Desirable But Dangerous

Rabbis' Daughters in the Babylonian Talmud

Dvora Weisberg
Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

This article considers what space or place rabbis' daughters occupy in the Babylonian Talmud. It explores the ways that rabbis' daughters are portrayed in the *Bavli*, both in their relationships with their fathers and in their relationships with others. It considers the ways in which stories about rabbis' daughters, or texts that include a mention of a rabbi's daughter, correlate with other talmudic material about daughters. I argue that stories about rabbis' daughters emphasize the connection between father and daughter. Daughters do not ordinarily study Torah; furthermore, through marriage, they leave their family of origin. At the same time, the *Bavli* indicates that a rabbi's daughter may carry on her father's teachings through her behavior and his lineage through her children. However, a father's undesirable behavior or poor supervision may result in a problematic daughter. Rabbis' daughters are portrayed as desirable wives for Torah scholars, but they are also portrayed as women who may, when outside the domestic sphere, behave inappropriately and manipulate Torah for their own ends. Rabbinic literature treats women as the Other and the *Bavli*'s stories about rabbis' daughters show that rabbinic concern about women extended even to the women over whom the rabbis had the most control and influence.

In classical rabbinic literature, women are an anomaly. Rabbinic law sometimes treats women like persons and at other times like chattel.[1] Non-legal texts sometimes characterize women in positive terms and portray individual women as having excellent qualities; at other times, the texts speak of women disparagingly.[2] Some rabbinic texts recognize the inherent humanity of women, portraying them as intelligent, moral and spiritually inclined. Others treat women as the quintessential Other, assigning women fewer rights and responsibilities than men and offering them little or no access to Torah.

Rabbis' daughters represent the epitome of this polarity. The space occupied by rabbis' daughters is described by Wendy Zierler[3] as "border space." Rabbis are often portrayed as wise men, men of exceptional piety and learning. The behavior

1 Judith Romney Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988).

2 Judith Baskin, *Midrashic Women* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis Univ. Press/Univ. Press of New England, 2002).

3 Wendy Zierler, "The Rabbi's Daughter in and out of the Kitchen: Feminist Literary Negotiations," *Nashim* 5 (Fall 2002) 84–85.

of individual rabbis is held up as an example; even mundane acts when performed by a rabbi are described as "Torah."[4] It follows that life in a rabbinic household is somehow different than life in a non-rabbinic household. Even a rabbi's servants partake on some level of his special status; they are quoted as sources of lore that they presumably acquired from the rabbi.[5] Surely the immediate family members of the rabbi also partake of specialness since they are exposed on a daily basis to the piety and learning of their rabbinic spouse and father.[6] Even a rabbi's daughter, while not necessarily accorded the access to Torah enjoyed by her brother, might be a relatively learned and/or particularly pious woman simply by virtue of proximity to her father. Zierler writes, "[a]s a borderland figure, the rabbi's daughter enjoyed a privileged exposure to the world of Jewish scholarship and ritual leadership, presenting an alternative to the traditional binary divisions of Jewish gender roles."[7]

At the same time, rabbinic literature displays some suspicion, and occasionally outright distaste, for learned women. The Babylonian Talmud contains stories of women who used their knowledge of Torah to subvert the law or to disparage men.[8] While the study of Torah helps make men righteous, it offers no such assurances for women. In fact, it may have the opposite effect. At least one rabbi warns fathers against teaching Torah to their daughters, claiming that for women, the study of Torah leads to lewdness.[9] While most women were unlikely to be exposed to Torah study in their everyday lives, the rabbi's daughter lives in an atmosphere permeated by Torah; her informal exposure to Torah is certain. As a result, the rabbi's daughter had a "mixed identity and a scholarly potential that, if actualized, had problematic, even transgressive implications."[10]

4 In rabbinic tradition, students are encouraged to observe their teacher's everyday behavior and learn from it. Even a rabbi's sexual practices and his behavior in the bathroom is "Torah." See *b.Ber.* 62a.

5 Rabban Gamaliel's slave, Tavi, is praised for his learning (*m.Ber.* 2:7, *m.Sukkah* 2:1). The maidservants of several rabbis are singled out for their adherence to Jewish law or for their knowledge; at times a rabbi's maidservant provides rabbis with information (*b.ʿErub.* 53b, *b.Meg.* 18a, *b.Nid.* 6b).

6 *B.Taʿan.* 25b describes an incident involving R. Ḥanina ben Dosa's wife and an annoying neighbor. When the neighbor drops by to humiliate Ḥanina's wife – Ḥanina ben Dosa and his family are extremely poor – a miracle occurs and the oven is full of bread. The *Bavli* concludes that Ḥanina's wife was confident that her claim that there was bread baking in the oven would be substantiated because "she was used to miracles," presumably because of her life with a *baʾal nissim*.

7 Zierler, "The Rabbi's Daughter," 85.

8 For several examples, see the exchange between Beruriah and R. Jose the Galilean at *b.Ber.* 10a and the encounters between rabbis and women seeking the payment of their marriage contracts at *b.Giṭ.* 35a. As I shall demonstrate later in this article, rabbis' daughters are portrayed as relatively knowledgeable women, and in at least one instance, that knowledge enables the daughters of rabbis to manipulate the legal system.

9 *M.Soṭah* 3:4, *b.Soṭah* 21a–b.

10 Zierler, "The Rabbi's Daughter," 85.

This article considers what space or place rabbis' daughters occupy in the *Bavli*. It explores the ways that rabbis' daughters are portrayed in the *Bavli*, both in their relationships with their fathers and in their relationships with others. It considers the ways in which stories about rabbis' daughters or texts that include a mention of a rabbi's daughter correlate with legal material about father-daughter relationships. It analyzes the behaviors ascribed to women identified as the daughters of rabbis and considers whether those behaviors are notable, either for their virtue or lack therein. It seeks to determine whether rabbis' daughters are portrayed as desirable women, that is women who act in appropriate ways and who would make good partners for scholarly men, or as dangerous women, women who tempt men and distract them from the study of Torah. Because rabbis' daughters may have greater access to Torah than the daughters of non-rabbis, we must also consider whether rabbis' daughters are particularly dangerous because they manipulate Torah to serve their own ends.

A study of stories in the *Bavli* that mention rabbis' daughters offers insights into the talmudic sages' views of women. Their own daughters were, in theory, the women over whom the rabbis had the most control and influence; they raised them from infancy into womanhood.[11] The stories the rabbis tell about their daughters should reveal the best impulses the rabbis have about women. At the same time, concerns expressed by rabbis about rabbis' daughters surely indicate the grave concerns and anxieties the rabbis had about women.

Our understanding of the position of daughters within their family of origin during the rabbinic period, before and after marriage, is limited due to a paucity of sources. Stories about rabbis' daughters, regardless of their historicity (which cannot be assumed or proven), afford us a broader appreciation of what it meant to the rabbis to be the fathers of daughters, and how they regarded the place of daughters in the family. Finally, talmudic stories involving rabbis' daughters may offer insights into the kinship ties and marital alliances of the early rabbis. The material we have suggests that many rabbis married the daughters of their colleagues. These marriages created kinship ties among rabbis. As we shall see, the *Bavli* presents marriage to a rabbi's daughter as a reward for or inducement to the study of Torah. Marriage to a rabbi's daughter would have also been attractive to scholars because such women would have understood and presumably accepted the burdens of marriage to a man who might spend large amounts of time away from his wife and children while engaging in an "occupation" that did not result in material benefit.

11 The *Bavli* acknowledges that sages frequently spent much of their married lives away from home studying Torah (*b.Ketub.* 62b–63a). Many sages may have been absentee fathers to both their sons and daughters. Still, we can assume that a father's absence, like his presence, impacts his children. The daughters of rabbis who left their families to study Torah presumably learned that, in their families at least, study of Torah was the ultimate value and merited sacrifice on the part of women.

The talmudic material in this article is presented in three sections. The first section considers texts that discuss interactions between rabbis and their daughters. The second section deals with the interactions between rabbis' daughters and their rabbinic husbands. The third section discusses texts that portray rabbis' daughters as "independent women," women operating outside the home and outside of the control or influence of either father or husband.[12]

These groupings allow us to consider both the father-daughter relationship and the view of rabbis' daughters as potential spouses. It also allows for a contrast between images of women who operate within the family circle and those who operate outside the confines of male authority and protection. It also reflects the fact that most of the *sugyot* that mention rabbis' daughters are, in fact, not interested in the daughters *per se*. Rather, stories featuring rabbis' interactions with their daughters, or actions taken by rabbis in relation to their daughters, tend to focus on or illuminate some aspect of the rabbi's character.

The material that is analyzed in this article is primarily aggadic, although some of the incidents are cited in the context of halakhic discussions. Stories may be cited to support halakhic rulings or temper them; at times a talmudic story has only the loosest connections to the legal discussions around it. In *Talmudic Stories*, Jeffrey Rubenstein offers an approach to reading stories in the *Bavli*. Rubenstein argues that the "redactors of the BT constructed stories by reworking earlier narrative sources."[13] He advocates combining literary analysis, source-criticism and redaction criticism to understand the *Bavli*'s stories. He also insists that stories should be read in the context of the talmudic discussion into which the redactors of the *Bavli* placed them.[14]

I agree with Rubenstein that reading a story in the context of the *sugya* in which it appears broadens our understanding and appreciation of that story, and have tried to use his approach as a guide for my own reading. We cannot analyze the story of Rabbi Akiba's daughter in *b.Šabb.* 156b without considering the discussion of Israel and fate of which this story is a part. Similarly, Rubenstein's analysis of *b.Ḥag.* 15a–b, the story of Elisha ben Abuyah, provides the backdrop against which we will consider one aspect of that story, the appearance of Elisha's daughter before Rabbi Judah HaNasi.

At the same time, my work, of necessity, recontextualizes stories. There is no place in the *Bavli* in which rabbis' daughters are the focus of a sustained discussion. In order to explore the ways in which rabbis' daughters are portrayed in the *Bavli*, a scholar must create a context, weaving, comparing, and contrasting

12 These groupings reflect, to some degree, Judith Romney Wegner's taxonomy of women, specifically her distinction between "women in whom some man has a legitimate sexual interest" and women who control their own sexuality. This taxonomy is less useful for reading aggadic texts than legal ones, but is still helpful. See Wegner, *Chattel or Person?* 14–17.

13 Jeffrey Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1999) 2.

14 Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 11–15.

material from various *sugyot*. My work therefore acknowledges the context of individual *sugyot* while drawing conclusions from the presence of numerous stories and anecdotes in the *Bavli* as a whole.

There are several "contexts" in which we might consider talmudic stories about rabbis' daughters. One would be a more general discussion of daughters and the father-daughter relationship in the *Bavli*. Specifically, one could compare stories about rabbis' daughters to incidents involving other women described as their fathers' daughters. We might also consider comparing material about rabbis' daughters to material about women in general. Such a comparison would indicate whether material about rabbis' daughters does in fact tell us anything new about rabbinic attitudes toward women. A third possibility would be to compare material about rabbinic father-daughter relationships to stories that highlight the relationships between rabbis and their sons.

The first of these three "contexts" proves the most disappointing. The *Bavli* contains few stories that feature women identified as their (named) fathers' daughters.[15] The second "context" is particularly interesting for gender studies, for the reason mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is also the most daunting, since it would involve reflecting on a significant amount of material.

Comparing the relationships between rabbis and their daughters to those between rabbis and their sons might prove interesting, particularly in light of Daniel Boyarin's observations about rabbinic anxiety about reproduction. Boyarin notes that some talmudic texts suggest that rabbis were not sanguine about their ability to reproduce themselves, that is, their Torah, through biological reproduction.[16] One "solution" was to reproduce oneself by "begetting" students. Male students are seen as an alternative to (disappointing) male offspring. Rabbis' daughters, on one hand, are even less useful than sons in ensuring continuity, both because they leave the family upon marriage and because they do not study and cannot teach Torah to their sons. On the other hand, rabbis can marry their daughters to their students, allowing them a way to bring a promising student "into the family," making him an honorary son through marriage as well as through shared study.

Fathers and Daughters

Rabbinic literature is not alone in positing daughters as potentially difficult and disruptive. The place of a daughter in Western culture and literature is often problematic. In the words of Lynda E. Boose,

15 *B.Sukkah* 56b (Miriam bat Bilgah); *b.Meg.* 16a (the daughter of Haman); *b.B. Bat.* 133b (the daughter of King Yannai's servant); *b.Sanh.* 93a (Nebuchadnezzar's daughter); *b.Sanh.* 39a and 91a (the daughter of Caesar), and *b.ʿAbod. Zar.* 10b (the daughter of the emperor Antoninus).

16 Daniel Boyarin, *Carnal Israel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1993) ch. 7.

> Daughters . . . embody the ambiguous attributes of what Victor Turner has defined as "liminal *personae* (threshold people) . . . they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law". . . . Liminal roles are inherently dual ones. They are "often regarded as dangerous, inauspicious, or polluting"; simultaneously, however, they are viewed as mysteriously sacred, peculiarly independent, and personifying the special power of the weak. They seem to be both dangerous and indispensable to the community. . . .[17]

Women, particularly as wives and mothers, are an integral part of the family life imagined in the Bible and by the ancient rabbis. In a patriarchal, patrilineal society, male offspring are necessary to ensure the family's survival. Daughters, on the other hand, are not essential to the family's continuation. Daughters may be economically useful, insofar as the family may benefit from their labor; in societies that employ bride-price, a family may also benefit economically from the marriage of its daughters. Still, the daughter, alone among the four members of the nuclear family, is dispensable; her role in the family's future is negligible.[18]

The problematic nature of the daughter is evident in the Hebrew Bible. Biblical genealogies focus on the father-son continuum; the name of a man's mother may be mentioned,[19] but is often absent. While the early genealogies in Genesis speak of men "fathering sons and daughters,"[20] it is sons' names (or the name of the eldest son) that are the focus of biblical genealogies.[21] While we can assume that ancient Israelites were as likely to have daughters as they were sons, daughters are not central to the Bible's concern with the growth of the people Israel.

When daughters do appear in the biblical narrative, their presence often highlights the vulnerability of their father's position in society. Lot's offer of his daughters to the mob at Sodom underscores his vulnerability as a newcomer to Sodom.[22] The rape of Dinah and her brothers' subsequent attack on the town of Shechem force Jacob to confront his small numbers and lack of protection from his neighbors.[23] David's inability to control his sons is demonstrated by his lack of response to the rape of his daughter Tamar by her brother Amnon; David is "upset," but takes no action.[24]

17 Lynda E. Boose, "The Father's House and the Daughter in It," in Lynda E. Boose and Betty S. Flowers, eds., *Daughters and Fathers* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1989) 67.

18 Boose, "The Father's House," 21.

19 2 Kings 8:25–26, 12:1–2, 14:1–2, and others.

20 Gen 5:4, 7, 10, and others.

21 Gen 11:10–25, 25:12–16, 46:8–27, and others.

22 Gen 19:4–9.

23 Gen 34:30.

24 2 Sam 13:21.

Daughters are also portrayed as conduits bringing grief and trouble to their fathers. Lot commits incest with his daughters; the marriage of Laban's daughters results in his losing much of his wealth to Jacob. Jephthah blames his daughter for the consequences of his rash vow, exclaiming, "Alas, daughter! You have brought me low; you have become my troubler."[25]

Pre-rabbinic Jewish sources recognize a daughter as a source of anxiety to her father. Ben Sira describes all of the stages of a girl's life as fraught with tension – for her father.

> A daughter keeps her father secretly wakeful and worry over her robs him of sleep; when she is young, lest she do not marry, or if married lest she be hated; while a virgin, lest she be defiled or become pregnant in her father's house; or having a husband, lest she prove unfaithful, or, though married, lest she be barren.[26]

Ben Sira advises fathers to "keep strict watch over a headstrong daughter lest she make you a laughingstock to your enemies, a byword in the city . . . and put you to shame."[27] While many daughters may have given their fathers nothing but joy, the wisdom tradition makes no mention of a "good" daughter.[28] What is clear is that a daughter's behavior is seen as a reflection on her father, before and after marriage.[29]

Perhaps in part to control or minimize the danger that is inherent in a daughter, rabbinic law grants a father extensive authority over his daughter while she is a minor.[30] He owns anything she finds or earns. He may annul her vows. He is authorized to betroth her.[31] The father may sell his daughter as a servant.[32] If she is seduced or raped, he collects the fines for the injury.[33] The father's authority ends when his daughter marries. The rights and authority of the father are transferred to a husband at the time of marriage,[34] but cannot be assumed by anyone

25 Judg 11:35.

26 Ben Sira 42:9–10.

27 Ben Sira 42:11.

28 In contrast, wisdom literature recognizes that there are "good" and "bad" wives.

29 Women were described as their fathers' daughters even after marriage. See Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996) 55–56, 118.

30 A father's legal authority over his daughter decreased significantly when she reached majority (Wegner, *Chattel or Person?* 115–19). We cannot determine whether most girls were married before or shortly after reaching their majority, nor can we know whether women who reached majority unmarried did in fact exercise the power accorded them by rabbinic law.

31 *M.Ketub.* 4:4.

32 *M.Soṭah* 3:8.

33 *M.Ketub.* 4:1.

34 *M.Ketub.* 4:4–5.

else; the authority of the mother or brothers of a fatherless girl is limited.[35]

The rights accorded to the father are not balanced by responsibilities towards his daughter. A father is not legally required to support his daughter during his lifetime.[36] Daughters are entitled to support from their father's estate after his death,[37] but they are not their fathers' heirs unless they have no brothers.[38] The father's extensive rights over his daughter and the absence of paternal responsibility toward daughters leads Judith Romney Wegner to conclude that the legal status of a minor daughter "is barely distinguishable from chattel."[39]

We might expect talmudic stories about rabbis and their daughters to relate to and support the legal rulings that delineate the father-daughter relationship. While the stories discussed below acknowledge and condone the father's power, they are not, for the most part, concerned with the father's rights over his daughter. Instead, these stories highlight the complexity of the father-daughter relationship. In particular, the stories underscore the ties between fathers and daughters, teaching that the fate of a daughter is dependent, to some extent, on the merit and the actions of her father. These stories thereby underscore the responsibility of fathers for their daughters. When executed properly, this responsibility results in the well-being of the daughter, who becomes a credit to her father. When the father fails to provide for his daughter, or acts inappropriately, the daughter is endangered, and her vulnerability reflects poorly on her father.

To what extent did the rabbis see themselves as responsible for raising their daughters? While the Mishnah clearly absolves fathers from the legal responsibility to provide for their minor daughters, we can assume that most fathers did, in fact, provide for their daughters' needs.[40] Furthermore, there are aspects of raising children that are not financial. Men were obligated to educate their sons,[41] but the rabbis differed as to whether a father should teach his daughter.[42]

In some cases, rabbis may have been less likely to participate in raising their daughters (and sons) than other men. The *Bavli* acknowledges and condones the practice of scholars leaving their homes for many years to study Torah. In one story,[43] Rabbi Ḥanania ben Ḥakhinai returns to his hometown after twelve

35 *M.Ketub.* 4:1, *m.Yebam.* 13:1.

36 *M.Ketub.* 4:6 For a discussion of the father's financial obligations toward his daughter, see Miriam Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1997) 118–30.

37 *M.Ketub.* 4:11.

38 *M.B.Baṭ.* 8:2. Even if a man's sons predecease him, their surviving children would have precedence over their aunts, the deceased's daughters.

39 Wegner, *Chattel or Person?* 38.

40 Peskowitz, *Spinning Fantasies*, 118, 127–30.

41 *B.Qidd.* 29a.

42 *M.Soṭah* 3:4.

43 *B.Ketub.* 62b.

years of study and cannot locate his house. He hears a young woman referred to as "the daughter of Ḥakhinai"[44] and concludes that she must be "our daughter"; only by following her is the rabbi able to find his home.[45] Rabbis who visited home infrequently are unlikely to have exercised much control or influence over their growing daughters.[46]

A number of talmudic passages suggest that fathers did take responsibility for aspects of raising their daughters. *Bavli Šabbat* 65a reports that the father of Samuel, one of the early Babylonian *amoraim*, did not allow his daughters to go out on the Sabbath with loops of string in their ears.[47] He also did not allow them to share a bed. Samuel's father supervised his daughters' ritual immersions, building *miqvaot* for them to use in the spring and mats for them to stand on when they immersed in the river in the fall.

In questioning these practices, the *Bavli* provides details that explain the choices made by Samuel's father. The daughters of Samuel's father, we learn, wore colored loops of string in their ears. While a loop of string is not usually thought of as an ornament, the colored loops were decorative and therefore might be taken off and displayed in a public place. Samuel's father took a stringent position to ensure his daughters' Sabbath observance. Similarly, he was careful about their sleeping arrangements, not because he suspected that they would behave improperly with each other, but because he did not want them to become accustomed to sharing a bed; he worried, apparently, that they might later seek male companionship because they enjoyed physical contact. His concern about the conditions under which his daughters immersed themselves reflects his understanding of what constitutes a valid *miqveh*, as well as his concern lest the mud at the bottom of the river constitute a barrier (חציצה) between the water and his daughters' feet.

The father of Samuel is involved in regulating and supervising his daughters' lives at several stages of their development. When they are young, he guarantees

44 It is not clear why Ḥanania's daughter is referred to by her grandfather's name. Perhaps the grandfather lived with or supported the family in Ḥanania's absence; perhaps he was better known than his son. In any event, the irony is unmistakable; the young woman Ḥanania claims as "our daughter" is not even known by his name. See Jeffrey Rubenstein, *The Culture of the Babylonian Talmud* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2003) 109.

45 In another story, a rabbi does not recognize his grown son.

46 According to Rubenstein, one of the cautionary messages of this *sugya* is that rabbis who choose to leave home for many years to study Torah will be strangers to their children (*The Culture of the Babylonian Talmud*, 109, 115).

47 *M.Šabb.*, chap. 6, discusses what ornaments may or may not be worn in the public domain on the Sabbath. Things that a person might be likely to remove may not be worn lest a person remove them and carry them in the public domain, thus violating the Sabbath law. According to *m.Šabb.* 6:6, young girls are permitted to go out on the Sabbath wearing loops of string or small chips in their ears. Apparently young girls' ears were pierced but they did not wear earrings until they were older; these devices were used to prevent the pierced hole from closing.

their Sabbath observance. While they are single, he takes precautions to ensure their chastity. These are presumably the normal responsibilities of a Jewish father. In the case of Samuel's father, his concern for his daughters' ritual observance extends beyond the time of marriage; it is he, and not their husbands, who takes responsibility for ensuring that they immerse properly.

This passage suggests that a daughter is a tremendous responsibility. A father must train his daughter to be virtuous and ritually observant. This responsibility might be transferred to a husband at the time of marriage, but it may continue to concern a father. On some level, this passage echoes Ben Sira, who imagines a daughter as a lifelong source of concern for her father.

At the same time, Samuel's father does execute his responsibility to his daughters. In so doing, he ensures their observance of the Sabbath and the laws of menstrual purity, as well as their chastity. Given the rabbinic tradition that women die in childbirth due to their negligence of specific commandments, including the laws of *niddah*,[48] we can read this passage in part as rabbinic approval of Samuel's father. His care protects his daughters before and after their marriages.

The anxiety fathers may experience in raising daughters is illustrated through a story about Rabbi Akiba and his daughter. This story, found at *b.Šabb.* 156b, is the second in a series of stories demonstrating that "Israel is not ruled by planetary influence" (אין מזל לישראל). In each vignette, an individual fated to die or lead a life of crime is saved through his or her righteous behavior, proving that a Jew's actions, not his or her horoscope, determine the course of his or her life.

Astrologers tell Rabbi Akiba that his daughter will die on her wedding day. The *Bavli* does not tell us when Akiba learned of his daughter's destiny; we may assume that her horoscope was cast when she was quite young. The *Bavli* does tell us that R. Akiba "worried a great deal about the matter." Akiba's response to the astrologers' prediction is, in and of itself, intriguing. He takes the information seriously insofar as he worries for his daughter. At the same time, he takes no apparent precautions to protect his daughter. He is not willing to thwart fate by refusing to let his daughter marry; nor does he check the bridal chamber for danger. Akiba's concern stands in contrast with the previous story. When Samuel is told by Ablet, his non-Jewish companion, that a certain man is fated to die that day, he replies that "If he is a Jew, he will return." In the story after the one about Akiba's daughter, a mother is warned that her son will grow up to be a thief. Like Akiba, she worries, but unlike him, she takes steps to protect her child.

R. Akiba's behavior also stands in contrast to that of other fathers warned of a child's ominous future. Oedipus' father, learning that his son is destined to kill

48 *M.Šabb.* 2:6. *B.Šabb.* 32a also suggests that women may die in childbirth because of their failure to observe the Sabbath carefully.

his father and marry his mother, seeks to protect himself by ordering his son's death. Sleeping Beauty's father, warned that his daughter would prick herself on a spinning wheel and die (or fall into a deep sleep) orders all the spinning wheels in his kingdom destroyed. Ironically, neither father can avert his child's destiny. Oedipus survives to kill his father and marry his mother; Sleeping Beauty happens upon a spinning wheel. These stories, unlike the *Bavli*, take fate for granted; they warn us that we can run from our destiny but we cannot escape it.

Does R. Akiba believe that "Israel is not ruled by planetary influence?" If so, his decision to do nothing is understandable. If there is no "fate," there is no need to avoid it. Still, Akiba is not entirely dismissive of the astrologers' prediction. He worries about it a great deal. Perhaps, in Akiba, the *Bavli* has created the quintessential father; he knows he cannot protect his child from the dangers of life, but he nonetheless is concerned about those dangers.

Unlike Sleeping Beauty, who cannot protect herself, Akiba's daughter escapes her "fate" through her own actions.

> On [the night of the wedding], she removed her brooch and stuck it in the wall [for safekeeping]. It happened to land in the eye of a snake. In the morning, when she removed the brooch [from the wall], the snake came after it. Her father said, "What have you done?" She said, "Last evening, a poor man came to the door. Everyone was busy preparing for the wedding feast; no one heard him. I took the portion [of food] you had given me and gave it to him." [Akiba] said to her, "You performed a *mitzvah*." Akiba went out [to the house of study] and taught, "Righteousness (*tzedakah*) delivers from death" (Prov 10:2).

R. Akiba worries about his daughter's future.[49] At the same time, it is not clear whether he does anything to protect her. Is Akiba not aware that "righteousness delivers from death?" Is the reader to assume that Akiba (and his wife) raised their daughter to perform acts of charity or other pious acts? Did they hope that those acts might protect her? In the following story, a parent encourages pious acts to avert a child's fate; might Akiba have done this for his child as well? Perhaps we are to assume that Rabbi Akiba's own righteousness, or his Torah study, contributed in some way to his daughter's escape from death.[50]

The actions of R. Akiba's daughter serve as a catalyst for her father's Torah. His next exposition of Torah derives from his daughter's experience. R. Akiba's

49 The true cynic might argue that Akiba is worried about the possibility that there is fate after all.

50 The link between Akiba and his daughter's escape is hinted at by the fact that the portion she gives to the poor man is the portion that her father gave her.

Torah, however, is not shared with his daughter; it is reserved for his (male) students and colleagues. Akiba tells his daughter that she has acted well, but the Torah the act generates is not for her. The life and near-death of Akiba's daughter take place in the home. Akiba gains insights into Torah at home, but he must go out into the androcentric world of the *beit midrash* to share his knowledge.

This story underscores the blessing and curse of having a daughter. Akiba's daughter provides her father with the opportunity to learn and affirm Torah. At the same time, she is a source of anxiety to him for many years. The daughter is the innocent cause of her father's pleasure and his pain. At the same time, we can read into the story the message that a father's Torah or righteousness may protect his daughter.

A similar message is offered by a story about the daughter of Ḥanina ben Dosa. *Bavli Taʿanit* 23a–25a contains a series of stories about miracles performed for or through the agency of great sages. One of those sages was Ḥanina ben Dosa. We learn of a miracle performed for his wife when she is taunted by a neighbor because of their poverty. The Talmud notes that Ḥanina's wife was "accustomed to miracles." We then read of another miracle in Ḥanina's home.

> One Sabbath eve, Ḥanina saw that his daughter was sad. He said to her, "My daughter, why are you sad?" She said to him, "I mixed up the vinegar jar and the oil jar, and I filled the Sabbath lamp with vinegar." He said to her, "My daughter, what does it matter? The One who causes oil to burn can cause vinegar to burn." It was taught: It burned throughout the day, until they used it to light the Havdalah light. (*b.Taʿan.* 25a)

On whose behalf was the miracle performed? It may have been done for the sake of the daughter; it may have been done for the sake of the father. Clearly, Ḥanina ben Dosa's piety brought blessing into his home. The *Bavli* may also be indicating that in addition to protecting and blessing them, the righteousness of fathers (and mothers) serves as a model for daughters.

The power of a father to protect his daughter through his merit extends beyond the father's life.

> The daughter of *Aher* came before Rabbi [Judah HaNasi]. She said to him, "Rabbi, provide for me." He said to her, "Whose daughter are you?" She said, "I am the daughter of *Aher*." He said to her, "Do any of his descendants still live? Is it not written, 'He has no seed or breed among his people, no survivor where he once lived' (Job 18:19)." She said to him, "Remember his Torah and not his deeds." Immediately, fire descended and licked Rabbi's bench. Rabbi wept, saying, "If this is [how God defends] those who revile Him, how much more so those who praise Him!" (*b.Ḥag.* 15b)

Elisha ben Abuyah's daughter acknowledges that her father's actions were unseemly, but she also reminds Rabbi of her father's learning. She identifies herself as her father's daughter and defends his memory. Her defense is supported by God, the source of the fire. The Talmud continues by explaining that Rabbi Meir remained Elisha's student after his death, "eating the fruit and throwing away the rind." Like Meir, Elisha's daughter recognizes, and insists that others recognize, her father's good qualities.

This story is part of a longer discussion about Elisha ben Abuyah's sins, rejection, and eventual "restoration" through the efforts of R. Yoḥanan. Rubenstein argues that the story is "less about Elisha than about questions that interested the rabbis: the intrinsic merit of Torah and whether it is jeopardized by sin."[51] Rubenstein reads the appeal of Elisha's daughter to Rabbi as proof that "the Torah of the sage . . . brings life to [his] child."[52] The story's focus on Torah and its merit is underscored by the absence of any indication as to whether Elisha's daughter received the material support she sought from Rabbi.[53] Elisha's daughter disappears as quickly as she appeared, forgotten as the *Bavli* pursues its concerns.

The differences between the *Bavli* and the Palestinian Talmud's versions of this incident underscore the *Bavli*'s emphasis on the connection between a father's merit and his daughter's fate. The Palestinian version of the story notes the daughters' respect for Torah, while the *Bavli* focuses on the merit of Elisha's Torah.[54] In the *Yerushalmi*, the fate of the daughters is revealed; in the *Bavli* it is enough to demonstrate that a daughter can call upon her father's Torah in times of need.

In contrast to the stories about the daughters of Akiba, Ḥanina ben Dosa, and Elisha ben Abuyah, the *Bavli* offers stories about rabbis whose behaviors endangered their daughters and themselves. These stories serve as reminders that a father's actions can shape his daughter's life negatively as well as positively. The *Bavli* reserves its criticism in these stories for the father, not for the daughter. In fact, while the daughter is essential to these stories, her behavior or experience serves as a foil, highlighting the shortcomings of her father.

The Mishnah rules regarding "a person who sells himself and his children to Gentiles, we do not ransom him, but we ransom the children after their father's death."[55] After several stories about men whom the rabbis were unwilling to ransom, the *Bavli*[56] relates a story about Resh Laqish, who sold himself to gladiators

51 Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 64.

52 Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 70.

53 In *y.Ḥag.* 2:1, Elisha's daughters' request for support is at first denied; Rabbi justifies his refusal by citing Ps 109:12. The daughters say to Rabbi, "Do not look at his deeds; look at his Torah," and Rabbi relents and decrees support for them.

54 Rubenstein, *Talmudic Stories*, 91.

55 *M.Giṭ.* 4:9.

56 *B.Giṭ.* 47a.

and escaped by tricking his captors. Upon his return from captivity, Resh Laqish "sat, eating and drinking." When his daughter asks if he would like a pillow, Resh Laqish replies, "My daughter, my belly is my pillow." The *Bavli* continues by informing us that when Resh Laqish died, he left little property and regretted not having used it up in his lifetime.

Resh Laqish, despite having been forced to sell himself into slavery, presumably due to poverty, is portrayed by the *Bavli* as a careless glutton, who thinks nothing of leaving his family destitute. His daughter's solicitousness is ironic, given that she is likely to be left without any place to sleep. The mention of the daughter underscores Resh Laqish's selfishness and his obsession with the material world.

An even more problematic story about a father and his daughter appears at *b.Šabb.* 80b. The story is introduced by a legal discussion as to the amount of plaster a person may carry on the Sabbath before violating the injunction against carrying in the public domain. The amount of plaster required to trigger the prohibition is described as the amount needed "to plaster the smallest of daughters." From the Tosefta we learn that the amount described is the amount that would be applied to a girl's smallest finger.[57] The precise reason for applying plaster to a girl's skin is not given. Rashi believes the plaster is applied to make the skin rosy.[58] The Tosafot think the application whitened the skin.[59] Rav's observation that poor girls who reached puberty at an early age used plaster suggests that plaster was an inexpensive depilatory. A discussion at *b.Moʿed Qat.* 9b indicates that the application of plaster was intended as a beauty treatment, valued for the end results despite the "disfigurement" a woman experienced during the treatment. The *Bavli* reports that R. Bibi used this treatment on his daughter with both positive and negative results.

> R. Bibi had a daughter. He applied [the plaster] to her one limb at a time, and he received through her four hundred *zuz*. There was a Gentile in his neighborhood who had a daughter. He applied [the plaster] to her at one time, and she died. [The Gentile] said: R. Bibi killed my daughter. R. Nahman said: R. Bibi used to drink strong liquor, so his daughters required this treatment. We do not drink strong liquor, so our daughters do not require this treatment.

R. Bibi's treatment apparently made his daughter more attractive on the marriage market. Because of her improved looks, her father received large sums of money while negotiating his daughter's betrothal. Seeing the results, an enterprising neighbor attempted to follow suit. Unfortunately he was not skilled in cosme-

57 *T.Šabb.* 9:20.

58 Rashi on *b.Šabb.* 80b, s.v. אצבע קטנה.

59 *Tosafot* on *b.Šabb.* 80b, s.v. שהגיעו.

tology, and his daughter died. The unhappy father accused R. Bibi of causing his daughter's death. While the *Bavli* gives no indication that any harm came to R. Bibi as a result of the Gentile's accusation, it does not reassure its reader that the charges were dismissed as baseless. The reader is left with the knowledge that even "harmless" practices can endanger Jews and leave them open to false accusations. Furthermore, the statement of R. Naḥman contains an implicit criticism of R. Bibi. It was his intemperance that necessitated his daughters' beauty treatments; had he behaved differently, his daughters would have been attractive without resorting to dangerous treatments.

This brief passage captures the dual edged sword hanging over the head of a father of daughters. A beautiful daughter attracts suitors and suitors bring presents. The language of the *sugya* states that R. Bibi, not his daughter, was the beneficiary of the gifts. His daughter's marriage led to his prosperity; the beauty treatments literally paid off. At the same time, R. Bibi's regimen for his daughter's care led to an accusation of murder.

R. Bibi's daughter is not responsible for her beauty or for the charges against her father. She is silent and passive in this story; she is simply the body that is transformed by the father. If we accept R. Naḥman's position, R. Bibi transforms his daughter's body twice, and both transformations are performed through his actions. His consumption of liquor makes his daughter unattractive, and his application of plaster makes her attractive. Both transformations are problematic from the father's point of view; the first saddles him with an unattractive daughter, while the second results in his being accused of murder. While R. Bibi's daughter is innocent, she is still the source of her father's troubles. A daughter can be an asset, but she is also a responsibility; in the worst case scenario, she can also be a source of danger.

In a story intended to illustrate a certain rabbi's lack of compassion, the *Bavli* tells of a father who blamed his daughter for the effect her beauty had on others.

> What happened to R. Yose from Yukrat's daughter? He had a beautiful daughter. One day, R. Yose saw a man bore a hole through a hedge and look at her. He said to him, "What are you doing?" He said, "Rabbi, I may not be worthy of marrying her, but am I not worthy of seeing her?" R. Yose said to her, "Daughter, you trouble men, return to the dust from which you came, lest men stumble because of you." (*b. Taʿan.* 24a)

The Talmud does not tell us whether R. Yose's words led to his daughter's death. We are informed by the previous story that the rabbi also predicted or caused his son's death, so it is possible that the Talmud means us to assume that his daughter died as a result of her father's admonition.

This story underscores the power of fathers over their sons and daughters. It

also demonstrates the danger children experience when their fathers are cruel. The *Bavli* in no way endorses Rabbi Yose's behavior; at the beginning of the discussion we learn that he lost a student because of his actions. Rabbi Yose's concern for men who might "stumble" because of his daughter's beauty, his decision to identify with any man (or Everyman) rather than with his own daughter, has dire consequences.

Legal sources emphasize the rights of a father in connection to his daughter's marriage. The father may betroth his minor daughter and collect her betrothal money. The *Bavli* contains a number of stories in which rabbis exercise their right to arrange their daughters' marriage. In several stories, rabbis offer their daughters in marriage to men they wish to reward or redeem. Rav Pappa gives his daughter to Ḥuna b. Rav Naḥman when the latter is able to answer a question that Rav Pappa could not answer.[60] Judah HaNasi's daughter becomes a pawn in her father's attempt to ensure that a colleague's grandson followed in his grandfather's footsteps.

> Rabbi [Judah HaNasi] traveled to the place of Rabbi Tarfon. He said to the inhabitants, "Does that righteous man, who swore by the life of his sons, have a son?" They said to him, "He has no son, but he has a grandson {lit. a daughter's son} and every prostitute who charges two, hires him for eight." They brought [Rabbi Tarfon's grandson] before him, and he said to him, "If you change your ways, I will give you my daughter." He changed his ways. According to some, he married Judah HaNasi's daughter but then divorced her; according to others, he did not marry her, lest people say he repented only for the sake of marriage. (*b.B.Meṣi^{c}a* 85a)

Like Rabbi Yoḥanan, who offers his sister to Resh Laqish in return for the latter's promise to study Torah,[61] Rabbi Judah HaNasi offers a female relative in marriage to a man with a dubious history. These rabbis are apparently convinced that the men in question are redeemable. While one rabbinic adage notes that "everything depends on the wife," I would argue that study of Torah, not the daughter or sister of a rabbi, is seen as the force that will guarantee these men's rehabilitation. While women serve as incentives to good behavior, it is Torah that ensures that behavior continues.

The *Bavli* makes no comment on the propriety of promising one's daughter in marriage to a noted reprobate. None of the rabbis are depicted as showing concern for the women involved nor do the stories' editors offer an explicit or implicit critique of the rabbis' choices. Rabbi does not seek to secure Rabbi Tarfon's

60 *B.Hor.* 12b.

61 *B.B.Meṣi^{c}a* 84a.

grandson for his daughter because the young man is so gorgeous that prostitutes pay to have sexual intercourse with him; he proposes the marriage to "save" the young man for a life of Torah and righteous behavior. Rabbi Yoḥanan's sister suffers greatly when her brother causes the death of her husband; her intercession on her husband's behalf, her pleas to her brother on her behalf and behalf of her children are ignored. The gloss "According to some, he married Judah HaNasi's daughter but then divorced her; according to others, he did not marry her, lest people say he repented only for the sake of marriage" is intended to demonstrate the piety of Rabbi Tarfon's grandson, but ignores the possible humiliation of a woman divorced or refused for the sake of preserving the reputation of a man who once frequented prostitutes! These stories underscore the power a father has over his daughter.

In contrast, other stories acknowledge that a father's right to arrange his daughter's marriage to his liking cannot always be realized. The limitation of a father's power is acknowledged at *b.Ber.* 56a, and is related through a discussion of dreams and the interpretation of dreams. The *Bavli* relates the practice of Bar Hadya, an interpreter who "offered a favorable interpretation to those who paid him, and an unfavorable interpretation to those who did not." Rava and Abbaye, two Babylonian *amoraim*, reportedly had identical dreams, but because Abbaye paid the interpreter and Rava did not, the former receives favorable interpretations while Rava receives dire predictions. The future of these rabbis' daughters figures in several of the dreams.

Abbaye and Rava report that in a dream they were reading the verse, "Though you beget sons and daughters, they shall not remain with you, for they shall go into captivity" (Deut 28:41). The interpreter tells Rava that the verse should be understood literally; Rava's children will be taken captive. He tells Abbaye that the verse he read is a sign that "You will have many sons and daughters. Your daughters will marry outside [your family] and it will seem to you as though they had been taken captive." In a similar vein, Abbaye's dream of reading "Your sons and daughters shall be delivered to another people" (Deut 28:32) indicates,

> You will have many sons and daughters. You will want your daughters to marry within your family, but your wife will want them to marry within her family. Your wife will force you to marry them within her family, which will be like "another people."

Rava's dreams are seen as signs that he will lose both his male and female children or that all his children will suffer from the loss of maternal care. In an attempt to offer a positive "spin" on these verses, the interpreter assures Abbaye that his "losses" will in fact be the result of otherwise normal events. Abbaye will

have many daughters and will be in the position to arrange marriages for them. In the first scenario, there is no indication that Abbaye will be forced to make undesirable matches for his daughters, but the marriages will remove his daughters from his extended family. The interpretation of the second dream imagines a disagreement between Abbaye and his wife regarding their daughters' marriages; Abbaye's wife will "force" her husband to comply with her wishes.

In a legal discussion about release from vows at *b.Ned.* 23a, we read of another dispute between Abbaye and his wife regarding a daughter's marriage.

> Abbaye's wife had a daughter. He said, "[She shall be married] to [one of] my relatives. She {presumably Abbaye's wife, not his stepdaughter} said that [the daughter should be married] to [one of] her relatives. Abbaye said to [his wife], "May you be forbidden to enjoy any benefit from me if you ignore my wishes and marry her to [one of] your relatives." She ignored his wishes and married her daughter to her relative. Abbaye went to R. Joseph [to see if the vow could be annulled]. He said to him, "If you had known that she would ignore your wishes and marry her daughter to her relative, would you have vowed [to deny] her? He said, "No," and R. Joseph released him [from the vow].

Here, as in the discussion at *b.Ber.* 56a, Abbaye is unable to arrange a daughter's marriage in accord with his wishes. These passages underscore Abbaye's powerlessness in situations in which he should have rights, or at least influence. Not only does Abbaye fail to control his daughters by arranging their marriages; Bar Hadya's interpretation of Deut 28:32 and the story in *Nedarim* acknowledge Abbaye's failure to control his wife as well.[62]

These stories about rabbis and their daughters indicate that the father-daughter relationship goes far beyond the legal structures set forth in the Mishnah and expanded upon in the *Bavli.* Despite the fact that daughters did not transmit their fathers' Torah and technically could not carry on their fathers' lineage, fathers were involved in their daughters' upbringing.[63] At the same time, there

62 *B.B.Metsi'a* 84b records another story in which a daughter is used to highlight tension between a rabbi and his wife. R. Eleazar the son of R. Simeon and his wife argue over his choice to afflict himself. She accuses him of frittering away her father's money (presumably her dowry), and "rebels against him, returning to her father's house." In her absence, R. Eleazar obtains additional wealth. When his wife sends her daughter to check on her father's well-being, R. Eleazar says to her, "Go tell your mother, 'Ours is greater than theirs,'" that is, Eleazar's wealth exceeds that of his wife's family. The use of "ours" and "theirs" may also be a not-so-subtle reminder to Eleazar's wife that her primary responsibility and loyalty should be to her husband and not to her family of origin. The daughter is given no opinion of her own on the conflict between her parents. The fact that she accompanied her mother to the mother's family and that she is used by her father to chastise his wife suggests that a child may become a pawn in her parents' power struggles.

63 Other talmudic passages mention rabbis who oversaw the medical care of their sick daughters

are stories that suggest that daughters are burdensome and can be a source of trouble or even danger to their fathers. There is no "Torah" for raising daughters; while the teachings of the sages detail the legal rights (and, to a lesser degree, the responsibilities) of a father, they do not offer guidance on raising daughters. Rabbis are not portrayed as more skillful fathers of daughters than other men; in fact, their tendency to devote time to the study of Torah and to live apart from their families to concentrate on study may make them less likely to shape their daughters and guide them to "proper" behavior.

Marrying the Rabbi's Daughter

One of the rights bestowed on a father was the power to arrange his daughter's marriage. We have seen that some rabbis sought to marry their daughters to men who showed promise in the study of Torah. This section considers the extent to which marriage might be seen as an avenue to create or cement ties between rabbis, and whether a rabbi's daughter might be considered a particularly desirable match. In addition, we will see that even after marriage, a woman is often identified as her father's daughter, and her behavior in her husband's house reflects on her father.

In some societies, particularly those that are exogamous, marriage may serve to create an alliance between two families, clans or communities. Such an alliance may offer new economic opportunities to both clans; it may also be an attempt to end or prevent hostilities between the clans.[64] Jewish marriage tended to be endogamous, insofar as marriage usually (or at least ideally) took place between co-religionists.[65] Furthermore, there seems to have been a preference for marriages within the extended family.[66] While anthropologists understand the function of endogamous marriages as the preservation of family property and descent lines rather than the creation of an alliance,[67] some types of Jewish marriages still underscore the desirability of "alliances" or ties between families. Rabbinic literature indicates the desirability of marriage to the daughter of a scholar.

> Our rabbis taught: A man should sell all he has in order to marry the daughter of a scholar. If he cannot find the daughter of a scholar, let him marry the daughter of one of the great men of his generation. If he cannot

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or prepared their daughters' wedding ornaments.

64 See C. Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969). This type of marriage is suggested to (and rejected by) Jacob and his sons in Genesis 34.

65 See Michael Satlow, *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001) chap. 6.

66 Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 75–78 and Satlow, *Jewish Marriage*, 156–58.

67 Naomi Steinberg, *Kinship and Marriage in Genesis: A Household Economics Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 5–11.

> find the daughter of one of the great men of his generation, let him marry the daughter of one of the heads of the community. If he cannot find the daughter of one of the heads of the community, let him marry the daughter of a charity collector. If he cannot find the daughter of a charity collector, let him marry the daughter of an elementary school teacher. A man should not marry the daughter of an *am haʾaretz*. . . .[68]

Just as a man should seek to marry the daughter of scholar, a man should seek to marry his daughter to a scholar. Later in the passage cited above, Rabbi Meir claims that a man who marries his daughter to an *am haʾaretz* is "like one who ties his daughter up and throws her before a lion," because the *am haʾaretz* is not a fastidious sexual partner.

Clearly, the rabbis are promoting themselves and their children as desirable partners. This may reflect their wish to create ties between themselves and those elements of Jewish society they saw as possible allies.[69] Marriage served not simply as a union between two partners but between their families; like the priests before them, the rabbis recognized the advantages in allying themselves with the wealthy and influential.[70] These advantages are made explicit in the stories told of Rabbi Akiba's marriage to the daughter of the wealthy Kalba Savuʿa. While Kalba Savuʿa originally disowns his daughter for marrying (without his consent) a poor illiterate shepherd, he eventually bestows his wealth on his famous and learned son-in-law.[71]

In addition to creating alliances between themselves and the well-to-do, marriage also allowed the rabbis to create connections among themselves. The *Bavli* identifies a number of rabbis' wives as the daughters of rabbis.[72] Beruriah, the wife of Rabbi Meir, is identified as the daughter of Rabbi Ḥanania ben Teradion.[73] Rabbi Simeon bar Yoḥai, a contemporary of Rabbi Meir, was mar-

68 *B.Pesaḥ.* 49b.

69 In *The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity* (London and New York: Routeledge, 1999), Richard Kalmin argues that it is only Palestinian rabbis who value marriage ties to non-rabbis. In contrast, Babylonian rabbis avoid intermarriage with non-rabbinic Jews. Kalmin attributes this, in part, to the strength of the Babylonian rabbis in their society; Palestinian rabbis needed to seek alliances with non-rabbis. In addition, Kalmin notes that genealogy was far more important to Babylonian rabbis than their Palestinian counterparts; this would explain the *Bavli*'s emphasis on marriages within rabbinic families.

70 Kalmin, *The Sage*, 31.

71 *B.Ketub.* 62b–63a; *b.Ned.* 50a. According to *b.Ned.* 50b–51a, Rabbi Judah the Patriarch's daughter was married to Ben El'asa, a member of a wealthy family.

72 The marriages between Palestinian rabbis and their colleagues' daughters that are mentioned in the *Bavli* are not mentioned in the *Yerushalmi*. The *Yerushalmi* does identify four Palestinian rabbis, R. Hillel, R. Zechariah, R. Zevida, and R. Yose Qotzira, as the sons-in-law of rabbis.

73 Beruriah presents a challenge to scholars. She is sometimes identified only as Beruriah (*t.Kelim B. Meṣiʿa* 1:6; *b.ʿEru.* 53b), sometimes as Hanania ben Teradion's daughter (*t.Kelim B. Qam.* 4:17),

ried to the daughter of Rabbi Pinḥas ben Yair.[74] Rabbi Judah HaNasi sought a marriage between his son and the daughter of R. Ḥiyya; the young woman died and Judah's son married the daughter of R. Jose ben Zimra.[75] Rabbi Ḥanina's daughters were married to R. Samuel ben Nadab and Samuel the Elder.[76] Rava, the fourth generation Babylonian *amora*, was married to the daughter of Rav Ḥisda,[77] who was one of Rava's teachers. Rav Ḥisda himself was married to a rabbi's daughter; his wife was the daughter of R. Aḥa bar Abba.[78] Ḥoma, the granddaughter of R. Isaac ben R. Judah, was married three times; two of her husbands were rabbis.[79] R. Ashi was married to the daughter of Rami bar Ḥama.[80] Ties between rabbis are also evidenced in marriages between rabbis and the sisters of rabbis; Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrkanus was married to Ema Shalom, the sister of Rabban Gamaliel, and Resh Laqish married the sister of his colleague Rabbi Yoḥanan.[81]

Obviously, marriage to a rabbi's daughter afforded a younger rabbi closer ties with and access to a senior colleague.[82] Talmudic stories also indicate other advantages in having a rabbi's daughter as one's wife. In these stories, rabbis' daughters

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and sometimes as the wife of Rabbi Meir. There are passages that identify her as the daughter of Ḥanania ben Teradion and the wife of Rabbi Meir (*b.Pesaḥ.* 62b and *b.ᶜAbod. Zar.* 17b–18a).

74 *B.Šabb.* 33b.

75 *B.Ketub.* 62b.

76 *B.Ber.* 62b, *b.ᶜArak.* 16b.

77 *B.Ber.* 62b and others. R. Ḥisda's daughter was married twice, both times to her father's students. *B.B. Bat.* 12b cites Rav Ḥisda's daughter as proof that since the destruction of the Temple, prophecy is given only to children and fools. "The daughter of R. Ḥisda was sitting on her father's lap. Rava and Rami bar Ḥama were sitting before him. He asked her, 'Which of them do you want [to marry]?' She said, 'Both of them.' Rava said, 'And I was the latter.'"

78 *B.Qidd.* 81b.

79 *B.Yebam.* 64b.

80 *B.Beṭṣah* 29b.

81 The *Bavli* portrays marriages between rabbis and the sisters of their colleagues as unsuccessful alliances, insofar as an alliance is intended to prevent friction between the parties. Rabbi Eliezer's prayers result in the death of Rabban Gamaliel, despite Ema Shalom's attempts to protect her brother from her husband's anger (*b.B. Meṭṣiᶜa* 59b). Rabbi Yoḥanan offers his sister to Resh Laqish in an attempt to draw Resh Laqish into a life of Torah study; later the two argue and their estrangement results in their deaths. The *Bavli* has nothing to say about the woman who cemented their alliance. For a discussion of the fate of exchanged women when alliances failed, see Boose, "The Fathers House," 25–29.

82 This closeness could be a mixed blessing. Several talmudic stories feature interactions between a rabbinic father-in-law and his rabbinic son-in-law that underscore the difficulty of the relationship. R. Yannai causes his son-in-law's death; when the son-in-law fails to come home as usual, R. Yannai assumes he must be dead, thereby causing the younger man's demise (*b.Ketub.* 62b). In another story, R. Aḥa bar Abba criticizes his son-in-law, R. Ḥisda, for betrothing his daughter while she is a minor. In response, R. Ḥisda criticizes his father-in-law for holding his granddaughter, a betrothed girl. R. Aḥa defends his actions, arguing that his act is *l'shem shamayim*, an acceptable act since he is showing affection for his daughter's children (*b.Qidd.* 81b). In another passage, Rav

are shown to be solicitous of their husbands' welfare. The husbands, themselves rabbis, respect their wives' judgment. They rely on their wives' knowledge of ritual matters and allow their wives to act in ways that might not be acceptable for other women.

In several cases, a woman's ritual practice is relied upon, despite being questioned, because she is her father's daughter. In the course of a discussion on how one may sift flour on a festival, the *Bavli* mentions the practices of two women, the wives of R. Joseph and R. Ashi.

> [On a festival], R. Ashi's wife sifted flour on the back of the table [thus making a distinction between her usual practice and her practice on festivals]. R. Ashi said, "This one of ours {i.e. his wife} is the daughter of Rami bar Ḥama, and Rami bar Ḥama was a man whose practice was precise. If she had not seen this done in her father's house, she would not be doing it." (*b.Beṣah* 29b)

R. Ashi offers an explanation of his wife's behavior, perhaps to his students or his colleagues. His wife, he points out, is the daughter of a rabbi who was fastidious in his ritual practice. The daughter of such a man is assumed to be doing in her husband's home what she was taught in her father's home. In relying on her, R. Ashi is in fact relying on a great rabbi. There is no need for R. Ashi to question his wife's practice; he can trust her because she is her father's daughter.

A similar story is told about the wife of Rav Pappi. He serves two visiting rabbis a dish made with liver. One of the rabbis eats the liver, but the other abstains. Abbaye questions the refusal of the second rabbi. The Talmud informs us that "Rav Pappi's wife was the daughter of R. Isaac Naph'ḥa and R. Isaac Naph'ḥa was a pious man. Had his daughter not learned [the proper preparation of liver] in her father's house, she would not have prepared it" (*b.Ḥul.* 110a). The daughter of a rabbi can be trusted to prepare food properly; her husband – and his rabbinic colleagues – can rely on her knowledge.

While a number of rabbis are married to the daughters of rabbis, one such marriage is mentioned repeatedly by the *Bavli*, with the wife always referred to as her father's daughter. The wife of Rava, the fourth generation Babylonian *amora*, is always referred to, both by the *Bavli* and Rava himself, as the daughter of his teacher, R. Ḥisda. R. Ḥisda's daughter is portrayed as an outspoken woman, to whom the *Bavli* assigns an active role in her husband's public life.

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refuses to eat meat at his son-in-law R. Ḥanan's home; he accuses the local butchers of "giving [his] daughter's children forbidden meat" because their supervision of the meat is not continual (*b.Ḥul.* 95b). While Rav's comment appears to be directed at the butchers, it is also a criticism of his son-in-law who purchases the meat and who does not reprimand the butchers in his community. In these passages, a father's concern for his daughter and/or her children lead him to rebuke his son-in-law, in one case, causing the latter's death.

In several cases, the *Bavli* situates R. Ḥisda's daughter in her husband's *beit midrash*. She protects her husband by rattling nuts in a bowl; noise apparently drives away demons. When Rava becomes the head of the academy, his need for protection increases. His wife then creates a window in the wall of the academy and sits on the other side of the wall, stretching her hand through the opening and resting it on her husband's head.[83] In another discussion, the *Bavli* reports that the daughter of Rav Ḥisda intervened to protect her husband from a "dangerous" woman. Ḥoma, the widow of Rava's colleague Abbaye, came to Rava's court to arrange for support from her husband's estate. In the course of describing the amount of wine her late husband had provided for her, Ḥoma reveals her bare arm, dazzling Rava. Rava deals with his response by running home to have sexual relations with his wife. R. Ḥisda's daughter suspects that something unusual is going on in the court.

> The daughter of R. Ḥisda said to [her husband, Rava], "Who is appearing in court now?" He said to her, "Ḥoma, the wife of Abbaye." She went after her, hitting her with a club until she drove her out of all of Meḥoza. She said to her, "You have already killed three [husbands], and now you are coming to kill another?" (*b.Ketub.* 65a)

A number of passages indicate that Rava respected and valued the opinions and advice of his wife. He cites her as his source for quantifying the pain women experience during their first act of sexual intercourse (*b.Ketub.* 39b). Rava's respect for his wife's opinion extends beyond areas that are commonly considered within the sphere of women's knowledge. In *b.Ḥag.* 5a, Rava applies the words "whether good or bad" (Eccl 12:14) to a man who on the eve of the Sabbath sends home meat that has not had the thigh sinew removed. Rava regards this practice as improper because women are not careful about the removal of forbidden portions of the meat and on the day before the Sabbath people are unusually busy and thus more likely to overlook the state of the meat. The *Bavli* objects to this attribution, noting that Rava himself used to send such meat home on the eve of the Sabbath! The response offered by the *Bavli* points out that "the daughter of R. Ḥisda is different [from other women], for [Rava] knew that she was expert."

Why did Rava make a distinction between his wife and other women in this ritual matter? What does it mean to say that she was an "expert?" Minimally, we could assume that Rava's wife knew precisely what was required to make a piece

83 *B.Ber.* 62a. This protection of Rava by his wife requires her to be in close physical proximity to her husband when he taught Torah. Interestingly, the *Bavli* expresses no concern about a woman's hand, resting on the head of her husband, in full view of other men. Nor does it ask about the possibility of Rava's being sexually aroused by his wife's touch.

of meat fit for consumption. It is possible that her "expertise" extended beyond the scope of meat preparation to other ritual matters. I would suggest that by referring to her here and elsewhere as "the daughter of R. Ḥisda," rather than "the wife of Rava," the *Bavli* suggests that the "expertise" of this woman was linked to her relationship to her father, a prominent rabbi. From the *Bavli*'s point of view, having married his teacher's daughter, Rava could feel confident that his wife was knowledgeable and reliable in ways that other women were not.

In one case, an exchange between Rava and his wife sounds very much like an exchange between two rabbis. Rava is called upon to determine the status of an animal that appears to be a טרפה, an animal unfit for slaughter and consumption. He rules that the animal is in fact fit, and after the animal is slaughtered, Rava purchases some of its meat. Rava's wife questions her husband's action.

> The daughter of R. Ḥisda said to [Rava], "When my father (*abba*) permitted a firstborn, he did not purchase its meat." He said to her, "That is the law in the case of a firstborn, whose meat is sold by estimation. Here the weighing out of the meat serves as proof [of my disinterestedness]. Is there any possibility that they will say I got a choice portion [in return for having declared the animal fit for slaughter]? They give me the choice cut every day." (*b.Ḥul.* 44b)

Rava's wife compares her husband's action to that of her father. R. Ḥisda was a priest and was called upon to judge whether a firstborn animal was blemished and therefore available to its owner. When he declared an animal blemished, R. Ḥisda refused to buy the animal's meat, lest someone accuse him of benefiting from his judgment. His daughter, in mentioning her father's practice, is questioning the integrity of her husband. While her use of the familiar "Daddy" suggests that her remark might be the beginning of a marital spat, Rava accepts her comment as a classic rabbinic inquiry, a discussion that cites the behavior or teachings of one sage to question a statement of another. He replies by showing that the analogy between R. Ḥisda's practice and his is imperfect. He does not criticize his wife for questioning his behavior, nor does he dismiss her father's practice. Rather, he employs rabbinic reasoning. The language of the *Bavli* suggests that Rava recognizes his wife as someone who understands not only ritual, but also the techniques employed by rabbis to discuss ritual. I would argue again that it is her position as her father's daughter that leads the *Bavli* to portray Rava's wife as someone with whom he can speak of complex matters in a complex way.

In another incident, Rava accepts his wife's testimony, despite the fact that women were not generally accepted as witnesses in court. In fact, Rava accepts his wife's testimony in a situation where he rejects that of a rabbi!

> A certain woman was required to take an oath in the court of Rava. The daughter of R. Ḥisda said to him, "I know that this woman is suspected of lying under oath." Rava shifted the oath onto the other party [in the dispute]. Another time, R. Pappa and R. Adda b. Matna were sitting before Rava. A document was brought before him. R. Pappa said to him, "I know that the [debt described in the] document has been discharged. He said to him, "Is there someone besides you [who can testify to this]?" He said, "No." He said to him, "Despite your testimony, one witness has no standing." R. Adda b. Matna said to him, "Isn't R. Pappa equal to the daughter of R. Ḥisda?" He said, "I am sure of the daughter of R. Ḥisda; I am not sure of him." (*b.Ketub.* 85a)

Rava's actions here are doubly surprising. He accepts the testimony of a woman in a monetary case. Furthermore, the testimony of R. Ḥisda's daughter is given weight despite the fact that she is a single witness, even though two witnesses are required in monetary cases. Although the daughter of R. Ḥisda is testifying as to the general veracity of the other woman, not the case itself, and is presumably speaking privately to her husband rather than testifying openly in court, R. Pappa and R. Adda b. Matna are aware of the situation and see her testimony as having legal significance.

When questioned by R. Adda b. Matna, Rava makes it clear that his wife, the daughter of R. Ḥisda, is exceptional. He can "be sure of her." Again, we might argue that Rava might have treated his wife this way regardless of her status, but I think it is equally reasonable to assume that Rava's respect for his wife is rooted in her position as his teacher's daughter. An exchange between husband and wife, appended to a legal dispute, presents R. Ḥisda's daughter as a woman versed in *halakhah*.

> When Ravin came [from the land of Israel to Babylonia, he reported that] R. Yoḥanan said: A woman who remains [single] ten years after her husband's death and [then] remarries will never give birth. R. Naḥman said: This is taught only when she does not intend to remarry, but if she intends to remarry, she may become pregnant. Rava said to the daughter of R. Ḥisda, "The sages are casting aspersions on you." She said to him, "I was intent on [marrying] you." (*b.Yebam.* 34b)

R. Yoḥanan and R. Naḥman are ruling on the likelihood of a woman conceiving after a long period in which she does not have sexual intercourse. R. Yoḥanan believes that a ten-year period of abstinence renders a woman infertile. R. Naḥman associates infertility with the woman's state of mind rather than her sexual activity; as long as she is considering marriage, she does not lose her capacity to conceive.

Rava alludes to R. Yoḥanan's teaching in his remark to his wife; from the context of the discussion, we can assume that R. Ḥisda's daughter married Rava after many years of widowhood. Given R. Yoḥanan's statement, her conception of a child in her second marriage, her husband says, suggests that she had intercourse while she was a widow. Her reply indicates her awareness of both traditions, that of R. Yoḥanan and that of R. Naḥman. She tells her husband that while she was a widow, "I was intent on [marrying] you," and that intent preserved her fertility.

Reading this exchange, a reader might imagine that Rava was unsure of his wife's chastity during her widowhood and that he used the teachings of the sages to question his wife's past behavior. Her answer, which recalls the teaching of Rav Naḥman, could be read as a protestation of her virtue. One might also read this exchange as a marital joke or bantering between Rava and the daughter of R. Ḥisda; he teases her and she replies in an equally light tone. Either reading must include an acknowledgement that Rava assumes his wife is aware of the teaching of R. Yoḥanan; her response indicates that she knows both Yoḥanan's ruling and that of Rav Naḥman. Rava does not cite his colleagues' dicta; he merely alludes to them, as does his wife in her reply. Rava and the daughter of R. Ḥisda share the specialized knowledge of the sages.

The daughter of R. Ḥisda is portrayed as a secondary source of Torah[84] and a woman familiar with rabbinic law. Her husband relies on her judgment and her knowledge of ritual. He speaks to her in the language of the sages, and knows she will understand him.

The daughter of R. Ḥisda is always referred to in the *Bavli* as her father's daughter. When Rava speaks about his wife, he too calls her "the daughter of R. Ḥisda"; never does he refer to her as "my wife" (דביתהו). In several instances, we might think that the reference reflects the fact that R. Ḥisda's daughter is mentioned in connection with her father,[85] or that she is citing a practice of her father's,[86] but in most cases she appears in a story because she is Rava's wife. In describing Rava's wife as her father's daughter, the *Bavli* hints that growing up as a rabbi's daughter gives a woman a sense of what needs to be done and how to negotiate life in a rabbinic household. At the same time, R. Ḥisda's daughter, like almost all of the rabbis' daughters mentioned in the *Bavli*, is nameless; she

84 Even the death of R. Ḥisda's daughter becomes a source of Torah for her husband. *B.Šabb.* 129a discusses the immersion of a woman after childbirth; there is some concern that a woman who had given birth was not well enough to immerse, presumably in cold water. The daughter of Rav Ḥisda immersed within thirty days after childbirth, when Rava was not there to "keep her warm." She was chilled, and "they brought her bier to Rava in Pumbedita," that is, she died. Following this, Rava taught that a woman should not immerse during the thirty days after childbirth unless her husband is at home.

85 *B.B.Bat.* 12b.

86 *B.Ḥul.* 44b.

derives her identity from the men around her, not from her own actions.

These stories about the daughters of rabbis highlight the advantages of marrying a rabbi's daughter. The demands on rabbinic households were significant, and they presumably differed in some ways from those of non-rabbinic families. The rabbis insisted that the everyday affairs of their households be conducted in accordance with the law, and the conduct of rabbis and their families was seen as a model for students. A rabbi's daughter could be trusted to oversee food preparation in the appropriate manner, leaving the rabbi free to focus on the study of Torah. Furthermore, rabbis, according to the *Bavli*, often left home for long periods of time to study. A rabbi's daughter could be trusted to raise a rabbi's children properly in his absence. And rabbis' daughters, some of whom grew up with absent fathers, were likely to realize and accept what it meant to be a rabbinic spouse. We read in *b.Ketub.* 63a that Rabbi Akiba's daughter "did for Ben Azzai" what her mother had done for her father. Rabbi Akiba's wife lived alone in poverty for many years while Akiba studied; it was she, according to *b.Ketub.* 62b–63a, who encouraged him to become a scholar. While the *Bavli* does not specify what Akiba's daughter "did" for Ben Azzai,[87] we can imagine that rabbinic spouses who accepted and endorsed their husbands' absences taught their daughters, explicitly or implicitly, to do the same.[88]

The Rabbi's Daughter Unbound "Captivity" and "Redemption"

Each of the stories above mentions a rabbi's daughter, but she is frequently absent from the main stage on which the action of the story takes place. In many of the passages cited above, conversations between two individuals, often two rabbis, reference an event involving a rabbi's daughter, but the daughter is not present or involved in the conversation. Even when rabbis' daughters give voice to their experience or concern, their voices are quickly silenced. Rabbi Akiba's daughter disappears from view when her father goes to the *beit midrash* to teach what he has learned from her experience. Elisha ben Abuyah's daughter is forgotten as Rabbi Judah HaNasi ponders the significance of the fire that

87 The comment about Akiba's daughter and ben Azzai is confusing because ben Azzai is generally assumed to have remained a bachelor due to his overwhelming passion for Torah. See Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*, 134–35. Commentators have suggested that the couple was betrothed and that Akiba's daughter died before the marriage could take place. In any case, the comment suggests to the reader that women who sacrifice for Torah are likely to have daughters who emulate their behavior.

88 Rubenstein (*The Culture of the Babylonian Talmud*, 111–12) argues that *b.Ketub.* 62b–63a portrays Akiba's wife as a "fantasy wife" rather than a realistic model for rabbis seeking spouses. At the same time, Rubenstein acknowledges, the closing comment that "the daughter of Rabbi Akiba did the same for Ben Azzai" can be read as advice for rabbis; if a man desires to study Torah while being legally married, he should seek a wife like Rabbi Akiba's.

supported the defense of Aḥer by his daughter; we never learn if she received the support she requested.

When rabbis' daughters do speak in these passages, their speech is directed toward their fathers or husbands. These stories relegate rabbis' daughters to the domestic sphere; when they leave that sphere, as the daughter of Rav Ḥisda does to protect her husband from evil spirits and evil women, they are silent or speak only to family members or other women. It is the rabbi-husband or the editorial voice of the *Bavli* that is called upon to explain why the practices of rabbis' daughters can be accepted as legally valid; these women do not defend or explain themselves to men outside the family circle.

What happens when women leave the protection and supervision of their home and family? Are rabbis' daughters, when outside the custody of their fathers and husbands, dependable women, or are they suspect? Do they use the Torah they absorbed in their father's house properly or do they manipulate Torah for their own ends?[89] This section considers stories about rabbis' daughters who, for various reasons, act at least in part as independent agents. In contrast to stories about rabbis' daughters as wives, these stories reveal rabbinic angst about women, and specifically about women who, by virtue of their upbringing, may be able to manipulate the law or circumstances to their own advantage.

These stories have a common theme: captivity and redemption. Rabbis' daughters, through no fault of their own, and sometimes as a result of the actions of their male relatives, find themselves taken captive by non-Jews. While the women do not have the power to free themselves, they play a part in their rescue or in establishing their legal and social status after their return from captivity.

Our first story features the daughters of R. Naḥman, a Babylonian *amora*. While the women are identified as "the daughters of R. Naḥman," the story suggests that they were either married or betrothed; their husbands or prospective husbands are not identified.

> The daughters of Rav Naḥman used to stir the kettle with their bare hands. This was troubling to Rav Ilish. [He said to himself]: It is written, "I have found only one man among a thousand, and not a single woman have I found" (Eccl 7:28) – but what about the daughters of Rav Naḥman!
>
> It happened that the daughters of Rav Naḥman were taken captive and Rav Ilish was taken captive with them. One day, Rav Ilish was sitting with a man who understood the language of birds. A raven came by and cried out. [Rav Ilish] said to [the man], "What is he saying?" He said, "Run Ilish, run Ilish." He said, "Ravens are liars and I will not listen to him." A dove came

89 The *Bavli* generally presumes that Torah is a civilizing force; men who study Torah become domesticated (as in the case of Rabbi Tarfon's grandson or Resh Laqish). Women, however, are not tamed or improved by the study of Torah; rather than improving women, Torah is corrupted by them.

by and cried out. He said to him, "What is he saying?" He said, "Run Ilish, run Ilish." He said, "The community of Israel is compared to a dove; I infer from this that a miracle will be performed for me."

Rav Ilish said to himself, "I will go check up on the daughters of Rav Naḥman. If they have remained faithful, I will take them with me." He said to himself, "Women discuss all of their affairs in the outhouse."[90] He stood outside the outhouse and heard them saying, "These captors are our husbands just as the men of Nehardea were our husbands. Let us tell our captors to move away from here, so our husbands won't hear that we are here and come and rescue us." Rav Ilish and the man who understood the language of birds fled. A miracle was performed for Rav Ilish and he was able to cross the river and escape pursuit; they found the other man and killed him.

When Rav Naḥman's daughters returned to Nehardea, Rav Ilish said, "They stir the pot through witchcraft." (*b.Git.* 45a)

Rav Ilish witnesses the daughters of a prominent rabbi performing a dangerous act without suffering injury. He is perplexed; the safety of Rav Naḥman's daughters suggests they are the beneficiaries of divine protection, protection that would attest to their righteousness. Ilish's reading of Eccl 7:28 leaves him uncertain as to whether women can be righteous. Ilish is confused; his sensory experience and his understanding of Torah are at odds. He then shares an experience – captivity – with these women and uses that experience to "test" their righteousness. Rav Naḥman's daughters fail the test; they are wanton women, indiscriminate in their need for men. Rav Ilish miraculously escapes captivity, indicating that it is he who is truly righteous. He is now able to dismiss the ability of Rav Naḥman's daughters to stir a boiling pot without injury as nothing more than "witchcraft."

This reading of the story portrays Rav Naḥman's daughters as inconsistent and amoral. It warns the reader that even the most seemingly righteous woman cannot be trusted. The fact that the women in question are the daughters of a prominent rabbi only serves to emphasize the unreliability of women.

The story offers an insight into the fears of its authors, fears that they shared, through this story, with their intended audience. Our story appears at the end of a brief talmudic discussion at *Giṭṭin* 45a on ransoming captives and assisting captives to escape. The following *mishnah* and brief discussion precede our story.

90 Baskin, *Midrashic Women* (33–34) notes that "[t]he outhouse is seen in rabbinic literature as a place of danger where demons and evil spirits lurk. Associating the privy with women's intimate conversations is to associate their conversations with licentious and supernatural topics, an expression of the perils the sages link with women who have strayed out of their preferred location in the domestic realm.

> Mishnah: They do not ransom captives for more than they are worth because of *tikkun olam*. They do not assist escaping captives because of *tikkun olam*. Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said: It is because of the decree regarding captives.
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> Gemara: They were asked: This "because of *tikkun olam*"– is it because of the pressure on the community or is it lest they come and grab more captives? Come and learn: Levi bar Darga ransomed his daughter for the sum of thirteen thousand gold dinars. Abbaye said: And who is to say that he did so with the consent of the sages? Perhaps he did so against the wishes of the sages!
>
> They do not assist escaping captives because of *tikkun olam*. Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel said: It is because of the decree regarding captives. What is the difference between them? The difference between them is when there is only one.

We can certainly argue that the story of Rav Ilish and the daughters of Rav Naḥman is placed here because it deals with the escape and ransoming of captives. Rav Ilish's escape is made without outside assistance. His success in evading his captors may be intended to reassure Jews reluctant to follow the *mishnah*'s dictum to refrain from abetting escapees. The death of Rav Ilish's companion also underscores the dangers involved in trying to escape captivity. But if the redactors of the *Bavli* wanted to convey these messages, they did not need to tell the story of Rav Naḥman's daughters. Rav Naḥman's daughters were presumably ransomed out of captivity – one can hardly imagine individuals so thoroughly wicked escaped through divine intervention – but there is no discussion of their ransoming. Their story adds nothing to our understanding of the first dictum of the *mishnah*.

Another issue in the story that might reflect the rabbis' social milieu is captivity. Many rabbinic texts portray Gentiles as dangerous to Jews. Captivity is an extreme form of danger. It is seen as particularly threatening to the chastity of Jewish women. Perhaps our story reflects the rabbis' fears that Jewish women will, at some point in captivity, "willingly" submit to their captors, rendering themselves "forbidden" (or at least less desirable) to their husbands when they are rescued.[91] We might read this story as an expression of rabbinic anxiety about resuming marital relations with a wife who has been a captive.

We could also posit that this story is informed by rabbinic concerns about

91 The *Bavli* voices this concern at *b.Ketub.* 51a in a discussion about rape. It concludes that a woman may serve or aid her captor out of fear; only women who "are released and run after their captors" are forbidden to their husbands. The words of Rav Naḥman's daughters remove any doubt in Ilish's mind that their relations with their captors are involuntary.

witchcraft in the Jewish community. Women, according to rabbinic texts, were more strongly associated with witchcraft than men.[92] On some level, this story might underscore the rabbis' discomfort with "women's wisdom" as contrasted to that of men. Men's knowledge is rooted in Torah and is therefore "kosher," even when it involves communicating with birds (according to rabbinic traditions, the ability to understand the speech of animals was a sign of wisdom, and such wisdom was seen as a divine gift). Women's knowledge is by definition not derived from Torah, since women do not study Torah, and is therefore inherently foreign and thus suspect.

The story of Rav Ilish and Rav Naḥman's daughters can be read in a broader context. That context is the material in the *mishnah* that deals with women taken captive and another story about rabbis' daughters in captivity. This material offers us some perspective on the impact captivity could have on a woman's future and provides some insights into the conclusion of Rav Naḥman's daughters, "These captors are our husbands just as the men of Nehardea were our husbands."

> A virgin is given a marriage portion of two hundred *zuz* and a widow a portion of one hundred *zuz*. . . . A woman taken captive after her third birthday is given a marriage portion of one hundred *zuz*. (*m.Ketub.* 1:2–4)
>
> If a man does not write in his wife's marriage contract, "If you are taken captive, I will ransom you and take you back as my wife," – or, if she is the wife of a priest, "I will bring you back to your country of residence" – he is still obligated [to perform these acts], since they are agreed upon practices. (*m.Ketub.* 4:8)
>
> A woman who says, "I was taken captive but I am still pure" {she testifies that she did not have intercourse with her captors} – her testimony is accepted. . . . But if there are witnesses that she was taken captive, and she says, "I am pure," her testimony is not accepted. If the witnesses [to her captivity] come after she is married [to a priest], she need not leave the marriage. Two women are taken captive. If each one says, "I was taken captive but I am still pure," their testimony is not accepted.[93] When each testifies about the other, their testimony is accepted. (*m.Ketub.* 2:5–6)

These *mishnayot* dictate the legal status of a Jewish girl or woman who is taken captive, presumably by Gentiles. A girl who is in captivity before her third

92 See Baskin, *Midrashic Women*, 33 and 142–43.

93 This seems to contradict the statement in the previous *mishnah*, in which the testimony of a woman who says, "I was taken captive, but I am pure" is accepted. Several manuscripts of the Mishnah do not include the words "I was taken captive," leading the commentators to suggest that this is a case in which there are witnesses to her having been a captive.

birthday is still presumed to be a virgin for purposes of fixing her marriage settlement, but a girl who is a captive after her third birthday is treated like a woman who is presumed to have had sexual intercourse; her marriage settlement is half of that assigned to a virgin. Whether or not intercourse actually took place, the girl's status is permanently altered by her captivity; she is less desirable on the marriage market.

Being taken captive also impacts the status of a married woman. The standard marriage contract, according to the Mishnah, included a husband's responsibility to redeem his wife from captivity. The Mishnah also expects a husband to resume married life with his wife. The wife of a priest, however, is permanently disqualified from living with her husband if she is taken captive. The fact that the clause intended for the marriage contract includes "and take you back as my wife" suggests that there might have been some reluctance on the part of a husband to resume marital relations with an ex-captive. Captivity clearly had serious legal and psychological consequences for women and their husbands.

The Mishnah, in a discussion about testimony, considers a woman's ability to testify regarding her personal status. If an unmarried woman testifies that she was taken captive, but insists that she remained "pure," that is, that she did not have sexual intercourse with her captors, her testimony is accepted and she can marry a priest. This view is based on the legal principle הפה שאסר הוא הפה שהתיר (lit. the mouth that forbids is the mouth that permits) – when a person provides information that is disadvantageous to herself and then offers additional information that is advantageous, we accept the latter because the former was offered as well, assuming that if the person were lying, she would not have offered the first, damaging facts. However, if we have independent confirmation of the damaging information – in this case, that she was a captive – her claim to be "pure" is not acceptable; she is suspect as the person who benefits from the testimony.

The following story serves as an example of rabbis' daughters using the laws of testimony to clarify their legal status and to ensure themselves a favorable legal ruling.

> There were some women captives who came to Nehardea. The father of Samuel appointed a guardian for them. Samuel said to his father, "Up until now who was their guardian?" His father replied, "If they were your daughters, would you treat them with disrespect?" The conversation was like "an error uttered by a ruler" (Eccl 10:5), and Samuel's daughters were taken captive and were taken to the land of Israel. They left their captors out of sight and went into the *beit midrash* of Rabbi Ḥanina. Each said, "I was taken captive, but I am pure." He declared them eligible to marry [priests]. Later, their captors came. Rabbi Ḥanina said, "They are obviously daughters of a scholar." It came out that they were the daughters of Samuel. R.

> Ḥanina said to R. Shemen bar Abba, "Go see to your kinswomen." He said to R. Ḥanina, "Are there witnesses [to their captivity] abroad?" [He said,] "They aren't here now." (*b.Ketub.* 23a)

Like the previous story, this story can be read in a variety of ways. On one level, the story allows the reader to acknowledge and admire the resourcefulness of Samuel's daughters. As we saw in the *mishnah*, a woman who is taken captive loses her right to the marriage settlement accorded to virgins. In addition, her choices of a marriage partner are curtailed, legally as well as socially. The *mishnah* also limits a woman's ability to protect her status. If a woman's captors appeal to the Jewish community to ransom her, her status is automatically compromised; her testimony about her sexual experience in captivity is not accepted. Samuel's daughters are clearly aware of these laws; they engineer their reappearance in the Jewish community so that there will be no witnesses to their captivity other than themselves. By doing so, they guarantee that their testimony about their "purity" will be accepted. R. Ḥanina's comment, "They are obviously the daughters of a scholar," can be read as an admiring acknowledgement of the women's cleverness or recognition that rabbis' daughters may be more aware of legal rulings than other women.

This story is fraught with ambiguity. What does R. Ḥanina mean when he says to R. Shemen bar Abba, "Go see to your kinswomen?" The commentaries assume R. Ḥanina is advising Shemen to marry one of the women. Shemen's response, "Are there witnesses abroad" can be understood as a delicate suggestion that a delay in marriage might be desirable, indicating that Shemen is not convinced of his kinswomen's virtue. The *Bavli* leaves the reader uncertain as well; the actions of Samuel's daughters leave room for doubt. Did Samuel's daughters leave their captors "out of sight" because they knew independent testimony to their captivity, regardless of their "purity," would render them ineligible for certain marriages, or because they knew the men would attest not only to their captivity but to the loss of their virginity? Samuel's daughters are clearly employing their knowledge of the law; whether their use is "legitimate" or subversive is unclear. Regardless of the women's sexual histories, their use of Torah is by definition problematic; because they are women, their Torah is suspect.

The story could also be read as a cautionary tale. Samuel's daughters are manipulating the system and perhaps the editors of the *Bavli* find that manipulation problematic. The story could be understood as a warning: women who know something about the law will use the law to serve their own ends.[94] Should they do so, all that a rabbi can do is (grudgingly) acknowledge their cleverness.

94 For discussions of women as tricksters in the halakhic arena, see Charlotte Fonrobert, *Menstrual Purity* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2000) 118–25. Fonrobert argues that the *Bavli*'s discussion of Yalta and the bloodstain at *b.Nid.* 20b is an attempt to assert rabbinic control over women; Yalta's ruse and argument are downplayed as the Gemara questions her reliability.

Rabbis' daughters are thus particularly dangerous, because they are more likely than other women to have knowledge of the law.

That women who know Torah are problematic is clear from other talmudic stories. One of the only women identified by her name as well as her position as a rabbi's daughter is Beruriah, the daughter of Rabbi Ḥanania ben Teradion and the wife of Rabbi Meir. The identification of Beruriah as both her father's daughter and Meir's wife is a confused one; some passages identify Beruriah as the daughter of Ḥanania ben Teradion, others identify her as Meir's wife and some offer no identification beyond that of her given name.[95] In this article, I cite only those talmudic passages in which Beruriah is identified as the daughter of Ḥanania ben Teradion. There are two such passages in the *Bavli*, *Pesaḥim* 62b and *ʿAbodah Zarah* 17b–18b. In *b.Pesaḥ.* 62b, Beruriah is mentioned by Rabbi Yoḥanan in a discussion with R. Simlai. The latter has asked the former to teach him a work known as *Sefer Yuḥasin*.

> [R. Yoḥanan] said to him, "Where are you from [originally]?" He said to him, "From Lod." "And where do you live [now]?" "In Nehardea." He said to him, "We don't teach [this material] to individuals from Lod or from Nehardea, and how much more so [would we not teach it to] you, who are from Lod and who live in Nehardea!" [R. Simlai] pressed him, and he agreed [to teach him]. He said to him, "Teach it to me in three months." [R. Yoḥanan] took a clod of dirt and threw it at him, saying, "Even Beruriah, the wife of R. Meir, the daughter of R. Ḥanania ben Teradion, who learned three hundred teachings in one day from three hundred teachers, couldn't learn this in three years, and you presume to learn it in three months!"

Here Beruriah is described as a model student; she is able to learn large quantities of material in a short time. Furthermore, she has access to many teachers rather than just one; while Beruriah may have learned from her father and/or her husband, they were by no means her only teachers. Beruriah's learning is not a fluke; it is the result of diligent study with many sages.

At the same time that R. Yoḥanan sings Beruriah's praises, his choice of her, rather than a male student, is noteworthy. R. Yoḥanan is not very impressed with R. Simlai. What better way to put the presumptuous student in his place than to compare him unfavorably to a woman!

95 See Rachel Adler, "The Virgin in the Brothel: Character and Context in the Legend of Beruriah," *Vox Benedictina* 7:1 (1990) 7–29. Other discussions of the identity of Beruriah can be found in Tal Ilan, *Mine and Yours are Hers: Retrieving Women's History from Rabbinic Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 109 ff., and David Goodblatt, "The Beruriah Traditions," in the *JJS* 26:1–2 (1975) 68–85. Goodblatt concludes that the tradition that Beruriah was the daughter of Ḥanania ben Teradion and the wife of Rabbi Meir is a "Babylonian elaboration" (81–82, 85).

The other talmudic passage in which Beruriah is mentioned as the daughter of R. Ḥanania ben Teradion is a lengthy discussion of the fate of Ḥanania and his family at *b.ʿAbod. Zar.* 17b–18b. This *sugya* is made up of several related stories; the last story features Beruriah, her husband, R. Meir and her sister. Beruriah is not mentioned in the earlier stories; in these accounts, R. Ḥanania has an unnamed, and apparently unmarried daughter.[96]

> [The Romans] summoned R. Ḥanania ben Teradion and said to him, "Why do you [continue to] occupy yourself with Torah [despite our ban on Torah study]?" He said to them, "Thus Adonai my God commanded me." Immediately they sentenced him to death by fire, his wife to execution, and his daughter to a brothel. . . .
>
> His daughter to a brothel – For R. Yoḥanan said: Once his daughter passed before the elders of Rome. They said, "How beautiful is the gait of this young woman!" From that time on, she was precise in her gait. . . . When the three of them were brought out, they acknowledged the justice of God. . . . His daughter said, "[God is] wondrous in purpose and mighty in deed, whose eyes observe all the ways [of human beings, so as to repay each person according to his deeds . . .]" (Jer 32:19). . . .
>
> [When Ḥanania was taken out to be burnt], his daughter said to him, "Father, that I should see you like this!" He said to her, "If I were to be burnt by myself, it would be a difficult thing for me. But now that I am being burnt together with the Torah scroll, the One who is concerned with the insult to the Torah scroll will be concerned with the insult to me."
>
> . . . Beruriah, the wife of Rabbi Meir, was the daughter of R. Ḥanania ben Teradion. She said to him, "It's humiliating that I should have a sister in a brothel!" He took a measure of *dinarim* and went [to rescue his sister-in-law]. He said, "If she has not done a forbidden act, then a miracle will be performed, but if she has done something forbidden, a miracle will not be performed." He came and presented himself as a Roman knight. He said to her, "Give yourself to me." She said, "I am menstruating." He said, "I'll wait."[97] She said, "There are many more attractive than I." He said, "She has done nothing inappropriate; she must say this to everyone."

96 Adler ("The Virgin in the Brothel," 22–23) argues that the unnamed daughter is created when Beruriah, the wife of Rabbi Meir, is "fused" with the daughter of Hanania ben Teradion. The Talmud is unwilling to contemplate the problems that would arise if Meir's wife were consigned to a brothel, and instead proposes that it was Beruriah's sister who received this sentence.

97 This is the translation suggested by Rashi. The verb רתח conveys the sense of burning, leading to the suggestion that Meir responds to the news that the woman is menstruating by indicating that his desire is so intense that he is willing to have intercourse with a menstruant.

Because of Ḥanania's commitment to Torah study, he, his wife and their daughter were severely punished. Uncomfortable with the seemingly unjust nature of these sentences, the *Bavli* explains why each member of the family was punished. In doing so, the Talmud offers a severe critique of Ḥanania's daughter; the punishment inflicted on Ḥanania's daughter for a minor expression of vanity far outweighs the "crime" she committed. At the same time, Ḥanania's daughter is held up as a righteous woman; she accepts the sentence as a just one rather than criticizing God.

The daughter is then forced to witness her father's execution, something she finds painful. Rabbi Ḥanania's last words to his daughter are pedagogic. One could read his reply as dismissive of her concern, and a contrast between her focus on the physical and his on the spiritual, but his responses to his students' inquiries are similar; in both cases, Ḥanania reassures those close to him that his suffering is mitigated because he shares it with a Torah scroll.

The rescue of Ḥanania's unnamed daughter by her brother-in-law underscores the powerlessness of women. Beruriah convinces her husband to rescue her sister by appealing to her own sense of pride; it is so embarrassing to have a sister in a brothel! Is Beruriah incredibly self-centered, or is this the only approach she believes her husband will be receptive to? Her dignity is, by extension, his; surely having a sister-in-law in a brothel, even involuntarily, is embarrassing for Meir as well as his wife. Meir then puts his sister-in-law to a test; like Rav Ilish, he will not attempt a rescue unless the woman in question is "virtuous." This raises the question: How does Meir think a woman in a brothel can maintain her virtue? Shouldn't Ḥanania's daughter merit rescue even if she had been forced to have sexual relations with the clientele of the brothel? Is Meir's quick conclusion that his sister-in-law has avoided sexual contact an acknowledgement that his expectations are unreasonable? As in the case of R. Naḥman's daughters and the daughters of Samuel, the daughter of R. Ḥanania ben Teradion is expected to evade the sexual desires of men while she is a powerless captive. It is unclear whether the redactors of these stories truly expect women to succeed in avoiding sexual contact with captors or whether these stories represent wishful thinking on the part of the rabbis.

Ḥanania ben Teradion's daughters have little power to impact their environment. Ḥanania's daughter is sentenced to a life of prostitution as a result of her father's "crime." The only response she can make is to accept her fate and empathize with her father's suffering. She cannot save herself from her sentence, and is subject to her brother-in-law's judgment as to her morality. Beruriah's power is also limited; while she escapes the punishment meted out to her parents and sister, she depends on her husband to save her sister. Finally, Ḥanania's unnamed daughter disappears into the background as the story becomes that of Rabbi

Meir. Just as her sentence reflected the Roman's desire to punish her father; her escape is of no concern to the Romans except insofar as they respond to Rabbi Meir's defiance in rescuing her. Once her virtue is proven, Ḥanania's daughter disappears, as if to say that a truly virtuous woman is an invisible one, and, conversely, a woman seen is a woman whose virtue is questionable.

The stories at *b.Giṭ.* 45a, *b.Ketub.* 23a, and *b.ʿAbod. Zar.* 17b–18b suggest that rabbis' daughters, while relatively "safe" when under the control or influence of fathers and husbands, are problematic when they "escape" male authority. These "escapes" as portrayed in the *Bavli* are ironic, in that they involve captivity. While Jewish fathers and husbands can "control" their daughters and wives, non-Jewish men cannot control Jewish women. The *Bavli* asserts this both by presuming that Jewish women in captivity can, if they choose, avoid sexual contact with their captors, and by portraying female captives as active rather than passive figures. While all women may be "dangerous" when not protected by their male relatives, rabbis' daughters are especially dangerous. While they may employ their skills to protect themselves from unwanted sexual advances, they may also use their knowledge of Torah to "protect" themselves from the consequences of captivity. They may also hide behind their identity as rabbis' daughters, appearing to be pious while engaging in witchcraft. The men responsible for them may be forced to risk their lives protecting them – or their sisters – from Gentiles.

Conclusions

In defining women as the Other, the rabbis acknowledge both the ways in which women are like men and the ways in which they are different. The anomaly that women represent results in rabbinic ambiguity toward women as a class. Talmudic stories about rabbis' daughters demonstrate that the rabbis' mixed reactions to women encompassed even those women over whom they had the most influence and control.

The *Bavli* emphasizes the connection between father and daughter. While the legal discussions of the Mishnah and the *Bavli* see a daughter's marriage as removing her from her father's house and his control, the stories discussed above indicate that a daughter is forever associated with her father. A daughter, even though she marries and becomes part of her husband's family, offers a father the promise of continuity, albeit in ways different than those offered by sons. A son learns Torah and may transmit it in his father's name; even if the father is not the son's primary teacher, the son will always be referred to as his father's child. Sons marry and carry on the family lineage. While the *Bavli* does not claim that rabbis' daughters study Torah (with the exception

of Beruriah), it does portray rabbis' daughters as transmitters of their fathers' Torah, through their actions in their husbands' homes. In addition, a rabbi may marry his daughter to a promising young scholar (or a less than promising reprobate in need of rescue), acquiring a rabbinic son-in-law. Given Boyarin's work on the anxiety of rabbis regarding their ability to produce satisfactory sons, the already scholarly son-in-law may in fact be a better choice to ensure a rabbi's legacy. The number of men referred to as the sons of rabbis' daughters[98] suggests that daughters were in fact seen as potential contributors to their father's lineage as well as that of their husbands.

There is a clear distinction between the daughter in the home and the daughter freed from the constraints of the home. A daughter requires supervision. When that supervision is properly carried out, a daughter may marry and be virtuous. When fathers fail in their role, a daughter may be a source of danger to her father or to other men. When firmly ensconced in her husband's home and acting in his interests, a rabbi's daughter can be an extremely desirable wife whose actions reflect her father's learning and piety. When freed from the social restraints imposed upon daughters and wives, a rabbi's daughter may use her knowledge and abilities to advance her own agenda, one that might not coincide with that of the *Bavli*'s editors. While women who are not rabbis' daughters may manipulate Torah to achieve their own goals,[99] rabbis' daughters pose a special threat, given their likelihood to be more familiar with Torah than the average woman.

In *m.Soṭah* 3:4, Ben Azzai claims that "A man is obligated to teach his daughter Torah, so that if she drinks [the waters of jealousy but does not immediately experience the symptoms described in the Torah] she will know that it is her merit that causes the delay." Ben Azzai believes that women must be taught so they will understand the workings of the law, such that they will not imagine that a delay in punishment negates the severity of the law. For Ben Azzai, the study of Torah ensures understanding and righteousness, even for women. In contrast, Rabbi Eliezer argues, "One who teaches his daughter Torah, teaches her frivolity." According to Rabbi Eliezer, women do not become more respectful or righteous as a result of Torah study; instead they pervert the Torah they learn. The *Bavli*'s stories about rabbis' daughters support both Ben Azzai and Eliezer's claims. In contrasting women situated in their homes with women "freed" from the constraints of the home, the *Bavli* acknowledges that an educated woman can be righteous and a source of Torah, but warns that women can use their Torah knowledge for "frivolous" and disruptive purposes.

Rabbis' daughters were certainly more likely to have access to Torah than

98 See appendix.

99 See note 94 and *b.Ber.* 31b and *b.Giṭ.* 35a.

other women. This access could result in a rabbi's daughter transmitting her father's legacy to her husband and sons. It could also result in situations in which rabbis found themselves dealing with knowledgeable women whose interests collided with their own. In conclusion, the rabbi's daughter is indeed desirable and dangerous, a woman to be both sought after and avoided, admired and feared.

I would like to thank my colleagues, Drs. Rachel Adler, Gail Labovitz, Stephen Passamaneck and Ron Reissberg for their comments on earlier versions of this piece.

Appendix
Mentions of Rabbis' Daughters in the *Bavli*

Berakot 56a	the daughters of Rava and Abbaye
Berakot 56a	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Berakot 62a	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Šabbat 65a	the daughters of the father of Samuel
Šabbat 80b	the daughter of Rabbi Bibi
Šabbat 129a	the daughter of Rav Ḥisda
Šabbat 151b	the daughter of Rabbi Ḥanina
Šabbat 156b	the daughter of Rabbi Akiba
ᶜErubin 65a	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Pesaḥim 25b	the daughter of Mar bar Rav Ashi
Pesaḥim 62b	Beruriah, the daughter of R. Ḥanania ben Teradion
Sukkah 44b	(the sons of) the daughter of Rav
Beṣah 29b	the daughter of Rami b. Hama
Taᶜanit 24a	the daughter of R. Yose from Yukrit
Taᶜanit 25a	the daughter of R. Ḥanina ben Dosa
Ḥagigah 3a	(the sons of) the daughter of R. Yohanan b. Gudgada
Ḥagigah 5a	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Ḥagigah 15b	the daughter of Elisha ben Abuyah
Yebamot 34b	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Ketubbot 23a	the daughters of Samuel
Ketubbot 39b	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Ketubbot 62b	the daughter of Ḥanania ben Ḥakhinai
Ketubbot 63a	the daughter of R. Akiba
Ketubbot 65a	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Ketubbot 69a	the daughter of R. Ashi
Ketubbot 85a	the daughter of R. Ḥisda

Nedarim 22a	(the son of) the daughter of R. Yannai the Elder
Nedarim 23a	the (step)daughter of Abbaye
Nedarim 51a	the daughter of R. Judah the Patriarch
Soṭah 49a	(the son of) the daughter of R. Aha b. Jacob
Giṭṭin 7a	the daughter of Mar bar Rav Ashi
Giṭṭin 45a	the daughters of R. Naḥman
Giṭṭin 47a	the daughter of Resh Laqish
Giṭṭin 69b	the daughter of Rav Ashi
Qiddušin 39b	(the son of) the daughter of Elisha ben Abuyah (parallel at *Ḥullin* 142a)
Qiddušin 71b	the daughter of R. Yoḥanan
Qiddušin 81b	the daughter of R. Meir; the daughter of R. Aha bar Abba; the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Baba Qamma 38a–b	the daughter of R. Samuel bar Judah
Baba Meṣiʿa 44b	the daughter of R. Ḥiyya
Baba Meṣiʿa 84b	the daughter of R. Simeon b. Eleazar
Baba Meṣiʿa 85a	the daughter of R. Judah the Patriarch
Baba Meṣiʿa 86a	the daughter of R. Simeon b. Halafta
Baba Meṣiʿa 104b	the daughter of Ravina
Baba Batra 12b	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Baba Batra 16b	the daughter of Rabbi Simeon the son of Rabbi [Judah the Patriarch]
Baba Batra 51b	(the sons of) the daughters of Rav (parallel at *Ḥullin* 92a)
ʿAbodah Zarah 17b–18b	the daughters of Ḥanania ben Teradion
Horayot 12b	the daughter of R. Pappa
Ḥullin 44b	the daughter of R. Ḥisda
Ḥullin 95b	the daughter of Rav
Ḥullin 110a	the daughter of R. Isaac Naphḥa