *In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts*, Cambridge MA, London, England, 1990.

Lancaster, B, 'The Psychology of Oppositional Thinking in Rabbinic Biblical Commentary' in GJ Brooke (ed.), *Jewish Ways of Reading the Bible*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, pp. 191-191.

Landman, L, *Messianism in the Talmudic Era*, Ktav, New York, 1979.

Lavee, M, 'Rabbinic Literature and the History of Judaism in Late Antiquity: Challenges, Methodologies and New Approaches' in M Goodman, and P Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 319-351.

Levine, BA, 'The Four Private Persons Who Lost Their Share in the World to Come: The Judgement of m. Sanh. 10:2' in NS Fox, DA Glatt-Gilad, and MJ Williams (eds.), *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and its Cultural Environment in Honour of Jeffrey H. Tigay*, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, 2009, pp. 487-508.

Levinson, J, *הסיפור שלא סופר. אמנות הסיפור המקראי המורחב במדרשי חז"ל* (*The Twice Told Tale. A Poetics of Exegetical Narrative in Rabbinic Midrash*), Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 2005.

Lieberman, S, 'The Martyrs of Caesarea', *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves* vol. 7, 1939-44, pp. 395-446.

Lieberman, S, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1950.

Lieberman, S, *תוספתא כפשוטה*, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, 1973.

Lieberman, S, *Texts and Studies*, Ktav Publishing House, New York, 1974.

Loader, JA, 'A Tale of Two Cities: Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament, early Jewish and Christian Traditions', *Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology* vol. 1, 1990, pp. 75-125

Martinez, FG, 'Interpretations of the Flood in the Dead Sea Scrolls' in FG Martinez, and GP Luttikhuisen (eds.), *Interpretations of the Flood*, Brill, Leiden, 1998, pp. 86-108.

Martinez, FG, 'Sodom and Gomorrah in the Targumim' in E Noort, and E Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin. Genesis 18-19 and its Interpretations*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, pp. 83-96.

Milikowsky, C, 'Gehenna and "Sinners of Israel" in the Light of Seder Olam (Hebr.)', *Tarbiz* vol. 55, 1986, pp. 311-342.

Milikowsky, C, 'The Status Quaestionis of Research in Rabbinic Literature', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 39, no. 2, 1988, pp. 201-211.

Milikowsky, C, 'Midrash as Fiction and Midrash as History: What did the Rabbis Mean?' in J-A Brant, CW Hedrick, and C Shea (eds.), *Ancient Fiction. The Matrix of Early Christian and Jewish Narrative*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2005, pp. 117-127.

Milikowsky, C, 'Reflections on the Practice of Textual Criticism in the Study of Midrash Aggada: The Legitimacy, the Indispensability and the Feasibility of Recovering and Presenting the (Most) Original Text.' in C Bakhos (ed.), *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 2006, pp. 79-109.

Millar, F, 'The Palestinian Context of Rabbinic Judaism' in M Goodman and P Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 25-49.

Miller, SS, 'Those Cantankerous Sepphoreans Revisited' in L Schiffman (ed.), *Ki Baruch Hu: Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine*, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1999, pp. 543-573.

Morgenstern, M, 'Notes on the Noun Patterns in the Yemenite Tradition of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic', *Revue des Etudes Juives* vol. 168, no. 1-2, 2009, pp. 51-83.

Moscovitz, 'The Formation and Character of the Jerusalem Talmud' in ST Katz (ed.), *Cambridge History of Judaism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006, pp. 663-677.

Naiweld, R, 'There is Only One Other: The Fabrication of Antoninus in a Multilayered Talmudic Dialogue', *The Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 104, no. 1, 2014, pp. 81-104.

Neusner, J, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, Brill, Leiden, 1970.

Neusner, J, *Talmudic Judaism in Sasanian Babylonia*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1976.

Neusner, J, *There We Sat Down. Talmudic Judaism in the Making.*, 2nd edn., Ktav, New York, 1978.

Neusner, J, *Messiah in Context. Israel's History and Destiny in Formative Judaism.*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1984.

Neusner, J, *Midrash in Context*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1984.

Neusner, J, *Israel and Iran in Talmudic Times. A Political History*, University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 1986.

Neusner, J, *The Tosefta: Its Structure and its Sources*, Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1986.

Neusner, J, 'In Quest of the Historical Rabban Yohanan ben Zakai' in M Chernick (ed.), *Essential Papers on the Talmud*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1994, pp. 255-275.

Neusner, J, 'Death and Afterlife in the Later Rabbinic Sources: the Two Talmuds and Associated Midrash-Compilations' in AJ Avery Peck, and J Neusner (eds.), *Judaism in Late*

Antiquity, vol. 4, Brill, Leiden. Boston. Köln, 2000, pp. 267-292.

Neusner, J, 'Sage Stories in the Two Talmuds: How the Documents Differ', *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* vol. 13, no. 2, 2010, pp. 194-210.

Nikolsy, R, 'Interpret Him as You Want: Balaam in the Babylonian Talmud' in GHv Kooten, and Jv Ruiten (eds.), *The Prestige of the Pagan Prophet Balaam in Judaism, Early Christianity and Islam*, Brill, Leiden, 2008, pp. 213-230.

O'Neil, JC, 'The Mocking of Bar Kokhba and of Jesus', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 31, no. 1, 2000, pp. 39-41.

Ochs, P, 'Introduction' in P Ochs and N Levene (eds.), *Textual Reasonings*, SCM Press, Canterbury, 2002, pp. 2-14.

Oppenheimer, A, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1983.

Oppenheimer, A, 'יחסי יהודים ונכרים בישובי בבל התלמודית' (Relationships between Jews and Non-Jews in Talmudic Babylonia)', *Proceedings of the 9th World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem*, Div. B, Vol 1, 1986, pp. 33-38.

Pearbolte, BJL, 'Sodom, Egypt and the two witnesses of Revelation 11:8' in E Noort, and E Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin. Gen. 18-19 and its interpretations*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, pp. 63-82.

Philo, *De Vita Mosis*, trans. FH Colson, Heinemann, London, 1935.

Pliny, *Natural History*, trans. H Rackham, Wm. Heineman, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1940.

Plutarch, *Lives*, trans. Thomas North, Dent, London, 1898

Rosen-Zvi, I, 'Hyper-Sexualistion in the Bavli: An Initial Survey' in L Teugels, and R Ulmer (eds.), *Midrash and the Exegetical Mind*, Gorgias Press, Piscataway, New Jersey, 2010, pp. 181-205.

Rosenthal, David, 'נוסח ישראל ו"נוסח בבל" במשנה עבודה זרה' in, *Studies in Talmudic Literature: Study Day in celebration of the 80th Birthday of Saul Lieberman, 8th-9th Sivan 1978*, האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית למדעים, Jerusalem, 1983, pp. 79-92.

Rovner, J, 'Pseudepigraphic Invention and Diachronic Stratification in the Stammaitic Component of the Bavli: The Case of Sukkah 28', *Hebrew Union College Annual* vol. 68, 1997, pp. 11-62.

Rovner, J, '"Rav Assi had this old Mother": The Structure, Meaning and Formation of a Talmudic Story' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggada*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 101-124.

Rovner, J, 'Metasystemic and Structural Indicators of Late-Stage Babylonian Stammaitic

Compositions', *Oqimta (e-journal)* vol. 1, 2013, pp. 369-419.

Rubenstein, J, *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, London, 1999.

Rubenstein, J, 'Some Structural Patterns of Yerushalmi *Sugyot*' in P Schaefer (ed.), *The Talmud Yerushalmi in Graeco-Roman Culture*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2002, pp. 303-309.

Rubenstein, J, 'The Thematization of Dialectics in the Bavli Aggadah', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 54, no. 1, 2003, pp. 71-84.

Rubenstein, J, 'Criteria of Stammaitic Intervention in Aggadah' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaitim) to the Aggadah*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 417-440.

Rubenstein, J, *Stories of the Babylonian Talmud*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2010.

Sabato, M, 'בבלי סנהדרין : כתבי יד וענפי נוסח' in S Lassman (ed.), *יום עיון לציין סוגיות במחקר התלמודי ; יום עיון לציין, חמש שנים לפטירתו של אפרים א. אורבך, כ"א בכסלו תשנ"ז, האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית למדעים*, Jerusalem, 2001, pp. 80-99.

Samely, A, 'An Account of the Rabbinic Homily: Lenhard's Form-Analytical Index', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 3, no. 2, 2002, pp. 371-379.

Samely, A, *Rabbinic Interpretation of Scripture in the Mishnah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002.

Schäfer, P, 'Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Attempt to Define the Status Quaestionis', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 37, no. 2, 1986, pp. 89-94.

Schäfer, P, 'Once again the Status Quaestionis of Research into Rabbinic Literature: An Answer to Chaim Milikowsky', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 40, 1989, pp. 139-152.

Schäfer, P, *Jesus in the Talmud*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007.

Schäfer, P, and C Milikowsky, 'Current Views on the Editing of the Rabbinic Texts of Late Antiquity: Reflections on a Debate after Twenty Years' in M Goodman, and P Alexander (eds.), *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 79-88.

Schiffman, LH, 'Composition and Redaction in Bavli, Pereq Heleq' in J Rubenstein (ed.), *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaitim) to the Aggadah*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2005, pp. 201-215.

Schremer, A, 'Midrash, Theology and History: Two powers in Heaven Revisited', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 39, no. 2, 2008, pp. 230-254.

Schwarzbaum, H, 'Talmudic-Midrashic Affinities of some Aesopic Fables' in HA Fischel (ed.), *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature*, Ktav, New York, 1977, pp.

425-442.

Secunda, S, 'Reading the Bavli in Iran', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 100, no. 2, 2010, pp. 310-342.

Secunda, S, *The Iranian Talmud. Reading the Bavli in its Sasanian Context*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2014.

Segal, E, *The Babylonian Esther Midrash: a Critical Commentary* (3 vols.), Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1994.

Segal, E, *From Sermon to Commentary: Expounding the Bible in Talmudic Babylonia*, Wilfred Louvier University Press, Waterloo, ONT, Canada, 2005.

Shemesh, A, 'King Manasseh and the Halakhah of the Sadducees', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 52, no. 1, 2001, pp. 27-39.

Shemesh, A, and C Werman, 'Hidden Things and their Revelation', *Revue de Qumran* vol. 18, 1998, pp. 409-427.

Shimoff, SR, 'David and Bathsheba: The Political Function of Rabbinic Aggada', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* vol. 24, no. 2, 1993, pp. 246-256.

Slomovic, E, 'The Book of Job and the Midrash on the Flood and Sodom-Gomorrah Narratives', *Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly of America* vol. 41, 1979, pp. 167-180.

Smith, M, 'The Synoptic Problem in Rabbinic Literature: A Correction', *Journal of Biblical Literature* vol. 107, 1988, pp. 111-112.

Sokoloff, M, (ed.) *The Geniza Fragments of Bereshit Rabba*. Publications of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, 1992

Stemberger, G, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, Tandt Clark, Edinburgh, 1996.

Stemberger, G, 'Dating Rabbinic Traditions' in R Bieringer, F Garcia Martinez, D Pollefreyt, and PJ Thomson (eds.), *The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature*, Brill, Leiden, 2010, pp. 79-96.

Stern, D, *Parables in Midrash*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, 1991.

Stern, D, *Midrash and Theory. Ancient Jewish Exegesis and Contemporary Literary Studies.*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1996.

Stern, S, 'Attribution and Authorship in the Babylonian Talmud', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 45, 1994, pp. 28-51.

Stern, S, *Jewish Identity in Early Rabbinic Writings*, Brill, Leiden, 1994.

Stern, S, 'Rabbi and the Origins of the Patriarchate', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 54, no. 2,

2003, pp. 193-215.

Stern, S, *Calendars in Antiquity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012.

Stern, S, 'Compulsive Libationers: Non-Jews and Wine in Early Rabbinic Sources', *Journal of Jewish Studies* vol. 64, no. 1, 2013, pp. 19-44.

Stern, S, 'Pagan Images in Late Antique Palestinian Synagogues' in S Mitchell, and G Greatrex (eds.), *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*, Duckworth and the Classical Press of Wales, London, Swansea, 2000, pp. 241-252.

Stone, LG, 'Redaction Criticism: Whence, Whither, and Why? Or, Going beyond Source and Form Criticism without Leaving them Behind'. in EE Carpenter (ed.), *A Biblical Itinerary: In Search of Method, Form and Content. Essays in Honour of George W. Coats*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, 1997, pp. 77-90.

Tropper, A, *Wisdom, Politics and Historiography. Tractate Avot in the Context of the Graeco-Roman Near East*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004.

Urbach, E, *The Sages*, trans. I Abrahams, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, England, 1979.

Urbach, E, *מעולמם של חכמים*, Jerusalem, 1988.

Van Ruiten, JTAGM, *Primaeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the Book of Jubilees*, Brill, Leiden, 2000.

Van Ruiten, JTAGM, 'Lot Versus Abraham. The Interpretation of Genesis 18:1-19:38 in *Jubilees* 16:1-9' in E Noort, and E Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin. Genesis 18-19 and its Interpretations*, Brill, Leiden and Boston, 2004, pp. 29-46.

Vandermeersch, P, 'Sodomites, Gays and Biblical Scholars: a Gathering Organized by Peter Damian' in E Noort, and E Tigchelaar (eds.), *Sodom's Sin*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, pp. 149-171.

Veltri, G, *Magik und Halakha*, JCB Moehr, Tübingen, 1997.

Vermes, G, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism.*, Brill, Leiden, 1961.

Visotzky, BL, 'Leaning Literary, Reading Rabbinics', *Prooftexts* vol. 28, no. 1, 2008, pp. 85-99.

Wimpfheimer, B, *Narrating the Law: A Poetics of Talmudic Legal Stories* (e-book), University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2011.

Wimpfheimer, B, 'The Dialogical Talmud: Daniel Boyarin and Rabbinics', *Jewish Quarterly Review* vol. 101, no. 2, 2011, pp. 245-254.

Yuval, IJ, 'Christianity in Talmud and Midrash: Parallelomania or Parallelophobia?' in FT Harkins (ed.), *Transforming Relations: Essays on Jews and Christians throughout History. In Honor of Michael A. Signer*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2010, pp.

50-74.

Zellentin, HM, *Rabbinic Parodies of Jewish and Christian Literature*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2011.

APPENDIX 1: PARALLEL TEXTS ON THE GENERATION OF THE FLOOD (bSanh. 107b-109a)

Tosefta and Palestinian Talmud

Tosefta Sanhedrin 13:6

דור המבול אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן חיינן לעולם הבא שנא' (בראשית ט') וימח את כל היקום אשר על פני האדמה בעולם הזה וימחו מן הארץ בעולם הבא ר' יהודה בן בתירא אומ' (שם ו') ויאמר יי לא ידון רוחי באדם לעולם לא ידון ולא רוחי בהם לעולם דבר אחר ויאמר יי לא ידון אמר המקום אני¹ מחזיר רוחם לנדנה ר' מנחם ברבי יוסי אומ' לא ידון אמ' המקום איני דן בשעה שאני משלם שכר לצדיקים אבל רוחן של רשעים קשה להן יותר מן הכל שנ' (ישעיה ל"ג) רוחם² אש תאכלכם.

The Palestinian Talmud, Sanhedrin 10:3

27b-c

דור המבול אין להן חלק לעולם הבא ואין עומדין בדין שנאמר לא ידון רוחי באדם לעולם אנשי סדום אין להם חלק לעולם הבא אבל עומדין בדין רבי נחמיה אומר אילו ואילו אינן עומדין בדין שנאמר על כן לא יקומו רשעים במשפט וחטאים בעדת צדיקי' על כן לא יקומו רשעי' במשפט זה דור המבול וחטאי' בעדת צדיקי' אלו³ אנשי סדום אמרו לו בעדת צדיקי' אינן עומדין אבל עומדין הן בעדת רשעים:

29b-c

גמ' דור המבול אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן רואין לעתיד לבוא מה טעמא וימח את כל היקום בעולם הזה וימחו מן הארץ לעתיד לבוא. תני רבי נחמיה אומר ממשמע שנאמר לא ידון רוחי באדם לעולם רבי יהודה אומר לא ידון לו רוחי שאיני נותן רוחי בהם בשעה שאני נותן רוחי בבני אדם רבי שמעון אומר לא ידון לו רוחי שאיני נותן רוחי בהם בשעה שאני נותן מתן שכרן של צדיקים אחרים אומרים לא ידון לו רוחי שאיני מחזירה לנדנה.

ר' יהושע בן לוי אמר עיקר זריבתן לחולטנית מה טעמא בעת יזורבו נצמתו בחומו נדעכו ממקומם. מהו בחומו בריתוחן. אמר רבי יוחנן כל טיפה וטיפה שהיה הקב"ה מוריד עליהן היה מרתיחה בתוך גיהנם ומורידה עליהן הדא הוא דכתיב בחומו נדעכו ממקומם.

יהודה בי רבי חזקיה ורבי אמרין הקב"ה דן את הרשעים בגיהנם שנים עשר חדש כתחלה הוא מכניס בהן חכך ואח"כ הוא מכניסן לאור והן אומ' הוי ואחר כך הוא מכניסן לשלג והן אומרים ווי ווי מה טעמא ויעליני מבור שאון מטיט הוין מהו מטיט הוין מקום שהן אומרינן בו הוי. ויקבלו דינם ויהא להן חלק לעולם הבא על שם ליץ לא שמע גערה.

1. The more likely reading is איני. This makes more sense than אני, which contradicts the sense of the Tosefta. It is also consistent with the parallel passage in the PT (29b-c, below).

2. This is the reading in the Zuckerman edition, but Isaiah 43:11 reads רוחכם.

3. אלא in printed edn. but אלו, as in the Leiden manuscript, is likely to be the correct reading.

Texts Parallel to Sections of the Gemara

Section B. Pride in their wealth

Tosefta Sotah 3:6

ב אנשי מבול לא נתגאו אלא מתוך טובה שנא' בתייהם שלום מפחד ולא שבט אלוה עליהם שורו עיבר ולא יגעיל וגו' ישלחו כצאן עויליהם וגו' ישאו בתוף וכינור וגו' יבלו בטוב ימיהם ושניהם בנעימים: היא גרמה להם ויאמרו לא' סור ממנו וגו' מה שדי כי נעבדנו ומה נועיל כי נפגע בו אמרו כלום יש לו עלינו אלא גשמים הרי יש לנו נחלים שאנו מסתפקין מהן ואין אנו צריכין לו שנא' (בראשית ד) ואיד יעלה מן הארץ והשקה את כל פני האדמה: אמר להם הקב"ה בטובה שנתתי לכם אתם מתגאין לפני אני נפרע מכם שנא' כי לימים עוד שבעה אנוכי ממטיר על הארץ וגו'.

ר' יוסי בן דורמסקית אומ' הן לא נתגאו אלא בגלגל העין שדומה למים שנא' ויראו בני האלהים את בנות האדם אף הקב"ה לא נפרע מהם אלא מים שנא' ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעיינות תהום רבה.

MRI Shira-Beshallach 2

כי גאה גאה... דבר אחר כי גאה גאה מתגאה הוא על כל המתגאים שבמה שאומות העולם מתגאים לפניו בו הוא נפרע מהם שכן הוא אומר בדור המבול (איוב כ"א) שורו עבר ולא יגעיל תפלט פרתו ולא תשכל ואומר (שם) ישלחו כצאן עויליהם וילדיהם ירקדון ישאו בתוף וכנור וישמחו וגו' מה נאמר שם (שם) מה שדי כי נעבדנו ומה נועיל כי נפגע בו אמרו לא טפת גשמים היא אין אנו צריכין לה אלא (בראשית ב') ואד יעלה מן הארץ והשקה את כל פני האדמה אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא שוטים שבעולם בטובה שהשפעת לי לכם אתם מתגאים בה לפני בה אני נפרע מכם שנא' (שם ז') ויהי הגשם על הארץ ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה. רבי יוסי בן דורמסקית אומר הם נתנו עיניהם העליונה בתחתונה כדי לעשות תאותם והקב"ה פתח עליהם מעינות מלמעלה ומלמטה לאבדם שנאמר (שם) ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעיינות תהום וארובות השמים נפתחו.

Sifre Ekev 11

ואכלת ושבעת השמרו לכם פן יפתה לבבכם. אמר להם הזהירו שמא תמרדו במקום שאין אדם מורד במקום אלא מתוך שובע שנאמר (דברים ח) פן תאכל ושבעת ובתים טובים תבנה וישבת ובקרך וצאנך ירביון וכסף וזהב ירבה לך. מהו אומר ורם לבבך ושכחת את ה' אלהיך. כיוצא בו אתה אומר (שם לא) כי אביאנו אל האדמה אשר נשבעתי לאבותינו זבת חלב ודבש מהו אומר ופנה אל אלהים אחרים. כיוצא בו אתה אומר (שמות לב) וישב העם לאכול ושתה מהו אומר עשו להם עגל מסכה. וכן אתה מוצא באנשי דור המבול שלא מרדו במקום אלא מתוך שובע מה נאמר בהם בתייהם שלום מפחד וגו' (איוב כא) שורו עיבר וגו' ישלחו כצאן עויליהם וגו' יבלו בטוב ימיהם וגו'. היא גרמה להם (שם) אמרו לאל סור ממנו מה שדי כי נעבדנו וגו' אמרו טיפה אחת של גשמים היא אין אנו צריכים לו (בראשית ב) ואיד יעלה מן הארץ. אמר להם המקום בטובה שהיטבתי לכם בה אתם מתגאים לפני. בה אני נפרע מכם (שם ז') ויהי הגשם על הארץ ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה. רבי יוסי בן דורמסקית אומר הם נתנו עיניהם עליונה ותחתונה כדי לעשות תאותם אף המקום פתח עליהם מעיינות עליונים ותחתונים כדי לאבדם שנאמר (שם) ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעיינות תהום רבה וארובות השמים נפתחו.

Tanhuma Beshallach 12

כי גאה גאה... דבר אחר גאה על כל המתגאים שכל המתגאים במה שהן מתגאים בו נפרע מהם. מצרים לקו במים על שנתגאו במים. דור המבול כתיב בהם (איוב כא) שורו עבר ולא יגעיל תפלט פרתו ולא תשכל. ישלחו כצאן עויליהם וילדיהם ירקדון. ישאו בתוף וכנור וישמחו לקול עוגב. ויאמרו לאל סור ממנו ודעת דרכיך לא

חפצנו. מה שדי כי נעבדנו ומה נועיל כי נפגע בו. אמרו אין אנו צריכין לטיפת גשמים אלא ואד יעלה מן הארץ וגו'. אמר להן הקב"ה בטובה שהשפעת ליכם אתם מתגאין לפני בה אני נפרע מכם שנא' (בראשית ז) ויהי הגשם על הארץ ארבעים יום וגו' וימח את כל היקום וגו'. רבי יוסי בן דורמסקית אומר הן נתנו עיניהם העליונה בתחתונה כדי לעשות תחתון הקב"ה פתח עליהן מעינות מלמעלה ומלמטה כדי לאבדן שנאמר (בראשית ז) ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעינות וגו'.

GenR 32:7

אמר ר' יוסי בן דורמסקית הם חטאו בגלגל העין שדומה למים אף הקב"ה לא פרע מהם אלא במים.

NumR 9:24

...תני היה ר' מאיר אומר מנין שבמדה שאדם מודד בה מודדים לו.

אנשי דור המבול לא נתגאו לפני המקום אלא מתוך טובה שהשפיע עליהם שנאמר (איוב כא) בתייהם שלום מפחד וגו' שורו עבר וגו' ישלחו כצאן עויליהם וגו' ישאו בתוף וכנור וגו' יבלו בטוב ימיהם וגו' היא גרמה להם ויאמרו לאל סור ממנו וגו' מה שדי כי נעבדנו וגו' אמרו דור המבול הואיל ואין לו עלינו טרחות אלא שני טיפות של גשמים הללו אין אנו צריכין יש לנו מעינות ונחלים שאנו מסתפקים מהם מים בין בימות החמה בין בימות הגשמים שנאמר (בראשית ב) ואד יעלה מן הארץ וגו' אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא בטובה שהטבתי לכם בה אתם מתגאים לפני בה אני נפרע מכם שנאמר (שם בראשית ז) ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעינות תהום וגו' וימח את כל היקום וגו' ר' יוסי בן דורמסקית אומר הם לא נתגאו לפני המקום אלא בגלגל העין שדומה למים שנאמר (שם בראשית ו) ויראו בני האלהים את בנות האדם אף המקום לא נפרע מהם אלא בגלגל המים הדומה לעין שנאמר ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעינות תהום וגו'.

Section C. Corruption (R. Yochanan's sayings)

GenR 33:4

ד ויסכרו מעינות תהום וגו' אמר ר' לעזר לרעה (בראשית ח) ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעינות וגו' אבל לטובה ויסכרו מעינות תהום ולא כל מעינות חוץ ממעיין טובה⁴ ואבלונים ומערת פמייס.

GenR 28:8

ר' עזריה בשם ר' יהודה אמר הכל קילקלו מעשיהם בדור המבול, הכלב עם הזאב, והתרנגול עם הטווס, ה"ה כי השחית כל בשר וגו'. ר' לוליני בר טיברי מש' רבי יצחק אף הארץ זינתה. הוּו זרעין לה חטים והיא ומסקא זונין, אלין זוניא מדריה דמבולא אינון.

4. Vienna and Munich manuscripts read טברי and טבריא respectively.

Section D. Noah

GenR 30:9

בדורותיו, ר' יודה ור' נחמיה, רבי יודה אמר בדורותיו היה צדיק אילו היה בדורו של משה או בדורו של שמואל לא היה צדיק. בשוק סמייה צווחין לעווירא סגי נהורא ולזעירא בירבי. לאחד שהיה לו מרתף שליין. פתח הבית ראשונה ומצאה חומץ. שנייה [ומצאה חומץ שלישית] ומצאה קוסס. אמר לו קוסס הוא. אמר אית הכא טב מינה אמ' ליה לא. כך בדורותיו היה צדיק. ר' נחמיה אמר ומה אם בדורותיו היה צדיק בדורו של משה על אחת כמה וכמה. לצלוחית שלפליטון מוקפת צמיד פתיל ומונחת בין הקברות וריחה נודף. ואילו היה חוץ לקברות כל שכן.

Tan Noah 5

בדורותיו ולא בדורות אחרים. רבי יהודה ורבי נחמיה חד אמר תמים היה בדור המבול ובדור הפלגה. שאלו היה בדורו של אברהם אבינו לא מצא ידיו ורגליו. משל לחבית של אפרסמון שהיתה מונחת במקום המטונף במקומה ריחה נודף. שלא במקומה אין ריחה נודף. וחד אמר תמים היה בדורותיו כ"ש בדורות אחרים. משל לצלוחית של פליטון שהיתה מונחת במקום הטנופת כ"ש אם היתה מונחת במקום הבושם.

TanB. Noah 6

מהו בדורותיו, יש דורשין לשבח, ויש דורשין לגנאי צדיק בדורותיו ולא בדורות אחרים, משל למה הדבר דומה, אם יתן אדם סלע של כסף בתוך [מאה] סלעים של נחשת, אותה של כסף נראית נאה, כך היה נח נראה צדיק בדור המבול, יש דורשין אותו לשבח כיצד, לנערה שהיתה שרויה בשוק של זונות והיתה כשרה, אלו היתה בשוק הכשרות על אחת כמה וכמה, משל לחבית של אפרסמון שהיתה נתונה בקבר והייתה ריחה טוב, אילו היתה בבית על אחת כמה וכמה.

Section E. Questioning the destruction

GenR 28:6

מאדם עד בהמה וגו' בי יודן אמר למלך שמסר את בנו לפידגוג והוציאו לתרבות רעה. כעס המלך על בנו והרגו. אמר המלך כלום הוציא את בני לתרבות רעה אלא זה. בני אבד וזה קיים. לפיכך מאדם ועד בהמה וגו' ר' פנחס אמר למלך שהיה משיא את בנו ועשה לו חופה. סיידה וכיירה וציירה. כעס המלך על בנו והרגו. נכנס בחופה התחיל לשבר בקנים ומכפיע בחיצאות ומקרע בליות. אמר בני אבד ואילו קיימין. לפיכך מאדם ועד בהמה.

Geniza Fragment (GenR 38)⁵

ר יודן ור' פינחס ר' יודן אמר משל למלך שמסר את בנו לפידגוג והוציאו לתרבות רעה כעס המלך על בנו והרגו אמר המלך כלום הוציא את בני לתרבות רעה אלא זה בני אבד וזה קיים לפיכך מאדם עד בהמה עד רמש ועד עוף השמים אמר ר' פינחס למלך שהיה משיא את בנו ועשה לו חופה סיידה וכיירה וציירה כעס המלך על בנו והרגו מה עשה המלך נכנס לתוך החופה התחיל לשבר בקנים ומכפיע בחיצאות ומקרע בביליות אמר המלך כלום עשיתי זו אלא בשביל בני אבד וזו קיימת לפיכך מאדם עד בהמה.

5. See M. Sokoloff (ed.) *The Geniza Fragments of Bereshit Rabba*. Publications of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem, 1992

LamR 4:11

ויצת אש בציון ותאכל יסודותיה. כתיב (תהלים ע"ט) מזמור לאסף אלהים באו גוים בנחלתך, מזמור, בכיה מבעי ליה. א"ר אלעזר משל למלך שעשה חופה לבנו תיקן ביתו גיידה וסיידה וציירה פעם אחת הכעיסו וסתר. התחיל פדגוג יושב ומזמר, א"ל המלך חרב ביתו ואתה יושב ומזמר. אמר להו לכך אני מזמר ששפך חמתו על חופת בנו ולא על בנו. כך אמרו לאסף הקב"ה החריב את מקדשו ואתה יושב ומזמר, אמר להם לכך אני מזמר ששפך הקב"ה חמתו על עצים ואבנים ולא על ישראל, הדא הוא דכתיב ויצת אש בציון ותאכל יסודותיה.

GenR 30:2

אלה תולדות נח. קל הוא על פני המים (משלי כד) גזרה שנגזרה עליהם שיאבדו במים. תקולל חלקתם בארץ מי שפרע מדור המבול. כל כך למה לא יפנה דרך כרמים שלא היתה כוונתן למטעת כרמים אבל נח לא היתה כוונתו אלא להפרות ולהרבות בעולם אלה תולדות נח.

GenR 30:7

ז איש, כל מקום שנ' איש צדיק ממחה, שכל ק"כ שנה היה נח נוטע ארזים וקוצצן, אומ' לו למה כדין אמר להון כך אמר לי מריה דעלמא דמייתי מבולא על עלמא. אמ' ליה אין אתי מבולא לא אתי אלא על בייתיה דאבוה דההוא גברא. ה"ה (איוב יב) לפיד בוז לעשתות שאנן נכון למועדי רגל. אמר ר' אבא אמר הקב"ה כרוז אחד עמד לי בדור המבול זה נח. תמן אמ' כרוז ליה לפיד ליה. בוז שהיו מבזין עליו וקרו ליה ביזה סבא. לעשתות שאנן שהיו קשים כעשתות. נכון למועדי רגל, שהיו מוכנים לשני שברים לשבר מלמעלה ולשבר מלמטן.

Section F. The seven day waiting period

tSotah 10:1-5

בזמן שהצדיקים בא לעולם טובה באה לעולם... אין לי אלא שתולין לצדיקים בחייהם מנין אף במיתתן שנ' (בראשית ז) ויהי לשבעת הימים אילו שבעת ימי אבולו של מתושלח הצדיק שערכו את הפורענות מלבוא לעולם. ד"א' מלמד ששינה המקום עליהם סדרי עולם והיתה חמה זורחת ממערב ושוקעת במזרח. ד"א' נתן להם הקב"ה שבעת ימים מעין העולם הבא ואכלו ושתו כדי שידעו מה איבדו.

MRI Shira-Beshallach 5

נאדרי בכח. נאה אתה ואדיר בכח שנתת ארכה לדור המבול לעשות תשובה ולא עשו תשובה שנ' ויאמר ה' (בראשית ו') לא ידון רוחי באדם ולא גמרת להם כלייה עד שהשלימו רשעים לפניך.

Tanhuma Beshallach 15

ימינך ה' ימינך ה' פשוטה לקבל שבים שנתת ארכה לדור המבול לעשות תשובה שנאמר לא ידון רוחי באדם לעולם (בראשית ז) ולא גמרת עליהם כלייה עד שהשלימו רשעתן לפניך.

GenR 32:7

ויהי לשבעת הימים מלמד שתלה להם הקב"ה שבעת ימי אבו שלמתושלח הצדיק, כדי שיעשו תשובה ולא עשו. ד"א ויהי לשבעת הימים אמר ר' יהושע בן לוי ז' ימים נתאבל הקב"ה על עולמו קודם שיביא המבול. מה טעם ויתעצב ולהלן אומר (שמואל ב יט) כי נעצב המלך על בנו.

ARNA 32

עשרה דורות מאדם ועד נח וכי מה הוצרך לבאי עולם לכך אלא ללמדך שכל הדורות היו מכעיסין ובאין ולא הביא עליהן את מי המבול בשביל צדיקים וחסידיים שהיו בהם. ויש אומרים כל זמן שהיה מתושלח חי לא ירד מבול לעולם וכשמת מתושלח עוד נתלה להם שבעת ימים לאחר מיתתו שנאמר (בראשית ז) ויהי לשבעת הימים. מה טיבן של שבעת הימים הללו אלו ימי אבלו של הצדיק שערכו את הפורענות. לפיכך נאמר ויהי לשבעת הימים. דבר אחר ויהי לשבעת הימים מלמד שקבע להם הקב"ה זמן לאחר מאה ועשרים שנה שמא יעשו תשובה ולא עשו ולכך נאמר ויהי לשבעת הימים. דבר אחר מלמד ששינה עליהם הקב"ה סידורו של עולם והיתה חמה יוצאת ממערב ושוקעת במזרח שמא יבינו ויתיראו ויעשו תשובה ולא עשו לכך נאמר ויהי לשבעת הימים. דבר אחר שהעריך להם הקב"ה את שולחנו והראה להם טובו מעין העולם הבא כדי שידקדקו הן בעצמן ויאמרו אוי לנו טובה זו שאבדנו. מפני ששיחתו את דרכן על הארץ שנאמר (שם ו) וירא אלהים את הארץ והנה נשחתה כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו על הארץ.

Tan. Shemini 1

ויהי ביום השמיני. (א) זה שאמר הכתוב שומר מצוה לא ידע דבר רע (קהלת ח) מי היה זה אהרן שנאמר ומפתח אהל מועד לא תצאו שבעת ימים. ופתח אהל מועד תשבו יומם ולילה אמר להם משה לאהרן ולבניו שמרו אבלות שבעת ימים עד שלא יגיע בככם. ושמרתם את משמרת ה' שכך שמר הקב"ה שבעת ימים אבילות עד שלא הביא את המבול כביכול. ומניין שנתאבל שנאמר (בראשית ו) וינחם ה' כי עשה את האדם ויתעצב אל לבו ואין עציבה אלא אבל שנאמר (שמואל ב יט) ותהי התשועה ביום ההוא לאבל על ישראל כי אמר העם כי נעצב המלך על בנו.

Section G. The use of animals for transgression

Tan. Noah 12

ולא כדור המבול שהיו שטופין בזנות והולכין ונזקקין לשאינן מינן. ראה מה כתיב בהן ויראו בני האלהים וגו' ולכך אבדו מן העולם. ואף הבהמה קלקלו לשאינן מינן הסוס על החמור והחמור על הסוס והנחש על הצפור שנא' כי השחית כל בשר. כל אדם לא נאמר אלא כל בשר. לפיכך וימח את כל היקום אשר על פני האדמה מאדם עד בהמה וגו'. ולא נכנסו לתיבה אלא אותן שלא קלקלו לשאינן מינן שנ' מכל הבהמה' הטהור. לפי שאין התיבה קולטות אלא כשרים ומאליהן באו שנא' שנים שנים באו אל נח.

Section H. The Ark

GenR. 31:8

עשה לך תבת עצי גופר וגו' ר' נתן אעין דקידרינון.

GenR. 31:11

צוהר תעשה לתיבה. ר' חוניה ור' פנחס ר' חנן ור' הושעיא לא מפרשין ר' אבא בר כהנא ור' לוי מפרשין. ר' אבא בר כהנא אמר חלון. ר' לוי אמר מרגליות...
ואל אמה תכלנה מלמעלה. ר' יהודה ור' נחמיה. ר' יהודה א' ש"ל קילין היו בה. הקילא עשר אמות על עשר...

תחתיים שניים ושלישים תעשה. תחתיים לזבלים שניים לו ולבניו ולטהורים ושלישים לטמאים. ויש מחליפים תחתיים לטמאים שניים לו ולבניו ולטהורים והעליונים לזבלים. כיצד היה עושה אלא כמין קטרקטין היה

לו והיה פוססן מן הצד.

Section J. The raven and the dove

GenR 33:5

ויצא יצא ושוב. ר' יודן בשם ר' יודה בר' סימון התחיל משיבו תשובות. אמר לו מכל עוף שיש כאן לא תשלח אלא לי. אמר לו מה צורך לעולם לך לאכילה לקרבן. ר' ברכיה בשם ר' אבא אמר אמר לו הקב"ה קיבלו שעתיד העולם ליצטרך לו. אמר לו אימתי אמר לו עד יבשת המים מעל הארץ עתיד צדיק אחד לעמוד וליכש העולם ואני מצריכו להן הה"ד (מלכים א יז) והעורבים מביאים לו לחם ובשר וגו'.

GenR 34:7

אתה ואשתך וגו' רבי יודן ב"ר סימון ור' חנן בשם ר' שמואל בר רב יצחק. נח כיון שניכנס לתיבה נאסר לו פריה ורביה ה"ה ובאת אל התיבה אתה ובניך (בראשית ו) לעצמך ואשתך ונשי בניך לעצמן וכיון שיצא התירו ה"ה צא מן התיבה אתה ואשתך וגו'.

pTaanit 1:6

רבי יודה בר פזי רבי חננין בשם רבי שמואל בר יצחק נח בכניסתו לתיבה נאסרה לו תשמיש המיטה. מה טעמא ובאת אל התיבה אתה ובניך ואשתך ונשי בניך אתך וביציאתו הותרה לו תשמיש המיטה מה טעמא צא מן התיבה אתה ואשתך ובניך ונשי בניך אתך. אמר רבי חיה בר בא למשפחותיהם יצאו מן התיבה על ידי ששימרו יחסיהן זכו להינצל מן התיבה תדע לך שהוא כן דתנינן חם וכלב ועורב קילקלו מעשיהן. חם יצא מפוחם כלב יצא מפורצם בתשמישו עורב יצא משונה מן הבריות.

GenR 36:7

אמר ר' חייא חם וכלב שמשו בתיבה לפיכך יצא חם מפוחם וכלב מפורסם בתשמישו.

TanB Noah 17

וכן עשו נח ובניו והבהמה והחיה והעוף. לא נזקקו לפריה ורביה כשנכנסו לתיבה שכן צוה להם הקב"ה כשנכנסו לתיבה. מנין ויבא נח ובניו (בראשית ז ז), הזכרים לעצמן. ואשתו ונשי בניו (שם) הנקבות לעצמן. כך כל הימים שהיה נח בתיבה היו נח ובניו וכל אשר אתו אסורים בתשמיש המטה. אמר להם הקב"ה אפשר שאהא כועס ומחריב את העולם ואתה בונה. אלא כשיעבור המבול אתם נזקקים לפריה ורביה שנא' לאמר לאסורים צאו (ישעיה מט ט). וכיון שיבשה הארץ אמר לו הקב"ה צא מן התיבה [אתה ואשתך] (בראשית ח טז), והתיר להם פריה ורביה, ואף לבהמה ולחיה ולעוף התיר, שנאמר ושרצו בארץ ופרו ורבו (שם בראשית ז יז).

Tan. Noah 12

חם הוא אבי כנען זה א' משלשה שמשו בתיבה אלה הם, חם וכלב ועורב, ושלשתן לקו, חם לקה בעורו, כלב נקשר, עורב מזריע מן הפה.

GenR 33:6

רב ביריי אמר נפתחו לה שערי גן עדן והביאתו. אמר ר' אבהו אילו מגו עדן הביאתו לא היה לה להביא דבר משובח או קנמון או פפולוסמון. אלא רמז רמזה לו אמרה לו לנח מוטב מר מזה ולא מתוק מתחת ידיך.

Section K . Eliezer and Shem

Tan. Noah 2

ולוקח נפשות חכם זה נח שזן ומפרנס את הבהמה ומה היה מאכילן. א"ר עקיבא דבילה היו כולן אוכלין כמ"ש והיה לך ולהם לאכלה. ורבתינו אמרו לא אלא כל אחד וא' מכל מין ומין האכילם מה שלמד. הגמל תבן והחמור שעורים וכן כולם מה שלמד היה אוכל. הוי ולוקח נפשות חכם. יש בהמה שהיא אוכלת בשעה אחד ביום ויש בשתיים ויש בשלש ויש בשליש הלילה ויש באמצעו ויש בקרות הגבר. אמרו רבתינו י"ב חדש בתבה לא ראה שינה לא ביום ולא בלילה שהיה עוסק וזן הבריות שעמו הרי ולוקח נפשות חכם.

TanB Noah 14

אמר ר' לוי כל שנים עשר חודש שהיה נח בתבה, לא טעם טעם שינה, לא הוא ולא בניו, שהיו זקוקין לזון את הבהמה והחיה, ר' אבא בר כהנא אמר [שבשיתין] לפילין, וזכוכית לנעמיות, הכניס בתבה לזון את הבהמה ואת החיה, שיש מהן שאוכלת בשתי שעות בלילה, ויש מהן שאוכלת בג' שעות ביום, מכאן תדע לך שלא טעם נח טעם שינה. ר' יוחנן אמר בשם ר' אלעזר ב"ר יוסי הגלילי, פעם אחת שהיה נח לזון את הארי והכישו הארי ויצא צולע, שנא' [וישאר] אך נח (בראשית ז כג).

Tan. Noah 9

אמר ר' לוי כל אותן י"ב חודש שהיה נח בתבה לא טעם טעם שינה לא נח ולא בניו שהיו זקוקין לזון את הבהמה ואת החיה ואת העופות. ר"ע אומר אפי' שבשיתין לפילין וזכוכית לנעמיות הכניסו בידן לזון אותן. יש בהמה שאוכלת לב' שעות בלילה ויש אוכלת לשלשה. תדע לך שלא טעמו טעם שינה דא"ר יוחנן בשם ר"א ברבי יוסי הגלילי פעם אחד שהיה נח לזון את הארי הכישו הארי ויצא צולע שנאמר וישאר אך נח.

LevR 20:1

אחרי מות שני בני אהרן ר' שמעון בר אבבי פתח (קהלת ט) הכל כאשר לכל מקרה אחד לצדיק ולרשע. צדיק זה נח, נח איש צדיק (בראשית ו) אמר ר' יוחנן בנו שלר' אליעזר בנו שלר' יוסי הגלילי כשיצא נח מן התיבה הכישו נחשי ושברו ארי ולא היה כשר להקריב והקריב שם בנו תחתיו.

GenR 43:3

ר' יהודה ור' נחמיה חד אמר אברהם היה משליך עליהם עפר ונעשה חרבות, קש ונעשה חצים, וחרנה אמר יתן עפר אין כת' אלא כעפר הן היו משליכים חרבות על אברהם והן נעשות עפר, חצים ונעשות קש. הה"ד (שם ישעיהו מא) ירדפם יעבר שלום.

APPENDIX 2: PARALLEL TEXTS ON THE MEN OF SODOM (bSanh. 109a-b)

Tosefta and Palestinian Talmud

Tosefta San. 13:8

אנשי סדום אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן חיינן לעולם הבא שנ' (שם י"ג) ואנשי סדום רעים וחטאים בעולם הזה לי"י מאד בעולם הבא דבר אחר רעים איש על חבירו וחטאים בגילוי עריות לי"י בעבודה זרה מאד בשפיכות דמים.

Palestinian Talmud, Sanhedrin 10.3

27b-c

אנשי סדום אין להם חלק לעולם הבא אבל עומדין בדין. רבי נחמיה אומר אילו ואילו אינן עומדין בדין שנאמר על כן לא יקומו רשעים במשפט וחטאים בעדת צדיקי'. על כן לא יקומו רשעי' במשפט זה דור המבול וחטאי' בעדת צדיקי' אלו⁶ אנשי סדום. אמרו לו בעדת צדיקי' אינן עומדין אבל עומדין הן בעדת רשעים.

29b-c

אנשי סדום אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן רואין לעתיד לבוא. מאי טמא אנשי סדום רעים וחטים ליי מאד. רעים וחטאים בעולם הזה ליי מאד לעתיד לבוא. דבר אחר רעים אילו לאילו. וחטאים בגילוי עריות. ליי בעבודה זרה מאד בשפיכות דמים.

Texts Parallel to Sections of the Gemara

I Midrashic Section

Section A. Exegesis of Gen. 13.3

Avot DeRabbi Natan A 32

אנשי סדום לא חיינן ולא נידונין שנאמר (שם יג) ואנשי סדום רעים וחטאים לה' מאד. רעים זה עם זה. וחטאים בגילוי עריות. לה' זה חלול השם. מאוד שהיו מתכוונין לעבירות דברי רבי אליעזר. רבי יהושע אומר באין הן לדין שנאמר (תהלים א) על כן לא יקומו רשעים במשפט וחטאים בעדת צדיקים אינן עומדין אבל עומדין הן בעדת רשעים. רבי נחמיה אומר אפילו בעדת רשעים אינן באים שנאמר (שם קד) יתמו חטאים מן הארץ ורשעים עוד אינם.

6. אלא in printed edn. but אלו, as in the Leiden manuscript, is likely to be the correct reading

Avot DeRabbi Natan A 12

אבל אנשי סדום מתוך שהיו שונאים זה את זה אבדן הקב"ה מן העולם הזה ומן העולם הבא שנאמר (בראשית יג) ואנשי סדום רעים וחטאים לה' מאד. [רעים זה עם זה] וחטאים זה גילוי עריות לה' זה חילול השם. מאד שמתכוונין וחוטאים. הא למדת מתוך ששונאין זה את זה אבדן הקב"ה מן העולם הזה ומן העולם הבא.

Avot DeRabbi Natan B 30

שכן מצינו באנשי סדום שלא עקרו המקום אלא בעבור שהיו שונאים זה לזה שנאמר ואנשי סדום רעים וחטאים לה' מאד. רעים זה לזה. וחטאים בגלוי עריות. מאד בשפיכות דמים. דבר אחר מאד במשכב זכר.

Section B. Exegesis of Job/Psalms

Tosefta Sotah 3:11

אנשי סדום לא נתגאו אלא מתוך טובה שהוא אומ' בסדום (איוב כח) ארץ ממנה יצא לחם תחתיה כמו אש מקום ספיר אבניה וגו' נתיב לא ידעו עי' ולא שזפתהו עין איה. אמרו הואיל וכסף וזהב יוצא מארצנו אין אנו צריכין שיבא אדם אצלנו שאין באין אלא לחסרינו אמר להם המקום בטובה שהשפעת ליכם אתם משכחין את הרגל מביניכם אני אשכח אתכם מן העולם מהו אומר (שם) פרץ נחל וגו' (שם יב) לפיד בוז וגו' ישליו אהלים וגו' וכן הוא אומר (יחזקאל טז) חי אני נאם ה' אלהים אם עשתה סדום אחותך וגו' הנה זה היה עון סדום אחותך וגו'.

MRI Beshallah-Shira 2

וכן את מוצא באנשי סדום שבמה שנתגאו לפניו בו נפרע מהם שנ' (איוב כ"ח) ארץ ממנה יצא לחם ותחתיה נהפך כמו אש מקום ספיר אבניה ועפרות זהב לו ואומר (שם) נתיב לא ידעו עיט שזפתהו עין איה ואומר לא הדריכוהו בני שחץ ולא עדה עליו שחל אמרו הסדומיים אין אנו צריכין שיבא אדם אצלנו אלא הרי מזון יוצא מאצלנו וכסף וזהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות יוצאות מאצלנו בואו ונשכח תורת רגל מארצנו אמר להם הקב"ה ברוך הוא שוטים שבעולם בטובה שהשפעת ליכם אתם מתגאים אתם אמרתם נשכח תורת רגל מארצנו אף אני אשכח אתכם מן העולם שנ' (שם) פרץ נחל מעם גר הנשכחים מיני רגל דלו מאנוש נעו ואומר (שם י"ב) ישליו אהלים לשודדים ובטוחות למרגיזי אל מי גרם להם לאשר הביא אלוה בידו וכה"א (יחזקאל ט"ז) ותגבהנה ותעשנה תועבה לפני ומה גרם להם ואסיר אתהן כאשר ראיתי (שם) וכה"א הנה זה היה עון סדום אחותך גאון שבעת לחים ושלות השקט היה לה ולכך (שם) ויד עני ואביון לא החזיקה. וכה"א (בראשית י"ג) לפני שחת ה' את סדום ואת עמורה כגן ה' כארץ מצרים. ואחר מה כתיב (שם י"ט) ותשקן את אביהן יין בלילה הוא וכי מאין היה להם במערה אלא שזמן להם הקב"ה יין כענין שנאמ' (יואל ד') והיה ביום ההוא יטפו ההרים עסיס אם כן זימן הקב"ה למכעיסיו קל וחומר לעושי רצונו.

Sifre Ekev 11

וכן אתה מוצא באנשי סדום שלא מרדו במקום אלא מתוך שובע מה נאמר בהם (איוב כח) ארץ ממנה יצא לחם מקום ספיר אבניה נתיב לא ידעו עיט לא הדריכוהו בני שחץ וגו' אמרו אנשי סדום הרי מזון אצלנו הרי כסף וזהב אצלנו נעמוד ונשכח תורת הרגל מארצנו. אמר להם המקום בטובה שהיטבתי לכם אתם מבקשים לשכח תורת הרגל מביניכם אני משכח אתכם מן העולם. מה נאמר בהם (שם) פרץ נחל מעם גר (איוב יב) לפיד בוז וגו' ישליו אהלים לשודדים ובטוחות למרגיזי אל היא גרמה להם לאשר הביא אלוה בידו. וכן הוא אומר (יחזקאל טז) חי אני נאם ה' אלהים אם עשתה סדום. הנה זה היה עון סדום אחותך וגו' כל כך ויד עני ואביון לא החזיקה ותגבהינה. כיוצא בו אתה אומר כי כלה משקה מהו אומר (שם יט) ותשקין את אביהם יין ומאין היה להם יין במערה אלא שנזדמן להם לשעה וכן הוא אומר (יואל ד') והיה ביום ההוא יטפו ההרים עסיס אם כך נתן למכעיסיו קל וחומר לעושי רצונו.

NumR 9:24

אנשי סדום לא נתגאו לפני המקום אלא בשביל טובה שהשפיע להם. מהו אומר בארצם (איוב כח) ארץ ממנה יצא לחם וגו' מקום ספיר וגו' נתיב לא ידעו עיט וגו', לא הדריכוהו בני שחץ וגו'. אמרו סדום הואיל ומזון יוצא מארצנו כסף וזהב יוצא מארצנו אבנים טובות ומרגליות יוצאות מארצנו אין אנו צריכין שיבאו אדם אצלנו שאין באין אלינו אלא לחסרנו נעמוד ונשכח את הרגל מבינותינו אמר להם המקום בטובה שהטבתי לכם אתם מבקשים לשכח את הרגל מבינותיכם אני אשכח אתכם מן העולם מהו אומר (שם איוב כ"ח) פרץ נחל מעם גר הנשכחים מני רגל דלו מאנוש נעו (איוב יב) לפיד בוז לעשתות שאנן וגו' ישליו אוהלים וגו'. היא גרמה להם לאשר הביא אלוה בידו וכן הוא אומר (יחזקאל טז) חי אני נאם ה' אלהים אם עשתה סדום אחותך היא ובנותיה. כאשר עשית את ובנותיך הנה זה היה עון סדום אחותך גאון שבעת לחם ושלות השקט היה לה ולבנותיה. וכל כך למה ויד עני ואביון לא החזיקה וגו'.

Tan. Beshallah 12

אנשי סדום במה שנתגאו בו נפרע מהם מה כתיב בהן (איוב כח) ארץ ממנה יצא לחם ותחתיה נהפך כמו אש. מקום ספיר אבניה ועפרות זהב לו. נתיב לא ידעו עיט ולא שזפתו עין איה. לא הדריכוהו בני שחץ לא עדה עליו שחל. אמרו אין אנו צריכין שיבוא אדם מעוברי דרכים אצלנו אלא הרי מזון יוצא מאצלנו וכסף וזהב ואבנים טובות ומרגליות משלנו בואו ונשכח תורת הרגל מארצנו. אמר להן הקב"ה בטובה שהשפעת לי לכם אתם מתגאים אני אשכח אתכם מן העולם שנאמר (איוב כ"ח) פרץ נחל מעם גר הנשכחים מני רגל דלו מאנוש נעו. וכתיב (שם איוב יב) לפיד בוז לעשתות שאנן נכון למעדי רגל. ישליו אוהלים לשודדים ובטחות למרגיזי אל. מי גרם להם לאשר הביא אלוה בידו (איוב י"ב), וכן הוא אומר (יחזקאל טו) הנה זה היה עון סדום אחותך גאון שבעת לחם ושלות השקט היה לה ולבנותיה ויד עני ואביון לא החזיקה. וכן הוא אומר (בראשית יג) לפני שחת ה' את סדום ואת עמורה כגן ה' כארץ מצרים מה כתיב שם ותשקין את אביהן יין בלילה הוא (בראשית יט). מניין היה להם יין בסעודה אלא שזמן להם המקום יין כמה שנאמר (יואל ד) והיה ביום ההוא יטפו ההרים עסיס והגבעות תלכנה חלב וכל אפיקי יהודה ילכו מים ומעין מבית ה' יצא והשקה את נחל השטים. אם כך זמן הקב"ה למכעיסו לעושי רצונו עאכ"ו.

LevR 4:1

ד"א מקום המשפט שמה הרשע... מדבר בסדומיים. מקום המשפט שמה הרשע, מקום שנעשתה בהן מידת הדין בסדומיים כדתנן אנשי סדום אין להם חלק עולם הבא אבל עומדין בדין. שמה הרשע, שם (בראשית יט) וי"י המטיר על סדם ועל עמרה גפרית ואש וגו'. ורוח הקדש צווחת ואומרת מקום הצדק שמה הרשע מקום שהצדקתים וכתבתי בארצם (איוב כח) ארץ ממנה יצא לחם ותחתיה נהפך כמו אש מקום ספיר אבניה ועפרות זהב לו. אמרו כשהיו אחד מהן הולך אצל הגנן וא' לו תן לי באיסר ירק כשהוא נותן לו והיה משכשכו מוצא בעפרו זהב, לקיים מה שנאמר (שם איוב כ"ח) ועפרות זהב לו. שמה הרשע, שם אמרו נעמוד ונשכח את הרגל מבינותינו יד עני ואביון לא החזיקה.

Section C. R. Jose of Sepphoris

GenR 27:3

וירא י"י כי רבה וגו', ר' חננא אמר רבה והולכת רבי ברכיה בשם ר' יוחנן שמענו בדור המבול שנידונו במים והסדומיים באש מנ' ליתן את האמור כאן להלן ושאמ' להלן כאן תלמוד לומר רבה רבה לגזרה שוה.

רק רע כל היום משהיתה חמה זורחת ועד שתשקע לא היה בהם תוחלת ה"ד (איוב כד) לאור יקום רוצח וגו', והא כת' (שם איוב כ"ד) חתר בחשך בתים למה שיומם חיתמו למו, מה היה עושה היו מביא אפופוליסמון ושף באבן ובא בלילה וחותרה כדרש ר' חנינא בציפורי איתעבד בה תלת מאה חותרין, מה הוה ציפורי עבדין בתוכה.⁷

7. Several manuscripts have בתמיה instead of בתוכה, which makes more sense.

II Narrative Section

Section C. Judges of Sodom

GenR 50:3

חמשה ראשי דיינים היו בסדום, קוו שקר, דשקר, רבנבל, מטהידין וקלאפנדר. לוט היה ארכקריטיס שלהם.⁸ בשעה שהיה אומר להם מה שירצו אומרים לו גש הלאה סק לעיל, ובשעה שהיה אומר להם דברים שלא ירצו אומרים לו האחד בא לגור וישפוט שפוט.

TanB Vayera 21

חמשה דיינים היו בסדום, ולוט רע מכולם והושיבוהו ביניהם, שכך כתיב ולוט ישב בשער סדום.

Section J. The Young Girl

GenR 49:6

ו ארדה נא ואראה תני ר' שמעון בן יוחאי אומר זו אחת מעשר ירידות האמורות בתורה: אמר ר' אבא בר כהנא מלמד שפתח להם הקב"ה פתח שלתשובה ארדה נא ואראה הכצעקתה הבאה אלי עשו כלה כלייה הם צריכין ואם לא אדעה אודיע להן מידת הדין בעולם: אמר ר' לוי אפילו אני מבקש לשותק דינה שלנערה אינו מניח אותי לשתוק. מעשה בשתי נערות שירדו למלאות מים, אמרה אחת לחברתה למה פניך חולניות, אמרה לה כלו מזונותינו וכבר אנו למות. מה עשת מילאת את הכד קמח והחליפתו נטלה זו מה שביד זו וזו מה שביד זו. כיון שהרגישו בה נטלוה ושרפוה, אמר הקב"ה דינה שלנערה אינו מניח אותי לשתוק, ה"ד הכצעקתם אינו אומר אלא הכצעקתה שלנערה.

8. There is variation amongst manuscripts, with no consistent reading.

APPENDIX 3: PARALLEL TEXTS ON THE GENERATION OF THE DISPERSION (bSanh. 109a)

Tosefta and Palestinian Talmud

Tosefta San. 13:7

דור המגדל אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן חיינן לעולם הבא שנאמר (בראשית י"א) ויפץ י"י אותם משם על פני כל הארץ בעולם הזה ויחדלו לבנות העיר לעולם הבא.

Texts Parallel to Sections of the Gemara

Section I

GenR 38:6

דור הפלגה אמרו לא כל הימנו לבור לו את העליונים וליתן לנו את התחתונים¹ אלא בוא ונעשה לנו מגדל וניתן עבודה זרה בראשו וניתן חרב בידה ותהי נראת כאילו עושה עימו מלחמה¹, מהן לא נשארה מהן פליטה ואלו נשארה מהם פליטה, אלא דור המבול על ידי שהיו שטופין בגזל [שנא' גבולות ישיגו עדר גזלו וירעו], לפיכך לא נשארה מהן פליטה אבל אילו על ידי שהיו אוהבים זה את זה ויהי כל הארץ שפה אחת לפיכך נשאר מהם פליטה.

Tanhuma Noah 18

אמרו לא כל הימנו שיבור לו העליונים ויתן לנו התחתונים נעלה לרקיע ונכהו בקרדומות. ונחלקו לג' כתות אחת אומרת נעלה ונשב שם וא' אומרת נעשה עמו מלחמה וא' אומרת נעלה ונעבוד שם עבודת כו"ם. זו שאמרו נעלה ונשב שם משם הפיצם ה' וזו שאמרו נעלה ונעשה עמו מלחמה נעשו קופין רוחין ושדין וזו שאומרת נעבוד שם עבודת כו"ם בלע ה' פלג לשונם שנאמר ויפץ ה' אותם משם.

TanB Vayera 24

(אמרו לו) [ויאמרו] הבה נבנה לנו עיר ומגדל (בראשית י"ד), ונשים ע"ז שלנו למעלה הימנו, ונעשה עמו מלחמה, שנאמר ונעשה לנו שם (בראשית י"ד), ונכתוב ושם אלהים אחרים לא תזכירו (שמות כ"ג), אמר להם אברהם למה כל אלה, אמרו לו שלא יעשה לנו כמו שעשה לראשונים, אמר להם הנחתם מגדול עוז שם ה' (משלי י"ח), ואתם אומרים נעשה לנו שם, מה עשה להם הקב"ה, הפיצם, שנאמר ויפץ ה' אותם (בראשית י"ד).

1. The section up to here is repeated within 38:1. The second repetition is here quoted together with the text that follows it.

MRI Mishpatim 20

רבי נתן אומר הרי הוא אומר ויאמרו הבה נבנה לנו עיר וגו' נאמר כאן שם ונאמר להלן שם מה כאן עבודה זרה אף להלן עבודה זרה.

Texts on middah keneged middah with no parallel in bSanh. 109a

Tosefta Sotah 3:3

אנשי מגדל לא נתגאו אלא מתוך טובה שהשפיע להם שנא' ויהי בנוסעם מקדם וימצאו בקעה בארץ שנער וישבו שם ואין ישיבה אלא אכילה ושתייה היא גרמה להן ויאמרו הבה נבנה לנו עיר ומגדל וראשו בשמים וגו' ויפץ י"י אותם משם על פני כל הארץ.

MRI Beshallach-Shira 2

וכן אתה מוצא באנשי מגדל שבמה שנתגאו לפניו בו נפרע מהם שנאמר ויאמרו הבה נבנה לנו עיר ומגדל וראשו בשמים ונעשה לנו שם פן נפוץ אחריו מה כתיב ויפץ ה' אותם משם.

Sifre Ekev 11

וכן אתה מוצא באנשי המגדל שלא מרדו במקום אלא מתוך שובע מה נאמר בהם (בראשית יא) ויהי כל הארץ שפה אחת ודברים אחדים ויהי בנסעם מקדם וימצאו בקעה בארץ שנער וישבו שם. ואין ישיבה האמורה כאן אלא אכילה ושתייה שנ' (שמות לב) וישב העם לאכול ושתה ויקומו לצחק היא גרמה להם שאמרו הבה נבנה לנו עיר וגו' מה נאמר בהם (בראשית יא) ויפץ ה' אותם משם.

NumR 9:24

אנשי המגדל לא נתגאו לפני המקום אלא בשביל טובה שהשפיע להם שנאמר (שם בראשית יא) ויהי כל הארץ שפה וגו' ויהי בנסעם מקדם וגו' ואין ישיבה אלא אכילה ושתייה שנאמר (שמות לב) וישב העם לאכול ושתה. היא גרמה להם שנאמר (בראשית יא) ויאמרו הבה נבנה לנו וגו' ובה פרע מהם הקדוש ברוך הוא שנאמר (בראשית י"א) ויפץ ה' אותם משם וגו' על כן קרא שמה בבל וגו'.

Tan. Beshallach 12

אנשי מגדל במה שנתגאו בו נפרע מהן. הם אמרו הבה נבנה לנו עיר וגו' (שם בראשית יא), בו נפרע מהן שנאמר הבה נרדה ונבלה שם שפתם וגו' ויפץ ה' אותם (שם בראשית י"א).

Section II

GenR 38:8

אמר ר' חייא בר אבא המגדל הזה שבנו שלישי שקע ושלישי שרף ושלישי קיים, ואם תאמר שהוא קטן, ר'

הונא בשם ר' אידי כל מי שעולה בראשו רואה דקלים שלפניו כאלין הגביא.

GenR 38:11

על כן קרא שמה בבל חד תלמיד מדר' יוחנן הוה יתיב קמיה [הוה] מסבר ליה ולא סבר, אמר ליה מאי האי, אמר ליה דאנא גלי מאתרי, אמר ליה מן הידן אתר את, [אמר ליה] מן בורסיף, אמר ליה לא כן אלא בולסיף כי שם בלל י"י שפת.

Tan Noah 18

א"ר חייא בר אבא מגדל שעשו שליש נשרף שליש נבלע שליש קיים. מי שעולה לראשו רואה דקלים אשר ביריחו כחגבים.

TanB Noah 25

אמר ר' חייא בר אבא לשלשה חלקים נחלק המגדל, שליש נבלע, ושליש נפל, ושליש עומד עד עכשיו, מי שעולה לראשו רואה התמרים של יריחו כחגבים הללו.

APPENDIX 4: PARALLEL TEXTS ON KORACH AND THE GENERATION OF THE WILDERNESS (bSan. 109b-110b)

Tosefta and Palestinian Talmud

Tosefta San. 13:9-10

מרגלים אין להם חלק לעולם הבא שנאמר (במדבר י"ד) וכל מנאצי לא יראוה קרח ועדתו אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן חיינן לעולם הבא שנ' (שם ט"ז) ותכס עליהם הארץ' בעולם הזה ויאבדו מתוך הקהל בעולם הבא דברי ר' עקיבא ר' יהודה בן פתירא אומ' באין הן לעולם הבא ועליהם הוא אומ' (תהלים קי"ט) תעיתי כשה אובד בקש עבדך נאמרה כאן אבידה ונאמר להלן אבידה מה אבידה האמורה להלן אבידה מתבקשת אף אבידה האמורה כאן אבידה מתבקשת.

דור המדבר אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואינן חיינן לעולם הבא שנ' (במדבר י"ד) במדבר הזה יתמו ושם ימותו יתמו בעולם הזה ושם ימותו בעולם הבא ואומ' (תהלים צ"ה) אשר נשבעתי באפי אם יבואון אל מנוחתי דברי ר' עק' ר' אליעזר אומ' באין הן לעולם הבא ועליהם אמ' דוד (שם נ') אספו לי חסידיי כרתי בריתי עלי זבח.

Palestinian Talmud San. 10:1

27d

רב אמר קרח עשיר גדול היה תיסברין של פרעה נגלה לו בין מגדול ובין הים. רב אמר קרח אפיקרסי היה מה עשה עמד ועשה טלי' שכולן תכלת אתא גבי משה א"ל משה רבינו טלית שכלה תכלת מהו שתהא חייבת בציצית אמר לו חייבת דכתיב גדילים תעשה לך וגו' בית שהוא מלא ספרים מהו שיהא חייב במזוזה אמר לו חייב במזוזה דכתיב וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך וגו'. אמר לו בהרת כגריס מהו אמר לו טמא פרחא בכולו אמר לו טהור.

באותה שעה אמר קרח אין תורה מן השמים ולא משה נביא ולא אהרן כהן גדול. באותה השעה אמר משה רבון כל העולמים אם נברא לארץ פה מששת ימי בראשית הרי מוטב ואם לאו יברא לה מעכשיו ואם בריאה יברא ה'. אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש שלשה כפרו בנבואתן מפני פונרייה ואילו הן משה ואליהו ומיכה משה אמר אם כמות כל אדם ימותון אלה וגו' אליהו אמר עניני ה' עניני וידעו העם הזה ואם לאו ואתה הסיבות את לבם אחורנית מיכה אמר אם שוב תשוב בשלום לא דיבר ה' בי וירדו הם וכל אשר להם חיים שאולה. רבי ברכיה בשם רבי חלבו אף שמוותיהם פרחו מתוך טמסותיהם. א"ר יוסי בר חנינה אפילו מחט שהיתה שאולה ביד ישראל מידם אף היא נבלעה עמהן דכתיב וירדו הם וכל אשר להם חיים שאולה. ומי נתפלל עליהם ר' שמואל בר נחמן אמר משה נתפלל עליהם יחי ראובן ואל ימות רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר חנה נתפללה עליהן היא דעתיה דרבי יהושע בן לוי דאמר ר' יהושע בן לוי בשם רבי יוסי כך היתה עדתו של קרח שוקעת ויורדת עד שעמדה חנה ונתפללה עליהם ואמרה ה' ממית ומחיה מוריד שאול ויעל:

The Palestinian Talmud San. 10:3

29c

גמ' דור המדבר אין להן חלק לעוה"ב ואין רואין לעתיד לבוא שנאמר במדבר הזה יתמו ושם ימותו יתמו בעולם הזה ושם ימותו לעתיד לבוא וכן הוא אומר אשר נשבעתי באפי אם יבואון אל מנוחתי דברי רבי עקיבה ר' אליעזר אומר עליהם הוא אומר אספו לי חסידי כורתי בריתי עלי זבח ר' יהושע אומר נשבעתי ואקיימה פעמיים שאינו מקיים² חנניה בן אחי ר' יהושע אומר כתי' אשר נשבעתי באפי באפי נשבעתי חוזר אני בי. תני ר' שמעון בן מנסיא אומר עליהם הוא אומר אספו לי חסידי וגומר חסידי שעשו עמי חסד. כורתי בריתי שנכרתו על ידי. עלי זבח שעילו אותו ונזבחו על שמי. תני ר' יהושע בן קרחה אומר על הדורות הללו הוא אומר ופדויי ה' ישובון.

רבי אומר אילו ואילו יש להן חלק לעולם הבא³ ומה טעמא והיה ביום ההוא יתקע בשופר גדול ובאו האובדים בארץ אשור אילו עשרת השבטים. והנידחים באץ מצרים זה דור המדבר אלו ואילו והשתחוו לה' בהר הקדש בירושלם.

עדת קרח אין להן חלק לעולם הבא ואין רואין לעתיד לבוא מה טעמא ותכס עליהם הארץ בעולם הזה ויאבדו מתוך הקהל לעתיד לבוא. תני ר' יהודה בן בתירא אומר ממשמע שנאמר תעיתי כשה אבד בקש עבדך מה אבידה האמורה להלן סופה להתבקש אף אבידה האמור' כאן עתידה להתבקש. מי נתפלל עליהן ר' שמואל בר נחמן אמר משה נתפלל עליהן יחי ראובן ואל ימות ר' יהושע בן לוי אמר חנה נתפללה עליהן היא דר' יהושע בן לוי דאמר ר' יהושע בן לוי כך היתה עדתו של קרח שוקעת ויורדת עד שעמדה חנה ונתפללה עליהן ואמרה ה' ממית ומחיה מוריד שאול ויעל.

Texts Parallel to Sections of the Gemara

The texts from the Tan. are found also in TanB and NumR with generally minor changes, which are shown in footnotes.

Section A. Baraita concerning judgement for the world to come

ARN 36:2 and ARNB

ב. קרח ועדתו לא חיין ולא נידונין שנאמר (במדבר טז) ותכס עליהם הארץ ויאבדו מתוך הקהל דברי ר' אליעזר. רבי יהושע אומר באין הן ועליהם הוא אומר (ש"א ב) ה' ממית ומחיה מוריד שאול ויעל נאמר כאן שאול (במדבר טז) וירדו הם וכל אשר להם חיים שאולה ונאמר להלן שאול. מה שאול שנאמר להלן מוריד ומעלה אף שאול האמור כאן ירדו ועתידין לעלות. אמר לו רבי אליעזר מה אתה מקיים ותכס עליהם הארץ ויאבדו מתוך הקהל אמר לו מתוך הקהל אבדו מן העולם הבא לא אבדו.

דור המדבר לא חיין ולא נידונין שנאמר (שם יד) במדבר הזה יתמו ושם ימותו ואומר (תהלים צה) אשר נשבעתי באפי אם יבואון אל מנוחתי דברי רבי איעזר. רבי יהושע אומר באין הן ועליהן הוא אומר (שם ג) אספו לי חסידי כורתי בריתי עלי זבח. אמר לו ר"א מה אתה מקיים אשר נשבעתי באפי. אמר לו אלו מרגלים כל רשעי הדור כולן. אמר לו רבי יהושע ומה אתה מקיים אספו לי חסידי. אמר לו זה משה ואהרן וכל חסידי הדור משבט לוי משיבין על דבריו רשעים נאמר בהם שם וצדיקים לא נאמר בהם שם. והלא כבר נאמר (בראשית מט) שמה קברו את אברהם ואת שרה אשתו ואומר (שם ג) בקברי אשר כריתי לי בארץ כנען שמה ואומר (במדבר כ) ותמת שם מרים ותקבר שם (שם לג) ויעל אהרן הכהן וגו' וימת שם ואומר (דברים לד) וימת שם משה עבד ה' בארץ מואב על

2. This statement is also found in p. Hagigah (1:8) in relation to the annulment of vows, in order to show that vows are not always irrevocable.

3. I.e. the Generation of the Wilderness and the Ten Tribes, though the Ten Tribes are not mentioned until later in the text and this statement appears out of place here.

פי ה'. רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר אינן באין שנאמר (במדבר יב) במדבר הזה יתמו ושם ימותו ואומר (דברים כב) וערפו שם את העגלה בנחל. מה שם האמור להלן בעגלה ערופה שתמות ולא תזוז ממקומה אף שם האמור כאן ימותו ולא יזוזו ממקומן. ואחרים אומרים באים הן ועליהן הוא אומר (ירמיה ב) הלוך וקראת באזני ירושלים לאמר וגו' זכרתי לך חסד נעורך.

Section B. Word plays on the names of the major players in the narrative

GenR 98:2

כך אבינו יעקב תלה עיניו וראה שכינה עומדת על גביו אמר להם הוּו זהירין בכבודו של הקב"ה, ורבנן אמרי כך היתה עדתו של קרח שוקעת ויורדת שוקעת ויורדת עד שעמדה חנה ונתפללה עליהן (ש"א שמואל א' ב) ה' ממית ומחיה מוריד שאול ויעל.

GenR 98:5

בסודם אל תבא נפשי, בשעה שהן באים ליטול עצה בשטים, בקהלם אל תחד כבודי, בשעה שהם נקהלין על משה בעדת קרח, בקהלם אל תחד כבודי, אבל לדוכן רבי חונא ורבי חנינא ורבי פנחס תלתייהון אמרי בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי בן ישראל.

GenR 99:6

בקהלם אל תחד כבודי, כשיקהיל קרח את עדתו לחלוק לא יתיחד שמי עליהם, אלא (שם במדבר טז) ויקח קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי, ולא אמר בן יעקב.

Tan. Korach 4 (TanB Korach 7 and NumR 18:5)

בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי ולמה לא כתיב בן יעקב או בן ישראל וזה"ל כ (בראשית מט) בסודם אל תבא נפשי וגו' בסודם אל תבא נפשי אלו המרגלים ובקהלם אל תחד כבודי זה קרח. אמר יעקב לפני הקב"ה רבש"ע לא במרגלים ולא במחלוקתו של קרח יזכר שמי על אותן רשעים שעתידין להכעיס⁴. ואימתי יכתב שמי עליהם כשהם מתיחסין ועומדין על הדוכן⁵ שנאמר (דברי הימים א ו) בן תחת בן אסיר בן אביאסף בן קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי בן ישראל.

Tan. Vayechi 10

בסודם אל תבא נפשי (בראשית מט) כשיעמוד זמרי ויזנה עם כזבי על יזכר נפשי בהם. וכן הוא אומר ושם איש ישראל המכה זמרי בן סלוא (במדבר כה) כנה שמו ושם אביו ובכל ישראל לא היו שמות אלו. בקהלם אל תחד כבודי כשיקהיל קרח את כל העדה לחלוק על משה אל תתיחד כבודי עמהן אלא ויקח קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי ולא אמר בן יעקב. והיכן יזכר שמי על הדוכן דכתי' (ד"ה דברי הימים א ו) ואלה העומדים ובניהם תימן בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי בן ישראל.

4. The words שעתידים להכעיס are absent from NumR.

5. TanB has מתייחדים לעמוד על הדוכן, so reading: 'When might my name be united [with theirs]? When they unite to stand on the stage..' NumR has 'יזכר' instead of 'יכתב'.

TanB Vayechi 12

בסודם אל תבא נפשי ובקהלם אל תחד כבודי שנאמר זמרי בן סלוא נשיא בית אב לשמעוני (במדבר כח) וכן ויקח קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי וגו' ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן (שם במדבר טז), בקהלם את תחד כבודי.

Section C. The wives of On and Korach

Tan. Korach 10 (TanB Korach 24 and NumR 18:20)

ואון בן פלת. למה נקרא שמו און שכל ימיו באנינות היה⁶. בן פלת שנעשו לו נפלאות. אמר רב און בן פלת אשתו הצילתו אמרה לו מה ליך בהדין פלוגתא אי אהרן כהנא רבא את תלמידא אי קרח יהיה כהנא רבא את תלמידא אמר לה ידענא דכולא כנישתא קדישא דכתיב כי כל העדה כלם קדושים⁷ מה עבדת אשקיתיה חמרא וארויתיה ואגניתיה בערסיתיה והוה יתבא אבבא דביתא וסתריתיה למזייה⁸ כל מאן דאתא בשביל און בעלה חזייה וחדרא אדהכי והכי איבלעינהו ארעא⁹ היינו דכתיב (משלי יג) חכמות נשים בנתה ביתה זו אשתו של און ואולת בידיה תהרסנה זו אשתו של קרח.

Tan. Korach 3 (TanB Korach 6 and NumR 18:4)

ויקח קרח לקח טליתו והלך ליטול עצה מאשתו בשעה שאמר ליה הקב"ה למשה¹⁰ קח את הלויים מתוך בני ישראל וטהרת אותם וכה תעשה להם לטהרם וגו' (שם במדבר ח) מיד עשה משה כן לקרח התחיל לחזור על כל ישראל לא היו מכירין אותו אמרו לו מי עשה כך כך. אמר להם משה עשה בי כך ולא עוד אלא נטלוני בידי ורגלי והיו מניפין אותי ואומרים לי הרי אתה טהור.¹¹ והביא את אהרן אחיו וקשטו ככלה והושיבו באהל מועד. מיד התחילו שונאי משה להתגרות בו את ישראל ואמרו משה מלך ואהרן אחיו כהן גדול ובני אהרן סגני כהונה. תרומה לכהן מעשר ראשון לכהן כ"ד מתנות לכהן.¹² מיד ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן וגו'.¹³

Tan. Korach 2 (TanB Korach 4 and NumR 18:3)

ויקח קרח מה כתיב למעלה מן הענין דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם ועשו להם צצית (במדבר טו) קפץ קרח ואמר למשה אתה אומר ונתנו על צצית וגו' טלית שכולה תכלת מה היא שיהא פטורה מן צצית. א"ל משה חייבת בצצית. א"ל קרח טלית שכולה תכלת אינה פוטרת עצמה וארבעה חוטין פוטר אותה. בית מלא ספרים מהו שתהא פטורה מן המזוזה א"ל חייבת במזוזה. א"ל כל התורה כולה רע"ח פרשיות שיש בה כולן אין פוטרות את

6. Tan B reads שלן באנינות כל ימיו.

7. In NumR, On's wife says this, as in the BT.

8. NumR adds 'and her daughter.'

9. TanB reads אדהכי והכי נבלעו

10. The word 'משה' is absent from TanB.

11. In TanB the words 'עשה בי כך' are absent. The second half of the sentence is in the singular, which makes more sense as it is not clear why there is a change to the plural or who 'they' are. However, נטלוני, at the beginning of the sentence, is in the plural here in TanB too.

12. TanB reads 'תרומת מעשר לכהן כד מתנות כהונה לכהן..'

13. NumR adds, 'ויאמרו אלהם' (Num. 16:3).

הבית ושתי פרשיות שבמזוזה פטורות את הבית א"ל דברים אלו לא נצטוו עליהם ומלבד אתה בודאם הה"ד ויקח קרח.

Section D. Causes and course of the rebellion

Tan. Korach 10 (TanB Korach 25¹⁴ and NumR 18:20)

ויקומו לפני משה נשיאי עדה מיוחדין שבעדה קרואי מועד שיודעין לעבר את השנים ולקבוע את החדשים והתקופות אנשי שם שהיה להם שם בכל.¹⁵ וישמע משה ויפול על פניו מה שמע א"ר שמואל בר נחמני א"ר יונתן מלמד שחשדוהו באשת איש שנאמר ויקנאו למשה במחנה. א"ר חייא בר אבא אמר רב מלמד שכל אחד ואחד קנא לאשתו מן משה.¹⁶

The following paragraph is absent from TanB

ויקם משה וילך אל דתן ואבירם ארשב"ל מכאן שאין מחזיקין במחלוקת. אמר רב כל המחזיק במחלוקת עובר בלאו. הוא שנאמר ולא יהיה כקרח וכעדתו. רב אסי אמר ראוי הוא להצטרע כתיב הכא כאשר דבר ה' ביד משה לו. וכתוב התם (שמות ב) ויאמר ה' לו עוד הבא נא ידך וגו'. אמר רב חסדא כל החולק על רבו כאלו חולק על השכינה שנאמר בהצותם על ה'. אמר רב חמא בר חנינא¹⁷ כל העושה מריבה עם רבו כאילו עושה מריבה עם השכינה שנאמר (במדבר כ) המה מי מריבה אשר רבו בני ישראל את ה'. אמר רבי חנינא בר פפא¹⁸ כל המתרעם על רבו כאלו מתרעם על השכינה שנאמר (שמות טז) לא עלינו תלונותיכם כי על ה' א"ר אבהו כל המהרהר אחרי רבו כאלו מהרהר אחרי השכינה שנאמר (במדבר כא) וידבר העם באלהים ובמשה.

Section E. The wealth of Korach

Josephus Antiquities Book IV, 14¹⁹

Kores, a certain one of the Hebrews who was among the most distinguished both in ancestry and in wealth, an able speaker and most persuasive in dealing with crowds, seeing that Moyses was established in extraordinary honor, was hostile through envy, for he happened to be his fellow tribesman and kinsman, and was embittered because he was more deserving to enjoy this glory by virtue of his being wealthier and not inferior in ancestry.

14. There are grammatical differences between Tan and TanB in these sections which are not listed.

15. והתקופות is absent from TanB and NumR.

16. The attribution to R. Samuel bar Nachmani in the name of R. Jonathan is absent in TanB. The following statement in the name of Rav is attributed to Rav Samuel bar Isaac not R. Hiyya bar Abba in TanB and NumR.

17. NumR has R. Jose bar R. Hanina.

18. 'Bar Pappa' is absent from NumR.

19. Flavius Josephus, Antiquities, LH Feldman, Brill, Leiden, 2004.

GenR 50:11

ויתמהמה תמהון אחר תמהון. אמר כמה אבוד בכסף וזהב ובאבנים טובות ומרגליות הה"ד (קהלת ה) עושר שמור לבעליו לרעתו. ר' יהושע בן לוי אמר זה לוט ר' שמואל בר נחמן אמר זה קרח ר' יהודה בר' סימון אמר זה נבות, רבי לוי אמר זה המן רבי יצחק אמר זה שבט ראובן וגד, רבנין אמ' זה שבטו שללוי דהוה מסתכן וחזר למה דהוה.

NumR 18:15

אמר איוב (איוב יח) וישכן ערים נכחדות בתים לא ישבו למו אשר התעתדו לגלים זה היה קרח שהיה קתליקוס לביתו של פרעה והיו בידו מפתחות האוצרות שלו א"ל הקב"ה מה הנאה יש לך אין אתה שולט עליהם שנא' בתים לא ישבו למו אשר התעתדו לגלים ולמי הן מעותדין לאלו שהן גולין ישראל שגלו ממצרים אבל קרח לא יעשר ולא יקום חילו אף כשימות אינו קם ולא יטה לארץ מנלם לא יסור מני חשך לעולם אינו סר מן החשך יונקתו תיבש שלהבת אמרו רבותינו אשתו של קרח כשירדה לגיהנם כיבת אותה ויסור ברוח פיו שלא יאמר שמואל עתיד לעמוד ממנו ובשבילו אני נמלט אף הוא יסור ברוח פיו אל יאמן בשוא נתעה הקב"ה צווח על ר"ן איש שחלקו עמו אל תאמינו טועה הוא אל יאמן כשהוא נתעה בלא יומו תמלא עד שלא יגיע קצו למות הוא ממית עצמו. יחמס כגפן בסרו זו אשתו וישלך כזית נצתו אלו בניו ולמה כי עדת חנף גלמוד ואש אכלה אהלי שחד ואש יצאה מאת ה'.

Section F. The punishment of Korach

Sifrei Num. Korach

זכרון לבני ישראל הא למדנו שהיה קרח מן הבלועים ומן השרופים.

Tan Korach 9 (TanB Korach 23 NumR 18:19)²⁰

ויהי ככלותו לדבר את כל הדברים האלה ללמדך שמכל מקום שהוא רוצה מצמיח את הפורעניות. וירדו הם וכל אשר להם חיים שאולה יש אומרים חיים נדונין עד עכשיו ותכס עליהם הארץ הם אבדו ולא שררותן אלא נעשו תחתיהם שרי אלפים שרי מאות.²¹ וכל ישראל אשר סביבותיהם נסו לקולם שהיו צווחין משה רבינו הצילנו.

ואש יצאה מאת ה' וגו' אלו היו נבלעים ואלו היו נשרפין וקרח עומד בין השרופים שא"ל משה ואתה ואהרן איש מחתתו וקרח לקה יותר מכלם שנשרף ונבלע. ולמה נעשה בו שני דינין שאילו נשרף ולא נבלע הרי הבלועים מתרעמין ואומרים שלא הביא עלינו את כל הפורעניות הזה אלא קרח והרי הן נבלעין וקרח ניצול. ואילו נבלע ולא נשרף היו השרופים מתרעמין ואומרים שלא הביא עלינו את הפורעניות הזה אלא קרח והרי הן נשרפין והוא ניצול לפיכך נדון בשני מיתות. להט האש תחלה לעיני כל השרופים בידו היתה המחיתה והקטרת בה וקפלתו האש ככדור והאש מגלגלת בו עד שהביאותו לפי הארץ לבין הבלועים שנאמר ותפתח הארץ את פיה וגו'.

20. The first paragraph of NumR has several differences and is shown below. The second paragraph is the same as the Tanhumas.

21. TanB reads אלא נעשו תחתיהם שרים אחרים

NumR 18:19

ויהי ככלותו לדבר את כל הדברים האלה ותבקע האדמה אשר תחתיהם ללמדך שמכל מקום שהוא רוצה מצמיח את הפורעניות. חיים שאולה יש אומרים חיים וקיימים עד עכשיו ותכס עליהם הם אבדו ולא פחדותן שנעשו אחרים תחתיהן שרי אלפים ושרי מאות וכל ישראל נסו לקולם שהיו צווחין בקולם משה רבינו הצילנו.

Section H. Gehinnom

Tan. Korach 11 (TanB 26-27 and Num R 18:20)

דרש רבא מאי דכתיב (חבקוק ג) שמש ירח עמד זבולה. מלמד שעלו השמש וירח לזבול ואמרו לפניו רבש"ע אם אתה עושה דין לכן עמרם נצא ואם לאו לא נצא עד שזרק בהם חציו שנא' לאור חציו יהלכון.²² אמר להם הקב"ה לכבודי לא מחיתם לכבוד ב"ו מחיתם והאידנא עד דמחו להו לא נפקי.

דרש רבא מאי דכתיב אם בריאה יברא ה' אמר משה לפני הקב"ה רבש"ע אם נברא גיהנם מוטב ואם לאו יברא.²³ למאי אילימא למהדר למברייא ממש הא כתיב (קהלת ב) אין כל חדש תחת השמש אלא לאקרובי פתחא. ובני קרח לא מתו (במדבר כו) תנא משום רבינו מקום נתבצר בגיהנם וישבו עליו. אמר רבה בר בר חנה זימנא חדא אזלינא באורחא ואמר לי ההוא טייעא תא אחזי לך בלועי דקרח. אזלי חזאי תרי בזעא דקא נפק קוטרא מיניה. הא שקיל גבבא דעמרה ואמשייה במיאי ואותביה יתיה בריש רומחא עילויה ואיחרוך ונפל. ואמר לי אצית מאי שמעת. שמעי דהוו קאמרי משה אמת ותורתו אמת והן בדאין. אמר לי כל תלתין יומין הוה מהדר להו גיהנם כבשר בתוך קלחת ואמרי הכי משה אמת ותורתו אמת²⁴ והן בדאין. ולעתיד לבא הקב"ה עתיד להוציאן ועליהן אמרה חנה ה' ממית ומחיה מוריד שאול ויעל (שמואל א' ב).

NumR 18:12

וכן משה אם כמות כל האדם וגו' אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה מה אתה מבקש אמר לפניו רבונו שלעולם אם בריאה אם בראת פה לארץ הרי יפה ואם לאו יברא ה' יברא לה עכשיו פה. אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא (איוב כב) ותגזר אומר ויקם לך ועל דרכיך נגה אור.

22. The prooftext is absent in TanB and NumR.

23. This sentence is absent from TanB.

24. TanB and NumR read משה ותורתו אמת

APPENDIX 5: PARALLEL TEXTS ON BALAAM

(bSan. 105a-106b)

Palestinian Talmud - see Sections K and L, below.

Texts Parallel to Sections of the Gemara

Section B. Balaam and the world to come

GenR 20:3

אתה בקשתה להרוג את האדם ולישא את אשתו ואיבה אשית בינך ובין האשה הוי מה שביקש לא ניתן לו ומה שבידו נוטל ממנו, וכן מצינו בקין ובקרח ובלעם ובדואג וגחזי ואחיתופל ואבשלום ובאדוניהו ובעוזיהו ובהמן מה שביקשו לא ניתן להם ומה שבידם ניטל מהם.

Tosefta Sotah 4:18-19 (Lieberman edn.)

אתה בקשת להרוג את אדם ולישא את חוה עכשיו (שם) ואיבה אשית בינך ובין האשה נמצאת האומ' מה שביקש לא ניתן לו ומה שבידו נוטל ממנו וכן את מוצא בקין וקרח בלעם ודואג אחיתופל וגחזי אבשלום אדניה עוזיהו והמן שנתנו עיניהם בשאין ראוי להם מה שביקשו לא ניתן להם ומה שבידם נטלו מהם.

Tosefta Sanhedrin 13:1

ר"אליעזר אומ' כל גוים אין להן חלק לעולם הבא שנ' (תהלים ט') ישובו רשעים לשאול' כל גוים שכחי אלהים ישובו רשעים לשאולה אילו רשעי ישראל אמר לו ר' יהושע אילו א' הכת' ישובו רשעים לשאולה כל גוים ושותק הייתי או' כדברייך עכשיו שא' הכתוב שכחי אלהים הא יש צדיקים באומות שיש להם חלק לעולם הבא.

Section C. Moab and Midian

Sifrei Mattot

מאת המדינים והרי מואבים הם היו תחילה לדבר שנאמר וילכו זקני מואב וזקני מדין מימיהם לא עשו שלום זה עם זה וכשבאו להלחם עם ישראל עשו שלום זה עם זה ונלחמו עם ישראל. משל למה הדבר דומה לשני כלבים שהיו בעדר והיו צהובין זה עם זה בא זאב לטול טלה מן העדר והיה אחד מהם מתגרה כנגדו אמר חבירו אם איני הולך ומסייעו עכשיו הורגו ועוקף עלי והורגני עשו שלום זה עם זה ונלחמו עם הזאב. כך מואב ומדין מימיהם לא עשו שלום זה עם זה שנאמר (בראשית לו) המכה את מדין בשדה מואב. וכשבאו להלחם עם ישראל עשו שלום זה עם זה ונלחמו עם ישראל.

NumR 20:4

ויאמר מואב אל זקני מדין והלא את מוצא שמדינים נלחמים עם המואבים שנאמר (בראשית לו) המכה את מדין בשדה מואב והשנאה ביניהם מעולם משל לשני כלבים שהיו מריבים זה עם זה בא זאב על אחד מהן אמר השני אם איני עוזרו היום הורג את זה ולמחר יבא עלי לפיכך נתחברו מואב עם מדין.

Section F. Ancestors and their descendants

MRI Beshallach 1

ארבעה אסרו בשמחה אברהם אסר בשמחה שנא' (בראשית כ"ב) וישכם אברהם בבקר ויחבוש את חמורו ולא היו לו כמה עבדים אלא לכבוד המקום. יוסף אסר בשמחה שנא' (שם מ"ו) ויאסור יוסף את מרכבתו ולא היו לו כמה עבדים אלא לכבוד אביו. בלעם אסר בשמחה שנאמר (במדבר כ"ב) ויקם בלעם בבקר ויחבוש את אתונו. פרעה אסר בשמחה שנאמר ויאסור את רכבו. תבא חובשה של אברהם שהלך לעשות רצון המקום ותעמוד על חובשה של בלעם שהלך לקלל את ישראל.

MRS Beshallach 21:5

ארבעה אסרו בשמחה. אברהם[ם] אבינו אסר בש[מחה] שנא' וישכם אברהם בבוקר וגומ' (בר' כב). יוסף[אסר] בשמחה שנא' ויאס[ור] יוסף מרכבתו וגומ' (שם מו). פרעה אסר [בשמחה שנא' ויאסור את] רכבו וגומ' בלעם אסר בשמחה שנא' ויקם [בלעם בבוקר וגו'] (במ' כב). ר' שמעון בן יוחי אומ' תבוא חבישה תעמוד [על חבישה. תבוא חב] ישה שחבש אברהם לילך ולעשות ר[צון אביו שבשמי]ם תעמוד על חבישה שחבש בלעם לקל[ל את] יש'.

GenR 45:8

וישכם אברהם וגו'. אמר ר' שמעון בן יוחאי אהבה מקלקלת את השורה ושנאה מקלקלת את השורה. אהבה מקלקלת את השורה וישכם אברהם בבוקר ויחבש ולא היו לו כמה עבדים אלא אהבה מקלקלת את השורה. שנאה מקלקלת את השורה ויקם בלעם בבוקר ויחבש את אתונו ולא היו לו כמה עבדים אלא שנאה מקלקלת את השורה.

Tan Balak 8 and TanB Balak 11

מיד השכים בבקר שנאמר ויקם בלעם בבקר ויחבוש את אתונו וכי לא היה לו עבד ולא שפחה אלא מרוב שנאה ששנא את ישראל קדמתו ועמד בזריות הוא בעצמו. א"ל הקב"ה רשע כבר קדמך אברהם אביהם לעקידת יצחק בנו שנא' (בראש' כב) וישכם אברהם בבקר ויחבוש את חמורו (בראשית כב).

Section H. Exegesis of Num. 24:21-24

NumR 20:20

וישם ה' דבר בפיו כאדם שנותן בלינוס בפי בהמה ופוקמה להיכן שירצה כך הקב"ה פוקם את פיו כיון שאמר לו שוב אל בלק וברכם אמר מה אני הולך אצלו לפוח את נפשו בקש לילך לעצמו נתן הקב"ה לו בלינוס שוב אל בלק וכה תדבר.

Section J The Seduction of the Israelites

PT San. 10:2, 28c-d

וכי מה עשה בלעם הרשע על ידי שנתן עצה לבלק בן צפור להפיל את ישראל בחרב. אמר לו אלוה של אומה הזו הוא שונא את זנות אלא העמידו בנותיכם בזימה ואתם שולטין בהן. אמר ליה ומישמע לי אינון אמר ליה אקים בנתך קומוי וינון חמיין ושמעין לך הדא היא דכתיב ראש אומות בית אב במדין הוא. מה עשו בנו להן קנקלין מבית הישימון עד הר השלג והושיבו שם נשים מוכרת מיני כיסנין הושיבו את הזקינה מבחוץ ואת הנערה מבפנים והיו ישראל אוכלין ושותין והיה אחד מהן יוצא לטייל בשוק וליקח לו חפץ מן החנווני והיתה הזקינה מוכרת לו את החפץ בשיווי והנערה אומרת לו בא וטול לך בפחות. כן ביום הראשון וכן ביום השני וכן ביום השלישי והיתה אומרת לו מיכן והילך אתה כבן בית היכנס ובור לך. וכיון שהיה נכנס היה שם צרצור מלא יין מן היין העמוני שהוא קשה והוא את הגוף מפתה לזנות והיה ריחו מפעפע. ואדיין לא נאסר יין נסך של גוים על ישראל והיתה אומרת לו רצונך לשנות כוס יין והוא אומר לה הין והיא נותנת לו והוא שותה וכיון שהיה שותה היה היין בוער בו בכריסה של חכינה והוא אומר לה הישמעו לי והיא אומרת לו רצונך שאשמע לך והוא אומר הין מיד היתה מציאה לו טפוס של פער מתוך חיקה שלה והיתה אומרת לו השתחוה לזה ואני נשמעת לך והוא אומר לה וכי לעבודה זרה אני משתחוה והיתה אומרת לו אין את משתחוה אלא במגלה עצמך לו זו היא שאמרו חכמים הפוער עצמו לבעל פער זו היא עבודתו והזורק אבן למרקוליס זו היא עבודתו. והיה שם צרצור מלא יין מן היין העמוני שהוא קשה שהוא מפתה את הגוף לזנות והיה ריחו מפעפע ועדיין לא נאסר יין נסך על ישראל והיתה אומרת לו רצונך לשנות כוס יין והוא אומר הין והיא נותנת לו והוא שותה כיון שהוא שותה היה היין בוער בו בכריסה של עכנא והוא אומר לה הישמעו לי והיתה אומרת לו הינזר מתורת משה ואני נשמעת לך. הדא הוא דכתיב המה באו בעל פער וינזרו לבושת ויהיו שיקוצים באהבם עד שנעשו שיקוצים לאביהם שבשמים.

NumR 20:23

לזנות אל בנות מואב ותקראן לעם לזבחי אלהיהן שהלכו בעצתו שנא' הן הנה היו לבני ישראל בדבר בלעם למסר מעל בה' עשו להם קלעים והושיבו בהם זונות ובידיהן כל כלי חמדה והיתה זקנה יושבת מבחוץ ומשמרת לילדה שהיתה לפנים מן החנות. כשישראל עוברין ליטול חפץ בשוק זקנה אומרת לו בחור אי אתה רוצה כלי פשתן שבא מבית שאן והיתה מראה לו ואומרת לו הכנס לפנים ותראה חפצים נאים. הזקנה אומרת לו ביותר וילדה בפחות. מכאן ואילך אומרת לו ילדה הרי אתה כבן בית שב ברור לעצמך וצרצור יין מונח אצלה ועדיין לא נאסר יין של גוים נערה יוצאה מקושטת ומבוסמת ומפתה אותו ואומרת לו למה אנו אוהבין אתכם ואתם שונאין אותנו טול לך כלי זה חנם הלא (שם בראשית מב) כלנו בני איש אחד בני תרח אבי אברהם אין אתם רוצים לאכול מזבחתינו ומבשולינו הרי לנו עגלים ותרגולים שחטו כמצותכם ואכלו מיד משקתו היין ובוער בו השטן היה נשטה אחריה שנאמר (הושע ד) זנות ויין ותירוש יקח לב. ויש אומרים בלעם צוה אותם שלא להשקותם שלא ידונו כשתויי יין אלא כמזידין. כיון שהיה תובעה אומרת לו אני נשמעת לך עד שתשחט זה לפער ותשתחוה לו והוא אומר לעבודת כוכבים אני משתחוה ואומרת לו אין אתה אלא כמגלה עצמך והוא נשטה אחריה ועושה כן. זו שאמרו חכמים הפוער עצמו לבעל פער זו היא עבודתו שנאמר וישתחו לאלהיהן ויצמד ישראל לבעל פער.

Section K. Exegesis of Num. 25:1-2

Tan. Vayeshev 1

כל מקום שהוא צער אומר וישב. לשון צער הוא וישב ישראל בארץ מצרים בארץ גשן וגו' ויקרבו ימי ישראל למות (בראשית מז). וישב העם לאכול ושתו ויקומו לצחק וגו' ויפול מן העם ביום ההוא (שמות לב). וישבו לאכול לחם והנה ארחת ישמעאלים (בראשית לז). וישב יהודה וישראל לבטח (מלכים א ה). ויקם ה' שטן

לשלמה (מלכים א יא), וישב ישראל בשטים ויחל העם לזנות (במדבר כה).

Section L. The death of Balaam

PT San. 10:2

29a

כשבאו ישראל לנקום נקמת מדין מצאו שם בלעם בן בעור. וכי מה בא לעשות בא ליטול שכר עשרים וארבעה אלף שמתו מישראל על ידו בשיטים. אמר ליה פינחס לא דברייך עבדת ולא דבלק עבדת. לא דברייך עבדת דמר לך לא תיזיל עם שלוחי בלק ואזלת. ולא דבלק עבדת דאמר לך איזיל לייט ישראל וברכתנון. אף אני איני מקפחך שכרך.

Tan. Balak 14

תדע שכן כתיב ואת מלכי מדין הרגו על חלליהם ואת בלעם בן בעור מה בקש אותו רשע עם מלכי מדין לא כך כתיב ויקם בלעם וילך וישב למקומו. אלא כיון ששמע שנפלו בעצתו כ"ד אלף חזר ליטול מהן שכרו לכך כתיב ואת בלעם בן בעור עם חמשת מלכי מדין.

TanB Mattot 5

ואת בלעם בן בעור הרגו בחרב (במדבר שם ל"א ח). ומה ביקש שם אלא שהלך ליטול שכר של כ"ד אלף שנפלו בעצתו.

Tan. Mattot 3

ויצבאו על מדין וגו' ואת מלכי מדין וגו' ואת בלעם בן בעור הרגו בחרב ומה בקש שם. אלא שהלך ליטול שכר עשרים וארבע אלף שהפילו מישראל. ועליו נאמר (משלי כו) כורה שחת בה יפול וגו'. משל לההוא גמלא דהוה אזיל למיסב ולמתבע קרני ואודני דהוה ליה גזו מיניה.

Sifre Mattot 5

ר' נתן אומר בבית דין הרגוהו שנאמר' (יהושע יג) ואת בלעם בן בעור הקוסם הרגו בני ישראל.

NumR 14:1

דורשי רשומות אומרים כולהם יש להם חלק לעולם הבא חוץ מבלעם. מה טעם (תהלים ס) לי גלעד ולי מנשה וגו' מואב סיר רחצי על אדום אשליך נעלי עלי פלשת התרועעי. לי גלעד זה אחאב מלך ישראל שמת ברמות גלעד. לי מנשה כמשמעו זה מנשה בן חזקיה. אפרים מעוז ראשי זה ירבעם בן נבט אפרתי. יהודה מחוקקי זה. אחיתופל דקא אתי מיהודה. מואב סיר רחצי זה גיחזי שלקה ע"י רחיצה. על אדום אשליך נעלי זה דואג האדומי אמרו ישראל לפני הקב"ה ומה נעביד מלכא דישראל מקללין (שם תהלים נה) אנשי דמים ומרמה לא יחצו ימיהם.

APPENDIX 6: PARALLEL TEXTS ON DOEG AND AHITOPHEL (bSan. 106b-107b)

Palestinian Talmud

PT San. 10:2

29a-b

דואג אדם גדול בתורה היה באו ישראל ושאלו את דוד לחם הפנים מהו שידחה את השבת. אמר להם סידורו דוחה את השבת לא לישתו ולא עריכתו דוחין את השבת. והיה שם דואג ואמר מי הוא זה שבא להודות לפניי אמרו לו דוד בן ישי הוא. מיד הלך ונתן עצה לשאול מלך ישראל להמית את נוב עיר הכהנים הדא היא דכתיב ויאמ' המלך לרצים הניצבים עליו סובו והמיתו את כהני יי' כי גם ידם עם דוד וגו' עד ולא גלו את אזניו.

מי היו. אמר ר' שמואל בר רב יצחק אבנר ועמשא היו. אמרו ליה כלום אית לך עלינן אלא הדין זונר' והדין כלינרין הא טריפין לך ולא אבו עבדי המלך לשלוח את ידם בכהני יי'. ויאמר המלך לדוייג אמר רבי יהודה בר פזי לדוייג כתיב אמר לו נתפשתה כדג. אתה עבדתה רבתה טוב אתה ופגע בכהני יי'. ויסב דואג האדומי ויפגע בכהנים וגו'. לא כן תני רבי חייה אין ממנין שני כהנים גדולים כאחת. אלא מלמד שהיו כולם ראויין להיות כהנים גדולים.

כיצד נתרחק. רבי חנינה ורבי יהושע בן לוי חד אמר אש יצאה מבית קדשי הקדשים וליהטה סביבותיו. וחרנה אמר תלמידים וותיקים נזדווגו לו והיו למידים והוא שכח לקיים מה שנאמר חיל בלע ויקאנו מבטנו יורשינו אל.

אחיתופל אדם גיבור בתורה היה. כתיב ויוסף עד דוד את כל בחור בישראל שלשים אלף. רבי ברכיה בשם רבי אבא בר כהנא תשעים אלף זקנים מינה דוד ביום אחד ולא מינה אחיתופל עמהן הדא היא דכתיב ויוסף עוד דוד את כל בחור בישראל שלשים אלף. ויוסף תלתין. עוד תלתין. ופשוטיה דקרייה תלתין הרי תשעין.

את מוצא בשעה שבא דוד לשאת את ארון ברית יי' לא נשאו כתורה וירכיבו את ארון ברית האלהי' על עגלה חדשה וגו'. והוה ארונא טעין כהניא לרומא וטריף לון לארעא. טעין כהניא לרומא וטריף לון לארעא. שלח דוד ואייתי לאחיתופל. אמר ליה לית את אמר לי מה לדין ארונא דו טעין כהניא לרומא וטריף לון לארעא. טעין כהניא לרומא וטריף לון לארעא. אמר ליה שלח שאול לאילין חכימא דמתניתא.

אמר דוד מאן דידע למיקמתה ולא מקימה יהא סיפיה מתחנקא. אמר דבר קומוי והוא קאים. הדא היא דכתיב ויהי כי צעדו נושאי ארון יי' ששה צעדים ויזבח שור ומריא. רבי חנינה ורבי מנא חד אמר על כל צעידה וצעידה שור ומריא ובסוף שבעה פרים ושבעה אלים. וחרנה אמר על כל צעידה וצעידה שבעה פרים ושבעה אילים ובסוף שור ומריא. אמר הק"ב לאחיתופל מילה דמיינקייתא אמרין בכנישתא בכל יום לא אמרת ליה. ולבני קהת לא נתן כי עבודת הקודש עליהם בכתף ישאו ודא אמרת ליה.

וכן את מוצא בשעה שבא דוד לחפור תימליוסים של בית המקדש חפר חמש עשר מאוון דאמין ולא אשכח תהומא ובסופא אשכח חד עציץ ובעא מירמיתיה. א"ל לית את יכיל. א"ל למה. א"ל דנא הכא כביש על תהומא. אמר ליה ומן אימת את הכא. אמר ליה מן שעתא דשמע רחמנא קליה בסיני אני יי' אלהיך רעדת ארעא ושקועת ואנא היב הכא כביש על תהומא אף על גב כן לא שמע ליה. כיון דרימיה סליק תהומא ובעא מטפא עלמא והוה אחיתופל קאים תמן אמר כדון דוד מתחנק ואנא מליך.

אמר דוד מאן דחכם דידע מקימתיה ולא מקים ליה ייא סופיה מתחנקה. אמר מה דאמר ואוקמיה. התחיל דוד אומר שירה שיר המעלות. שיר למאה עולות על כל מאה אמה היה אומר שירה. אף על גב כן הוה סופה מתחנקה. אמר רבי יוסי הדא היא דמתלא אמרה צריך בר נש חשיש על לוטייה דרבה אפי' על מגן.

רבי ירמיה בשם רבי שמואל בר יצחק מגילה שמסר שמואל לדוד אמרה אחיתופל ברוח הקודש. ומה הוה אחיתופל עביד כד הוה בר נש אזל ממלך ביה במילה הוה אמר ליה איזיל עביד כן והכן ואין לית את מהימן לי אזל ושאל באורים ותומים. והוה אזל שאל ומשכח ליה כן. הדא היא דכתיב ועצת אחיתופל אשר יעץ בימים ההם כאשר ישאל וגו'. איש קרי ולא כתיב. לא יכלו הכתובים לקרותו איש.

כיצד נתרחק. ואחיתופל ראה כי לא נעשתה עצתו ויחבוש את חמורו וגו'. שלשה דברים צוה אחיתופל את בניו אמר להם אל תמרדו במלכות בית דוד דאשכחן דקודשא בריך הוא נסיב לון אפין אפילו בפרהסיא. ואל תשאו ותתנו עם מי שהשעה משחקת לו. ואם היתה העצרת ברורה זרעו חטים יפות. ולא ידעין אם ברורה בטל ואם ברורה בשרב.

Other texts about Doeg and Ahitophel

GenR 20:5

ר' אסי ורבי הושעיא בשם ר' אחא אמר לו הקב"ה אני עשיתיך מלך על הבהמה ועל החיה ואתה לא בקשת אני עשיתיך שתהא מהלך קוממיות כאדם ואתה לא בקשת, על גחונך תלך, אני עשיתיך שתהא אוכל מאכלות כאדם ואתה לא בקשת, ועפר תאכל כל ימי חיך, אתה בקשת להרוג את האדם ולישא את חוה, ואיבה אשית בינך ובין האשה, הוי מה שבקש לא ניתן לו, ומה שבידו ניטל ממנו, וכן מצינו בקין, ובקרח ובלעם, ובדואג ואחיתופל, וגחזי, ואבשלום, ובאדוניו.

Tosefta Sotah 4:5

נמצאת אומר בסוטה שנתנה עיניה [בשאין ראוי] לה מה שבקשה לא ניתן לה ומה שבידה ניטל ממנה וכן אתה מוצא בנחש הקדמוני שהיה ערום מכל הבהמה ומכל חית השדה שנא' (בראשית ג) והנחש היה ערום מכל וגו' בקש להרוג את אדם ולישא את חוה אמר לו המקום אני אמרתי תהא מלך על כל בהמה וחיה [עכשיו שלא רצית] ארור אתה מכל הבהמה ומכל חית השדה אני אמרתי בקומה זקופה תלך כאדם [עכשיו שלא רצית] (שם) על גחונך תלך אני אמרתי תאכל מאכל אדם ותשתה [משתאו של אדם עכשיו שלא רצית] (שם) ועפר תאכל כל ימי חיך אתה בקשת להרוג את אדם ולישא את חוה עכשיו (שם) ואיבה אשית בינך ובין האשה נמצאת אומר מה שבקש לא ניתן לו ומה שבידו ניטל ממנו וכן אתה מוצא בקין [קרח] ובלעם ודואג ואחיתופל וגחזי [אבשלום] ואדוניה והמן שנתנו עיניהם [בשאין] ראוי להם מה שבקשו לא ניתן להם ומה שבידם [ניטל מהם].

GenR 32:1

א א ויאמר ה' לנח בא אתה וכל ביתך אל התיבה כתיב (תהלים ה) תאבד דוברי כזב איש דמים ומרמה יתעב ה', מדבר בדואג ואחיתופל, דוברי כזב הן ודיבורן ר' פנחס אמר הן ומדברותיהן, איש דמים ומרמה, זה התיר גילוי עריות ושפיכת דמים, וזה התיר גילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים שנאמר באחיתופל (שמואל ב טז) בוא אל פילגשי אביך ושפיכות דמים דכתיב (שם שמואל ב' ט"ז) ואבא עליו והוא יגע ורפה ידים וכתיב (שם שמואל ב' ט"ז) והכיתי את המלך לבדו, וזה התיר גילוי עריות ושפיכת דמים, נחמן בריה דר' שמואל בר נחמני, אמר לשאול וכי יש אישות לדוד הלא מורד במלכות הוא וחשוב כמת, ועכשיו התיר קונעתו ועשה אותו זיטויטוס, וכאלו הוא מת ודמו מותר ואשתו מותרת, עמד שאול ונתן מיכל אשת דוד על פיו לפלטי בן ליש, ושפיכת דמים, דכתיב (שמואל א כב) ולא אבו עבדי שאול המלך לשלוח יד בכהני ה', אבל דואג הרגן שנאמר (שם שמואל א' כ"ב) ויסב דואג האדומי ויפגע

בכהני ה', יתעב ה', שאינן לא חיים ולא נדונים, ואני כאשר עשו כן עשיתי, ומה ביני לבינם, אלא - שגמלת עלי ואמרת לי (שמואל ב יב) גם ה' העביר חטאתך וגו'.

GenR 38:1

א' ויהי כל הארץ שפה אחת וגו', אלעזר ב"ר יוסי בר זימרא פתח (תהלים נט) אל תהרגם פן ישכחו עמי הניעמו בחילך והורידמו (כי מרו בך) רבנן פתרי קרייה בדואג ובאחיתופל אמר דוד אל תהרוג דואג ואחיתופל, פן ישכחו עמי פן ישכחו הדורות הבאים אחריהם, הניעמו בחילך טלטימו והורידמו והורידמו מגדולתן, ולנו מה יעשה (שם תהלים נ"ט) מגננו ה', חטאת פימו דבר שפתימו, זה התיר גילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים, זה התיר גילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים, זה השפ"ד שנאמר (שמואל ב טז) בוא אל פלגשי אביך, (שם שמואל ב' ז) ואבא עליו והוא יגע ורפה ידים, וזה התיר גילוי עריות ושפיכות דמים.

Tan Noah 17 and TanB Noah 26a

(יז) ויהי כל הארץ שפה אחת זש"ה אל תהרגם פן ישכחו עמי הניעמו בחילך והורידמו (תהלים נט) פסוק זה דוד אמרו כנגד אחיתופל ודואג. אמר דוד לפני הקב"ה רבש"ע אל תהרגם כשאר בני אדם פן ישכחו נסים שעשית עמי אלא הניעמו בחילך שיהיו מטולטלים בעולם והורידם מגדולתן למה כי מרו בך. חטאת פימו (שם תהלים נ"ט) שיהיו חוטאין בפיהם ומדברים בשפתותיהם דואג אמר ראיתי את בן ישי בא נובה אל אחימלך בן אחיטוב (שמואל כב) אחיתופל אמר אל אבשלום בא אל פלגשי אביך אשר הניח וגו' (שמואל לד טז), ד"א אמר דוד כנגד דור הפלגה אל תהרגם פן ישכחו בהריגה שהרגת דור המבול. אלא הניעמו בחילך טלטל אותם בעולם כמ"ש ויפץ ה' אותם משם.