

MICAH AND JOEL IN TALMUD AND MIDRASH

A Sourcebook

Jacob Neusner

Studies in Judaism


**University Press of America,[®] Inc.
Lanham · Boulder · New York · Toronto · Plymouth, UK**

**Copyright © 2007 by
University Press of America,[®] Inc.**
4501 Forbes Boulevard
Suite 200
Lanham, Maryland 20706
UPA Acquisitions Department (301) 459-3366

Estover Road
Plymouth PL6 7PY
United Kingdom

All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America
British Library Cataloging in Publication Information Available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2006931716
ISBN-13: 978-0-7618-3596-7 (paperback : alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 0-7618-3596-2 (paperback : alk. paper)

 The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48—1984

Studies in Judaism

EDITOR

Jacob Neusner
Bard College

EDITORIAL BOARD

Alan J. Avery-Peck
College of the Holy Cross

Herbert Basser
Queens University

Bruce D. Chilton
Bard College

José Faur
Bar Ilan University

William Scott Green
University of Rochester

Mayer Gruber
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Günter Stemberger
University of Vienna

James F. Strange
University of South Florida

CONTENTS

PREFACE.....		vii
1.	MICAH IN THE MISHNAH, TRACTATE ABOT, AND THE TOSEFTA	1
2.	MICAH IN SIFRA, THE TWO SIFRÉS AND MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL	5
3.	MICAH IN THE YERUSHALMI	19
4.	MICAH IN GENESIS RABBAH, LEVITICUS RABBAH, AND PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA	31
5.	MICAH IN ESTHER RABBAH I, RUTH RABBAH, SONG OF SONGS RABBAH, LAMENTATIONS RABBAH AND THE FATHERS ACCORDING TO RABBI NATHAN	57
6.	MICAH IN THE BAVLI	71
7.	JOEL IN THE MISHNAH, TRACTATE ABOT, AND THE TOSEFTA	97
8.	JOEL IN SIFRA, THE TWO SIFRÉS AND MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL ...	99
9.	JOEL IN THE YERUSHALMI	107
10.	JOEL IN GENESIS RABBAH, LEVITICUS RABBAH, AND PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA	113
11.	JOEL IN ESTHER RABBAH I, RUTH RABBAH, SONG OF SONGS RABBAH, LAMENTATIONS RABBAH AND THE FATHERS ACCORDING TO RABBI NATHAN	125
12.	JOEL IN THE BAVLI	133

Preface

A language community is not just a group marked out by its use of a particular language: it is an evolving communion in its own right, whose particular view of the world is informed by a common language tradition. A language brings with it a mass of perceptions clichés, judgments and inspirations. In some sense, then, when one language replaces another, a people's view of the world must also be changing.

Nicholas Ostler¹

What happens to a religious community when its first language is replaced by a second, yet a third, and onward through time? Whether or not the new language marks a change in world-view remains to be seen. Continuities of culture despite variations of language demand deep deliberation. The communities that inherited the holy Scriptures of ancient Israel, Rabbinic Judaism and catholic, orthodox Christianity, found themselves possessed by divine writings in a language other than their own — writings dictated by God to prophets, for example. They nonetheless regarded themselves as those of, and to, whom in their day God through Scripture spoke, those that continued and now constituted the community of ancient Israel. And that was so even though they did not form a language community coherent with the language of Scripture. But how to form a community of “perceptions, clichés, judgments and inspirations” within an alien yet authoritative language-world? Here in Rabbinic Judaism is a case, subtle if not uncommon in religious traditions, in which one language (Middle Hebrew) replaces another (Biblical Hebrew) even while the holy writings in the replaced language remain authoritative.

The Rabbinic sages of the first six centuries C.E. for their part recognized the difference between the language of Scripture and the language of the sages, that of the Mishnah for example. Greek and Latin, various kinds of Aramaic and Syriac, Mishnaic or Middle Hebrew — none of the principal languages of Judaic and Christian antiquity opened the door to the received Scripture, which required translation. Yet all these language communities made their own the received writings in an alien tongue.

Theology trumps culture. For their heirs the ancient Israelite Scriptures represented authoritative accounts of God's messages in God's own wording. That is why the shift in language — from God's language, Hebrew as recorded by the prophets, to the languages of the faithful, now inheritors — challenged them to

contemplate continuities from present to past. But they would say, from past to present. None could concede what is self-evident to modern historical linguistics, including those devoted to Scripture: when one language replaces another, views of the world must also be changing. But how were authoritative writings in one language to be received by communities speaking a different language? Conveyed by a divine language that no one now spoke and that many did not comprehend, Scripture, its law and theology, history and prophecy, enjoyed the privileged position in the faith- and language-communities of Judaism and Christianity. Both religious traditions faced the task of mediating God's word of old to language-communities that used other words altogether to say other things entirely.

How they did so forms a principal problem in the study of formative Judaism and Christianity. In general terms, the Christian solution, the organization of the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the Judaic solution to the same problem, the formation of the doctrine of the dual Torah, an oral Torah that amplified and complemented the written Torah of ancient Israel, run parallel. The New Testament found validation in the Old, as Christianity read backward from the Gospels to the Israelite prophets. The Rabbinic sages of the documents of the oral Torah received and recast the written one into wholly new modes of thought as well as of expression. They read forward from Scripture to the present moment. Nonetheless, that characterization of the reception of Scripture in formative Christianity and Judaism rests in general on episodic data, on mere examples and illustrations.

It is time for systematic work. This sourcebook and its companions represent the effort to collect and classify the hard facts in full detail. They form a data base on how Israelite Scripture was received and recast in the language-communities that produced the Bible in two Testaments of Christianity and the dual Torah of Judaism. Take the prophets, for example. Everyone knows that verses of prophecy figure prominently in the Gospels' narratives, and that they figure as proof-texts in Rabbinic exegesis of scriptural narratives as well. But to what end, and with what larger conception in mind? Biblical authority in Christianity forms a staple topic of theological inquiry. But I do not know of a systematic survey of how the Rabbinic *documents*, for their part, respond to the prophetic ones: select, explain, and utilize the received language of Scripture.

What is at stake in such a study is an account of how the Rabbinic system took over the prophetic writings and responded to their exhortations and theology — weighty issues. So far as prophetic Judaism challenges the covenantal nomism of Rabbinic Judaism, as some suppose it does, the wherewithal of evaluating that proposition, so critical to the history of Judaism, awaits. And these form only two important questions that a survey of Rabbinic readings of Israelite prophetic writings will help to resolve. This collection of Rabbinic comments on verses in the books of Micah and Joel carries forward the presentation of Jeremiah and Amos. It will be followed by anthologies of Rabbinic readings of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the other literary prophets.

To what end? I address the hypothesis that Rabbinic Judaism in its normative canon, from the Mishnah through the Bavli, not only formally through proof-texts but theologically through normative propositions represents a continuation and realization of Prophetic Judaism. I propose in this protracted study to validate the category-characterization: Prophetic-Rabbinic Judaism, the Judaic religious system that emerged from the Rabbis' reading of the prophets. In this protracted project, therefore, I create a data-base for the analysis of the Rabbinic reading of Israelite prophecy.

II

The Rabbinic sages of the first six centuries of the Common Era recognized that that Scripture's language was not their own, the Hebrew of the prophets and the Hebrew of the Mishnah and Midrash-compilations of Rabbinic Judaism being distinct forms of Hebrew. Here is a protracted account of their engagement with distinct linguistic usages and the meanings imputed to the differences, with italics signifying the use of Aramaic, plain type, of Hebrew:

BAVLI QIDDUSHIN 4:1-2 70A-B/V.5

- A. *There was a man from Nehardea who went into a butcher shop in Pumbedita. He said to them, "Give me meat."*
- B. *They said to him, "Wait until the servant of R. Judah bar Ezekiel gets his, and then we'll give to you."*
- C. *He said, "So who is this Judah bar Sheviskel who comes before me to get served before me?"*
- D. *They went and told R. Judah.*
- E. *He excommunicated him.*
- F. *They said, "He is in the habit of calling people slaves."*
- G. *He proclaimed concerning him, "He is a slave."*
- H. *The other party went and sued him in court before R. Nahman.*
- I. *When the summons came, R. Judah went to R. Huna, he said to him, "Should I go, or shouldn't I go?"*
- J. *He said to him, "In point of fact, you really don't have to go, because you are an eminent authority. But on account of the honor owing to the household of the patriarch [of the Babylonian Jews], get up and go."*
- K. *He came. He found him making a parapet.*
- L. *He said to him, "Doesn't the master concur with what R. Huna bar Idi said Samuel said, 'Once a man is appointed administrator of the community, it is forbidden for him to do servile labor before three persons?'"*
- M. *He said to him, "I'm just making a little piece of the balustrade."*
- N. *He said to him, "So what's so bad about the word, 'parapet,' that the Torah uses, or the word 'partition,' that rabbis use?"*
- O. *He said to him, "Will the master sit down on a seat?"*

- P. *He said to him, "So what's so bad about 'chair,' which rabbis use, or the word 'stool,' which people generally use?"*
- Q. *He said to him, "Will the master eat a piece of citron-fruit?"*
- R. *He said to him, "This is what Samuel said, 'Whoever uses the word "citron-fruit" is a third puffed up with pride.' It should be called either etrog, as the rabbis do, or 'lemony-thing,' as people do."*
- S. *He said to him, "Would the master like to drink a goblet of wine?"*
- T. *He said to him, "So what's so bad about the word 'wineglass,' as rabbis say, or 'a drink,' as people say?"*

The story further meanders in a variety of directions, but what is important for the present argument is clear: language-choices signaled social and cultural differences. Nor only so, but the use of Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, is attributed to God himself, by the prophets:

GENESIS RABBAH LXXIV:XIV.

1. A. "[Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. Laban said, 'This heap is a witness between you and me today. Therefore he named it Galeed, and the pillar Mizpah, for he said, 'The Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other. If you ill-treat my daughters or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us, remember, God is witness between you and me'"']" (Gen. 31:47-50): "Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha:"
- B. Said R. Samuel bar Nahman, "Let the Aramaic language not be a minor one in your view, for in the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings, the Holy One, blessed be he, paid all due respect to it.
- C. "In the Torah: 'Jegar-sahadutha.'
- D. "In the Prophets: 'Thus shall you say to them' (Jer. 10:11), [given in Aramaic].
- E. "In the Writings: 'Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in Aramaic' (Dan. 2:4)."

The passage has God dictate to Jeremiah a prophesy in Aramaic, and this is a mark of the importance of that language.

How these differences in not only word choice but the entirety of language were sorted out affords perspective on the religious systems — Rabbinic Judaism, catholic, orthodox Christianity — that with Scripture in hand would emerge from late antiquity. The uses to which they put the heritage of the past reveal much about the traits of mind and theological program that characterized the heirs of Scripture. To be sure issues that provoke interest have tended to focus on whether the later generations impose upon the scriptural heritage their own concerns or attempt to replicate the original, historical message and perspective of the Scriptural writers. So Scripture as a historical resource has been made to stand in judgment upon the

systematic theological readings of the heirs of Scripture in later times. But such a perspective imposes upon the Judaic sages and Christian theologians issues of historical authenticity that did not preoccupy them — they took for granted the historical facticity of Scripture's narratives and the authority of its laws — and obscures the issues that did concern them.

It is easier to invoke the notion that the sages and theologians possessed clear programs of inquiry than exactly to define of what those programs consisted. It is common to impute to them issues important to contemporary learning, pertinent to, if not historical, then theological or philological-exegetical topics. So debates in the Judaic framework pursue the issues of whether exegesis is provoked by traits of language and expression of the text or responds to issues of a systematic character pervading the documents in which the particularities of detailed exegesis figure. Such debates, which yield interesting results for the contemporary hermeneutics of Scripture, do not greatly advance our systematic knowledge of the way in which the sages and theologians received Scripture and responded to it. That knowledge depends upon comprehensive surveys of details and the categorization of the details. These desiderata await realization. We cannot now on the basis of a full corpus of data define the range of concerns that drew sages and theologians to Scripture: what they were likely to ask Scripture to reveal, to demonstrate, to elucidate.

My purpose here and in the companion anthologies is to create a data base for analytical studies of Rabbinic Judaism and ancient Israel prophecy. I collect and classify the corpus of comments on specific verses of Scripture embedded in the writings of the ancient rabbis and theologians. When we have accomplished the work of hunting and gathering the data and inductively ordering it by its interior categories, we shall have established solid foundations for generalization. Then we may say what the sages and theologians proposed to accomplish in their engagement with Scripture. We may begin to outline the authority of Scripture as that authority imposed structure and order upon the sages' and the theologians' systems: for what was Scripture likely to be interrogated, and what were the issues important in late antiquity on which Scripture was not invited to testify. To answer these questions of large-scale characterization and generalization requires a kind of work of collecting and arranging facts that until now has not been done — a reference book on Rabbinic readings of Israelite prophecy.

III

My ambition here accordingly is modest. This is a source book produced by grunt work, just a collection and classification of facts meant to provide documentation for future study. The raw data illustrate how one particular kind of ancient Israelite Scripture, the prophetic books, found a place in the new language-community formed by the Rabbinic sages and documented in their canon from the Mishnah, ca. 200 C.E., through the Talmud of Babylonia, a.k.a., the Bavli, ca. 600

C.E. I have collected from my translations and arranged in sequence document by document the references to the principal prophets set forth in the Rabbinic writings of late antiquity. In the companion studies I classify the uses of prophecy undertaken by the rabbis: the evidences of the movement from language to language, world view to world view. The present collection carries forward *Jeremiah in Talmud and Midrash* (Lanham, 2006: University Press of America. Studies in Judaism series), and its companion *Rabbi Jeremiah, Amos in Talmud and Midrash* (Lanham, 2006: University Press of America. Studies in Judaism series), and *Hosea in Talmud and Midrash* (Lanham, 2006: University Press of America. Studies in Judaism series).

The sources and reference system derive from my translations of the canon of formative Judaism. In those translations I consulted prior versions of the same documents. These derive from the British translations published by Soncino Press, London. Where these are used, I cite the name of the translator and the page in the Soncino translation where the work appears. The reference system I have devised signals the sentence, paragraph, completed unit of thought, plus the document and its conventional divisions, e.g., chapter and subchapter. The use of Aramaic type faces signals Aramaic, plain type, Hebrew, and bold face type, the citation of the Mishnah or the Tosefta by a later document.

The Mishnah. A New Translation. New Haven and London, 1987: Yale University Press. *Choice Outstanding Academic Book List*, 1989. Second printing: 1990. Paperbound edition: 1991. CD Rom edition: Logos, 1996. CD Rom/ Web edition: OakTree Software, Inc. Altamonte Springs, FL.

Editor: *The Law of Agriculture in the Mishnah and the Tosefta.* Leiden, 2005: E. J. Brill.

- I. *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Agriculture. Berakhot, Peah.*
- II. *Demai, Kilayim., Shebiit*
- III. *Terumot, Maaserot, Maaser Sheni, Hallah, Orlah, Bikkurim*

The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. N.Y., 1977-1980: Ktav. II-VI.

- I. Editor: *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. I. The First Division Zeraim.* N.Y., 1985: Ktav.
- II. *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. The Second Division. Moed.* Second printing: Atlanta, 1999: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.
- III. *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. The Third Division. Nashim.* Second printing: Atlanta, 1999: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

- IV. *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. The Fourth Division. Neziqin.* Second printing: Atlanta, 1999: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.
- V. *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. The Fifth Division. Qodoshim.* Second printing: Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.
- VI. *The Tosefta. Translated from the Hebrew. The Sixth Division. Tohorot.* Second printing: Atlanta, 1990: Scholars Press for South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism. With a new preface.

Reprint: *The Tosefta in English. I. Zeraim, Moed, and Nashim.* Peabody, 2003: Hendrickson Publications. With a new introduction.

Reprint: *The Tosefta in English. II. Neziqin, Qodoshim, and Toharot.* Peabody, 2003: Hendrickson Publications.

The Babylonian Talmud. Translation and Commentary. Peabody, 2006: Hendrickson Publishing Co. Second printing of *The Talmud of Babylonia. An Academic Commentary.*

- i. Berakhot
- ii. Shabbat
- iii. Erubin
- iv. Pesahim
- v. Yoma-Sukkah
- vi. Taanit-Megillah-Moed Qatan-Hagigah
- vii. Besah-Rosh Hashanah
- viii. Yebamot
- ix. Ketubot
- x. Nedarim-Nazir
- xi. Sotah-Gittin
- xii. Qiddushin
- xiii. Baba Qamma
- xiv. Baba Mesia
- xv. Baba Batra
- xvi. Sanhedrin
- xvii. Makkot-Abodah Zarah-Horayot
- xviii. Shebuot-Zebahim
- xix. Menahot
- xx. Hullin
- xxi. Bekhorot-Arakhin-Temurah
- xxii. Keritot-Meilah-Tamid-Niddah

The Talmud of Babylonia. A Complete Outline. Atlanta, 1995-6: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series. Now: Lanham, MD. University Press of America

- I.A. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times. Berakhot, Shabbat, and Erubin.*
- I.B. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times. Pesahim through Hagigah.*
- II.A. *The Division of Women. Yebamot through Ketubot*
- II.B. *The Division of Women. Nedarim through Qiddushin*
- III.A. *The Division of Damages. Baba Qamma through Baba Batra*
- III.B. *The Division of Damages. Sanhedrin through Horayot*
- IV.A. *The Division of Holy Things and Tractate Niddah. Zebahim through Hullin*
- IV.B. *The Division of Holy Things and Tractate Niddah. Bekhorot through Niddah*

The Talmud of the Land of Israel. An Academic Commentary to the Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions. Atlanta, 1998-1999: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series. Now: Lanham, MD. University Press of America.

- I. *Yerushalmi Tractate Berakhot*
- II.A. *Yerushalmi Tractate Shabbat. Chapters One through Ten*
- II.B. *Yerushalmi Tractate Shabbat. Chapters Eleven through Twenty-Four. And the Structure of Yerushalmi Shabbat*
- III. *Yerushalmi Tractate Erubin*
- IV. *Yerushalmi Tractate Yoma*
- V.A. *Yerushalmi Tractate Pesahim. Chapters One through Six.*
- V.B. *Yerushalmi Tractate Pesahim. Chapters Seven through Ten. And the Structure of Yerushalmi Pesahim*
- VI. *Yerushalmi Tractate Sukkah*
- VII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Besah*
- VIII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Taanit*
- IX. *Yerushalmi Tractate Megillah*
- X. *Yerushalmi Tractate Rosh Hashanah*
- XI. *Yerushalmi Tractate Hagigah*
- XII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Moed Qatan*
- XIII. A. *Yerushalmi Tractate Yebamot. Chapters One through Ten*
- XIII. B. *Yerushalmi Tractate Yebamot. Chapters Eleven through Seventeen. And the Structure of Yerushalmi Yebamot*
- XIV. *Yerushalmi Tractate Ketubot*

- XV. *Yerushalmi Tractate Nedarim*
- XVI. *Yerushalmi Tractate Nazir*
- XVII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Gittin*
- XVIII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Qiddushin*
- XIX. *Yerushalmi Tractate Sotah*
- XX. *Yerushalmi Tractate Baba Qamma*
- XXI. *Yerushalmi Tractate Baba Mesia*
- XXII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Baba Batra*
- XXIII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Sanhedrin*
- XXIV. *Yerushalmi Tractate Makkot*
- XXV. *Yerushalmi Tractate Shebuot*
- XXVI. *Yerushalmi Tractate Abodah Zarah*
- XXVII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Horayot*
- XXVIII. *Yerushalmi Tractate Niddah*

The Talmud of The Land of Israel. An Outline of the Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions. Atlanta, 1995-6: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series. Now: Lanham, MD. University Press of America

- I.A. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times. Berakhot and Shabbat*
- I.B. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times. Erubin, Yoma, and Besah*
- I.C. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times. Pesahim and Sukkah*
- I.D. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times. Taanit, Megillah, Rosh Hashanah, Hagigah, and Moed Qatan*
- II.A. *The Division of Women. Yebamot to Nedarim*
- II.B. *The Division of Women. Nazir to Sotah*
- III.A. *The Division of Damages and Tractate Niddah. Baba Qamma, Baba Mesia, Baba Batra, Horayot, and Niddah*
- III.B. *The Division of Damages and Tractate Niddah. Sanhedrin, Makkot, Shebuot, and Abodah Zarah*

The Two Talmuds Compared. Atlanta, 1995-6: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series. *The Talmud of the Land of Israel. An Academic Commentary to the Second, Third, and Fourth Divisions.* Atlanta, 1998-1999: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series. Now: Lanham, MD. University Press of America.

- I.A. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Yerushalmi Tractate Berakhot*
- I.B. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractate Shabbat.*
- I.C. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractate Erubin*
- I.D. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Yoma and Sukkah*
- I.E. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractate Pesahim*
- I.F. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Besah, Taanit, and Megillah*
- I.G. *Tractate Berakhot and the Division of Appointed Times in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Rosh Hashanah, Hagigah, and Moed Qatan*
- II.A. *The Division of Women in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Yebamot and Ketubot.*
- II.B. *The Division of Women in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Nedarim, Nazir, and Sotah.*
- II.C. *The Division of Women in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Qiddushin and Gittin.*
- III.A. *The Division of Damages and Tractate Niddah in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Tractates Baba Qamma and Baba Mesia*
- III.B. *The Division of Damages and Tractate Niddah in the Talmud of the Land of Israel and the Talmud of Babylonia. Baba Batra and Niddah.*
- III.C. *The Division of Damages and Tractate Niddah. Sanhedrin and Makkot.*
- III.D. *The Division of Damages and Tractate Niddah. Shebuot, Abodah Zarah, and Horayot.*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. I. Sifra. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

- Part i. *Introduction. And Parts One through Three, Chapters One through Ninety-Eight*
- Part ii. *Parts Four through Nine. Chapters Ninety-Nine through One Hundred Ninety-Four*
- Part iii. *Parts Ten through Thirteen. Chapters One Hundred Ninety-Five through Two Hundred Seventy-Seven*
- Part iv. *A Topical and Methodical Outline of Sifra*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. II. Esther Rabbah I. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. III. Ruth Rabbah. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. IV. Lamentations Rabbati. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. V. Song of Songs Rabbah. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

- Part i. *Introduction. And Parashiyyot One through Four*
- Part ii. *Parashiyyot Five through Eight. And a Topical and Methodical Outline of Song of Songs Rabbah*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. VI. The Fathers Attributed to Rabbi Nathan. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. VII. Sifré to Deuteronomy. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

- Part i. *Introduction. And Parts One through Four*
- Part ii. *Parts Five through Ten*
- Part iii. *A Topical and Methodical Outline of Sifré to Deuteronomy*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. VIII. Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael. Atlanta, 1997: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series

Part i. *Introduction. Pisha, Beshallah and Shirata*

Part ii. *Vayassa, Amalek, Bahodesh, Neziqin, Kaspa and Shabbata*

Part iii. *A Topical and Methodical Outline of Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael.*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. IX. Atlanta, 1998: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series. Now: Lanham, University Press of America.

Part i. *Introduction. Genesis Rabbah Chapters One through Twenty-One*

Part ii. *Genesis Rabbah Chapters Twenty-Two through Forty-Eight*

Part iii. *Genesis Rabbah Chapters Forty-Nine through Seventy-Three*

Part iv. *Genesis Rabbah Chapters Seventy-Four through One Hundred*

Part v. *A Topical and Methodical Outline of Genesis Rabbah. Bereshit through Vaere, Chapters One through Fifty-Seven*

Part vi. *A Topical and Methodical Outline of Genesis Rabbah. Hayye Sarah through Miqqes. Chapters Fifty-Eight through One Hundred*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. X. Leviticus Rabbah. Atlanta, 1998: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

Part i. *Introduction. Leviticus Rabbah Parashiyot One through Seventeen*

Part ii. *Leviticus Rabbah Parashiyot Eighteen through Thirty-Seven*

Part iii. *Leviticus Rabbah. A Topical and Methodical Outline*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. XI. Pesiqta deRab Kahana. Atlanta, 1998: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

Part i. *Introduction. Pesiqta deRab Kahana Pisqaot One through Eleven*

Part ii. *Pesiqta deRab Kahana Pisqaot Twelve through Twenty-Eight*

Part iii. *Pesiqta deRab Kahana. A Topical and Methodical Outline*

The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts. XII. *Sifré to Numbers.* Atlanta, 1998: Scholars Press for USF Academic Commentary Series.

Part i. *Introduction. Pisqaot One through Eighty-Four*

Part ii *Pisqaot Eighty-Five through One Hundred Twenty-Two*

Part iii *Pisqaot One Hundred Twenty-Three through One Hundred Sixty-One*

Part iv *Sifré to Numbers. A Topical and Methodical Outline*

The Rabbinic Midrash. Peabody, 2007: Hendrickson Publishing Co. Second printing, in twelve volumes, of *The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts.*

The plan of the project as a whole is as follows:

Jeremiah in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham, 2006: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES.

Amos in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham, 2006: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES.

Hosea in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham, 2006: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES.

Micah and Joel in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Obadiah in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Jonah in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Nahum in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Habakkuk in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Zephaniah in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Haggai in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Zechariah in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Malachi in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Isaiah in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

Ezekiel in Talmud and Midrash. A Source Book. Lanham: University Press of America STUDIES IN JUDAISM SERIES

I thought I would analyze the results of the anthologies prophet by prophet and so produced *Rabbi Jeremiah* (Lanham, 2006: University Press of America. But it quickly became apparent that given the systematic character of Rabbinic writings, I could not answer my analytical questions on the basis of the data pertaining to individual prophets, and the results for Jeremiah were obviously anomalous. Since my purpose is to clarify the character of Rabbinic Judaism, with prophecy as the variable and Rabbinic Judaism as the base, I had to create my entire data-base and collect and arrange the data on all the prophets before I could formulate my program of inquiry.

I am pleased to acknowledge the advice in planning this project of colleagues in biblical studies, in particular Richard E. Friedman, University of Georgia; Alan Cooper, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America; Bernard Levinson, University of Minnesota; and Jon Levenson, Harvard University. Their advice is always valuable. For planning the project as a whole I further consulted William Scott Green, University of Rochester, Herbert Bassler, Queen's University, and Bruce D. Chilton, Bard College.

Jacob Neusner
Research Professor of Theology
Senior Fellow, Institute of Advanced Theology
Bard College
Annandale-on-Hudson, New York 12504 5000

ENDNOTES

¹ Nicholas Ostler, *Empires of the Word. A Language History of the World* (N.Y. 2005: HarperCollins), p. 13.

1

Micah in the Mishnah, Tractate Abot, and the Tosefta

MISHNAH

M. SOTAH 9:9

- C. When adulterers became many, the ordeal of the bitter water was cancelled.
- D. And Rabban Yohanan b. Zakkai cancelled it, since it is said, "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery, for they themselves go apart with whores" (Hosea 4:14).
- E. When Yosé b. Yoezer of Seredah and Yosé b. Yohanan of Jerusalem died, the grape clusters were cancelled, since it is said, "There is no cluster to eat, my soul desires the first ripe fig" (Micah 7:1).

Micah contributes the image of the grapecluster.

M. SOTAH 9:15

- W. With the footprints of the Messiah: presumption increases...
- HH. Children will shame elders, and elders will stand up before children.
- II. For the son dishonors the father and the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; "a man's enemies are the men of his own house" (Mic. 7:6).

Micah's vision characterizes the end of days.

ABOT

Micah does not appear in tractate Abot.

TOSEFTA

TOSEFTA DEMAI 5:20

- C. Priests and Levites who were assisting on the threshing-floors—
- D. they do not give them heave-offering and tithes as wages.
- E. And if they gave [heave-offering and tithes], behold these are [i.e., have become] unconsecrated produce.
- F. a s it is said, “And you shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel” (Num. 18:32).
- G. They [the heave-offering and tithes] are already unconsecrated [profaned; viz., they retrospectively are deemed never to have been consecrated produce].
- H. And [Scripture] says, “You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of Hosts” (Mal. 2:8).
- L. Additionally they [the sages] have said,
- J. “Their heave-offering is not heave-offering and their tithes are not tithes.”
- K. Moreover, sages wished to fine them [the owners of the produce] [such] that their produce should require separating heave-offering [again].
- L. And concerning them Scripture says, “(1) Its heads give judgment for a bribe, (2) its priests teach for hire, (3) its prophets divine for money” (Mic. 3:11);
- M. therefore God brought upon them three punishments corresponding to [these] three transgressions,
- N. as it is said, “Therefore because of you (1) shall Zion be plowed as a field; [(2) Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins and (3) the mountain of the house a wooded height” (Mic. 3:12)].

Mic. 3:11-12 condemns the heads, priests and prophets, and these are punished through the ruin of Zion, Jerusalem, and the Temple mount.

TOSEFTA BABA QAMMA 9:31

- A. If he hit him with the back of his hand [M. Baba Qamma 8:6D],
- B. with paper, a notebook, untanned hides, a volume of documents which he had in his hands,
- C. he pays him four hundred zuz [M. Baba Qamma 8:6F].
- D. Now this is not because it is a painful blow, but because it is a humiliating one,
- E. as it is said, “Arise, O Lord, deliver me, O my God! For thou dost smite all my enemies on the cheek, Ithou dost break the teeth of the wicked” (Ps. 3:7).
- F. And it says, “With a rod they strike upon the cheek the ruler of Israel” (Mic. 5:1).
- G. And it says, “I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (Is. 50:6).

Micah shows that hitting someone on the cheek is an act meant to humiliate, not to inflict physical pain.

Micah in Sifra, the Two Sifrés and Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael

SIFRA

SIFRA CCLXV:I

1. A. ["But if you will not hearken to me and will not do all these commandments, if you spurn my statutes and if your soul abhors my ordinances, so that you will not do all my commandments but break my covenant,] also I [will do this to you]:"
11. A. "...those who hate you shall rule over you:"
- B. "For I shall raise up over you only those that belong to you and are within you."
- C. For when the nations of the world stand over Israel, they seek only what is entirely in evidence.
- D. For it is said, "After the Israelites had done their sowing, Midian, Amalek, and the Kedemites would come up and raid them; they would attack them, destroy the produce of the land all the way to Gaza, and leave no means of sustenance in Israel, not a sheep or an ox or an ass. [For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, swarming as thick as locusts; they and their camels were innumerable. Thus they would invade the land and ravage it. Israel was reduced to utter misery by the Midianites, and the Israelites cried out to the Lord]" (Judges 6:3-6).
- E. "But when I set up against you those who are among you and from you, they will know how to seek out the hidden treasures that are yours."
- F. For it is said, "You have devoured my people's flesh; [you have flayed the skin off them, and their flesh off their bones. And after tearing their skins off them and their flesh off their bones and breaking their bones to bits, you have cut it up as into a pot, like meat in a caldron. Some day they shall cry out to the Lord, but he

will not answer them; at that time he will hide his face from them, in accordance with the wrongs they have done]" (Micah 3:3-4).

Micah proves that when God punishes Israel, he knows what really matters.

SIFRÉ TO NUMBERS

SIFRÉ TO NUMBERS LXXXV:II

1. A. "And the people complained [in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes; and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled]:"
- B. The reference to "the people" encompasses only the wicked ones, as it is said, "What shall I do to this *people*" (Ex. 17:4). "How long will this *people* try me" (Num. 14:11). "This wicked *people* that refuses to hear my word" (Jer. 13:10). "Thus says the Lord to this *people*, 'So they have loved to wander'" (Jer. 14:10).
- C. But when he calls them "*my people*," he means not my people in general but only the suitable ones among them, as it is said, "Send forth *my people* that they serve me" (Ex. 7:16). "*My people*, what have I done to you, and how have I wearied you, answer against me" (Mic. 6:3). "*My people*, remember what Balak counseled..." (Mic. 6:5).

Micah contributes a text to prove that when God refers to "my people," he means only the suitable ones, whereas "the people" encompasses the wicked too.

SIFRÉ TO NUMBERS CXXXIV:VII

2. F. If Moses, sage of sages, eminence of eminences, father of the prophets, even though he knew that the decree was issued against him, did not restrain himself from seeking mercy, all the more so the rest of humanity, as it is said, "And I besought the Lord at that time, saying, O Lord God, thou hast only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as thine? Let me go over, I pray, and see the good land beyond the Jordan, that goodly hill country and Lebanon" (Dt. 3:23) — this was in various modes of supplication.
- P. "...mighty..."
- Q. For with mercy you overcome the trait of justice, as it is said, "Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity, and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion upon us, he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old" (Mic. 7:18-20).

Micah proves that the attribute of mercy outweighs the attribute of justice.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY XXXIX:II

6. A. Another matter: just as rain is a blessing, so dew is a blessing.
- B. And so Scripture says, "So God give you of the dew of heaven" (Gen. 27:28).
- C. And Scripture further says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain" (Dt. 32:2).
- D. "I will be as the dew to Israel" (Hos. 14:6).
- E. "And the remnant of Jacob shall be...as dew from the Lord" (Mic. 5:6).

Micah proves that dew is a blessing.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY XL:V

3. A. Another interpretation: "...from year's beginning to year's end:"
- B. Now is there produce out in the field from the beginning of the year to the end? [Obviously not.]
- C. Rather, they are in my domain to bestow a blessing on them in the house, just as much as I bestow a blessing on them in the field, as it is said,
- D. "The Lord will command the blessing with you in your barns and all to which you put your hand" (Dt. 28:8).
- E. And Scripture says, "Is the seed yet in the barn? Yes, the vine and the fig tree and the pomegranate and the olive tree has not brought forth – from this day I will bless you" (Haggai 2:19).
- V. How do I know that that is the case also for what is in storage?
- W. "Cursed shall you be in the city and cursed shall you be in the field" (Dt. 28:16).
- X. How do I know that that is the case also for dough?
- Y. "Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading trough" (Dt. 28:17).
- Z. How do I know that that is also the case for coming in and going out?
- AA. "Cursed shall you be when you come in and cursed shall you be when you go out" (Dt. 28:19).
- BB. How do I know that that is also the case for eating to satisfaction?
- CC. "And you shall eat and not be satisfied" (Lev. 26:26).
- DD. Now do I know that that is also the case when food goes into the belly?
- EE. "And your sickness shall be in your inward parts" (Mic. 6:14).
- FF. Produce remains in my domain for the bestowal of a curse just as I can bestow a curse on produce in the field:
- GG. so that they will be blighted by vermin or rot, wine will turn to vinegar, oil will become rancid.

Food in the belly is subject to God's rule, so Micah.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CLXXVII:I

1. A. **"...if anybody fails to heed the words he speaks in my name, [I myself will call him to account]:"**
- B. There are three who are put to death at the hand of Heaven [through extirpation]:
- C. one who holds back his prophecy, such as Jonah b. Amittai,
- D. one who adds to the words of a prophet, such as the associate of Micah,
- E. and a prophet who violates his own statement, such as Iddo.
- F. And there are three who are put to death by a court:
- G. One who prophesies what he has, in fact, not heard from God, such as Zedekiah b. Chenaanah,
- H. or who prophesies what was not stated to him in particular, such as Hananiah b. Azor,
- H. who heard what Jeremiah prophesied in the upper market and went and prophesied in the lower market,
- I. [and] one who prophesies in the name of an idol, saying, "This is what the idol said:" even though he has stated the law precisely right, imputing uncleanness to what is unclean, and imputing cleanness to what is clean.

The associate of Micah suffers death at the hand of heaven.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCL:I

1. A. **"...because they did not meet you with food and water on your way out of Egypt, [and because they hired Balaam, son of Beor, from Pethor in Aram-naharim to revile you. The Lord your God refused to listen to Balaam and turned his denunciation into a blessing, because the Lord your God loved you]:"**
- B. When it says, "...because..." it refers to advice.
- C. [It is that of which the following verse speaks:] "O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab devised" (Mic. 6:5).
2. A. "...on your way:"
- B. when you were discombobulated.
3. A. "...out of Egypt:"
- B. when you were redeemed.
4. A. "...and because they hired Balaam, son of Beor, from Pethor in Aram-naharim to revile you:"
- B. This is praise of Balaam.
5. A. "The Lord your God refused to listen to Balaam and turned his denunciation into a blessing:"
- B. This teaches that the one who curses is cursed.
6. A. Why?
- B. "...because the Lord your God loved you."

“Because” of the base-verse refers to the consultation with Balaam.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCLXXV:I

1. A. Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam on the journey after you left Egypt” (Dt. 24:8):
 - B. What has one thing to do with the other?
 - C. The matter has been placed into context to teach you that these skin-afflictions come only on account of gossip.
 - D. And this produces an argument *a fortiori*:
 - E. If Miriam, who spoke only behind Moses’s back, for the benefit of Moses himself, in praise of the Omnipresent, and for the sake of the increase of the world [through procreation], nonetheless was punished in this way.
 - F. One who disparages his fellow, in public – all the more so that such a one will be punished!
2. A. “...on the journey:”
 - B. When you were in disarray.
3. A. “...after you left Egypt:”
 - B. It was at the time of your redemption.
 - C. Still, Scripture assigned the matter to Miriam, to teach you that when the banners were en route, they did not go forth until Miriam took the lead before them.
 - D. That is in line with this statement: “And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam” (Mic. 6:40).

Miriam led the procession of the exodus, so Micah.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCIV:I

1. A. [“The Lord said to Moses, ‘The time is drawing near for you to die. Call Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may instruct him.’ Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting. The Lord appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud, the pillar of cloud having come to rest at the entrance of the tent” (Dt. 31:14ff.).]
 - B. “The Lord said to Moses, ‘The time is drawing near for you to die’:”
 - C. R. Simeon b. Yohai says, “Blessed be the reliable judge, the lord of all deeds, before whom is neither deceit nor favoritism.
 - D. “And so Scripture says, ‘Trust not in a friend, do not put confidence in a chief’ (Mic 7:5).”

It is best too trust in God and not in man, so Micah.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCVI:I

1. A. [“Give ear, O heavens, let me speak; let the earth hear the words I utter! May my discourse come down as the rain, my speech

distill as the dew, like showers on young growths, like droplets on the grass. For the name of the Lord I proclaim; give glory to our God” (Dt. 32:1-3).]

- B. “Give ear, O heavens, let me speak:”
- C. R. Meir says, “When the Israelites enjoyed merit, they would give testimony against themselves.
- D. “So it is said, ‘And Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves”’ (Josh. 24:22).
- E. “When they went wrong, as it is said, ‘Ephraim surrounds me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit’ (Hos. 12:1),
- F. “the tribes of Judah and Benjamin gave testimony against them.
- G. “So it is said, ‘and now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I ask, between me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard?’ (Is. 5:3-4).
- W. “When they did wrong to the gentiles, as it is said, ‘But our fathers mixed with the nations and learned their works’ (Ps. 106:35),
- X. “he called the mountains to give testimony against them.
- Y. “So it is said, ‘Hear, O you mountains, the Lord’s controversy’ (Mic. 6:2).
- Z. “When they did wrong to the mountains, as it is said, ‘They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains’ (Hos. 4:13),
- AA. “he called the oxen to give testimony against them.
- BB. “So it is said, ‘The ox knows his owner...’ (Is. 1:3).
- CC. “When they did wrong to the oxen, as it is said, ‘Thus they exchanged their glory for the likeness of an ox that eats grass’ (Ps. 106:20),
- DD. “he called the fowl to give testimony against them.
- EE. “So it is said, ‘Yes, the stork in heaven knows her appointed times...’ (Jer. 8:7).

Evidence against Israel comes from nature, which testifies against Israel, as in the case of the mountains, cited by Micah.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCVI:XIV

1. A. **Another teaching concerning the verse, “Give ear, O heavens, let me speak:”**
- B. It was because the Israelites did not carry out all of the religious duties that were assigned to them from heaven.
- C. “...let the earth hear the words I utter!”
- D. It was because the Israelites did not carry out all of the religious duties that were assigned to them on earth.
- E. Moses thus brought to testify against Israel two witnesses who last for ever and ever, as it is said, “I call to witness against you this day the heaven and the earth” (Dt. 30:19).
- F. And the Holy One, blessed be He, called to witness against you the song [that Moses was about to sing], as it is said, “Now therefore write this song for you” (Dt. 31:19).

- G. We do not then know whose testimony would endure, that of the Holy One, blessed be He, or that of Moses.
- H. When Scripture says, "This song shall testify before them as a witness" (Dt. 31:21),
- I. lo, [we learn that] it is the testimony of the Holy One, blessed be He, that confirms that of Moses, and not that of Moses that confirms the testimony of the Holy One, blessed be He.
- J. And on what account did Moses call to testify against Israel two witnesses which live and endure forever and ever?
- K. He said, "I am mortal, and tomorrow I shall be dead. What if the Israelites want to say, 'We never received the Torah'? Who will contradict them?"
- L. Therefore he called to testify against them two witnesses which live and endure forever and ever.
- M. And the Holy One, blessed be He, called the song to testify against them, saying, "This song will testify against them from below, and I from above."
- N. And how on the basis of Scripture do we know that the Omnipresent is called a witness?
- O. As it is said, "And I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness" (Mal 3:5).
- P. "I am he who knows and I am witness, says the Lord" (Jer. 29:23).
- Q. "And let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple" (Mic. 1:2).

God himself testifies against Israel so Micah.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCXXIII:V

- 1. A. [**Ah! The vine for them is from Sodom, from the vineyards of Gomorrah; the grapes for them are poison, a bitter growth their clusters. Their wine is the venom of asps, the pitiless poison of vipers. Lo I have it all put away, sealed up in my storehouses, to be my vengeance and recompense, at the time that their foot falters. Yea, their day of disaster is near, and destiny rushes upon them** (Dt. 32:32-35).]
- B. "Ah! The vine for them is from Sodom:"
- C. R. Judah interprets this matter to speak of Israel, R. Nehemiah interprets it to speak of the nations of the world.
- D. R. Judah interprets this matter to speak of Israel: "'The vine for them is from Sodom': 'Are you indeed from the planting of Sodom, or from the vineyards of Gomorrah? Are you not only from a holy planting?'"
- E. "For it is said, 'Yet I had planted you as a noble vine, wholly a right seed' (Jer. 2:21).
- F. "'...the grapes for them are poison': 'You are the children of the first Adam, upon whom I have placed the penalty of death, as well

as upon his offspring, who come after him to the end of all generations.'

- G. "...a bitter growth their clusters': As to the great ones [ruling authorities] among you, their gall is spread out in them as a grape cluster spreads out, for 'cluster' refers only to the great one, as it is said, 'There is no cluster to eat, nor first-ripe fig which my soul desires' (Mic. 7:1).

Micah speaks of the rulers of Israel as failed grapeclusters. But if this is part of Judah's exposition,, then the grapeclusters belong to the nations, as their rulers.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCXXIII:VI

1. A. [Judah's exposition continues:] "Their wine is the venom of asps': 'As to the pious and the heaven-fearers who are among you, their venom is like that of serpents.
- B. "...the pitiless poison of vipers': 'the heads that are among you are like an asp, which is cruel.
- C. "Another interpretation of the phrase, 'Their wine is the venom of asps': As to the patient and the sin-fearers among you, their venom is like that of serpents.
- D. "...the pitiless poison of vipers': 'the heads that are among you are like an asp, which is cruel."
2. A. R. Nehemiah interprets it to speak of the nations of the world:
- B. ["'Ah! The vine for them is from Sodom, from the vineyards of Gomorrah':]
- C. "You are most certainly of the vine of Sodom, of the vineyards of Gomorrah.
- D. "You are disciples of the original snake, who deceived Adam and Eve.
- E. ["'...the grapes for them are poison':] As to the great ones [ruling authorities] among you, their gall is spread out in them like a snake.
- F. ""["'a bitter growth their clusters':] cluster' refers only to the great one, as it is said, 'There is no cluster to eat, nor first-ripe fig which my soul desires' (Mic. 7:1)."

Nehemiah certainly speaks of the grape clusters as the nations of the world.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCXLII:I

1. A. "This is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, bade the Israelites farewell before he died" (Dt. 33:1):
- B. Since Moses had earlier said to the Israelites harsh words, for example,
- C. "The wasting of hunger...without shall the sword bereave" (Dt. 32:24-5),
- D. "Also in Horeb you made the Lord angry" (Dt. 9:8),

- E. "You have been rebellious against the Lord" (Dt. 9:7),
- F. now he went and said to them words of comfort: "This is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, bade the Israelites farewell before he died."
2. A. And from him did all of the prophets learn [how to conduct themselves].
- B. For they would first say to Israel harsh words and then go and say to them words of comfort.
- C. Now, for instance, you have among the prophets none whose words were more harsh than Hosea.
- D. When he began to speak, he said, "Give them, O Lord, whatever you will give. Give them a miscarrying womb" (Hos. 9:14)
- E. But then he spoke to them words of comfort:
- F. "His branches shall spread, his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his fragrance as Lebanon. They who dwell under his shadow shall again make grain grown and shall blossom as the vine" (Hos. 144:7-8).
- G. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely...I will be as the dew to Israel, he shall blossom as the lily" (Hos. 14:5-6).
3. A. So too Joel, to begin with: "Hear this, you old men, and give ear, all you inhabitants of the land. Has this been in your days or in the days of your fathers? Tell your children about it...that which the palmer-worm has left the locust has eaten" (Joel 1:2-4).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "And I will return to you the years that the locust has eaten, the canker worm and the caterpillar and the palmer-worm" (Joel 2:25).
4. A. So too Amos, to begin with: "Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are in the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, crush the needy, say to their husbands, 'Bring that we may feast'" (Amos 4:1).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "Behold the days come...when the plowman will overtake the reaper" (Amos 9:13).
5. A. So too Micah, to begin with: "Who hate the good and love evil, who rob...who also eat the meat of my people and flay their skin off from them" (Mic. 3:2-3).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "Who is a God like you, who pardons the iniquity and ignores the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He does not remain angry forever, because he delights in mercy. He will again have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities and you will cast their sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old" (Mic. 7:18-20).
6. A. So too Jeremiah, to begin with: "Then I will take away from the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness" (Jer. 7:34).

- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "Then will the virgin rejoice in the dance" (Jer. 31:13).
7. A. Might one think that once the prophets have said words of consolation, they then go and once again say words of rebuke?
- B. Scripture states, "And you shall say, 'Thus shall Babylon sink and not rise again, because of the evil that I will bring upon her...thus far as the words of Jeremiah'" (Jer. 51:64).
- C. That shows that once the prophets have said words of consolation, they do not then go and once again say words of rebuke.

Micah supplies an example of the pattern of initial rebuke and ultimate consolation.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCXLIII:IV

1. A. Another teaching concerning the phrase, "He said, 'The Lord came from Sinai':"
- B. When the Omnipresent appeared to give the Torah to Israel, it was not to Israel alone that he revealed himself but to every nation.
- C. First of all he came to the children of Esau. He said to them, "Will you accept the Torah?"
- D. They said to him, "What is written in it?"
- E. He said to them, "'You shall not murder' (Ex. 20:13)."
- F. They said to him, "The very being of 'those men' [namely, us] and of their father is to murder, for it is said, 'But the hands are the hands of Esau'" (Gen. 27:22). 'By your sword you shall live' (Gen. 27:40)."
- G. So he went to the children of Ammon and Moab and said to them, "Will you accept the Torah?"
- H. They said to him, "What is written in it?"
- I. He said to them, "'You shall not commit adultery' (Ex. 20:13)."
- J. They said to him, "The very essence of fornication belongs to them [us], for it is said, 'Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their fathers' (Gen. 19:36)."
- K. So he went to the children of Ishmael and said to them, "Will you accept the Torah?"
- L. They said to him, "What is written in it?"
- M. He said to them, "'You shall not steal' (Ex. 20:13)."
- N. They said to him, "The very essence of their [our] father is thievery, as it is said, 'And he shall be a wild ass of a man' (Gen. 16:12)."
- O. And so it went. He went to every nation, asking them, "Will you accept the Torah?"
- P. For so it is said, "All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O Lord, for they have heard the words of your mouth" (Ps. 138:4).
- Q. Might one suppose that they listened and accepted the Torah?
- R. Scripture says, "And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the nations, because they did not listen" (Mic. 5:14).

- S. And it is not enough for them that they did not listen, but even the seven religious duties that the children of Noah indeed accepted upon themselves they could not uphold before breaking them.
- T. When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that that is how things were, he gave them to Israel.

Micah holds that the kings of the earth refused to obey God and explicitly rejected the Torah.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCLII:VI

- 1. A. "...as he rests between his shoulders:"
- 4. A. R. Meir says, "The chosen house was built in the property of Benjamin, and a triangular section protruded from there into the property of Judah.
 - B. "So Scripture says, '...as he rests between his shoulders.'
 - C. "How do I then interpret [in light of these frontiers] the phrase, 'The scepter shall not depart from Judah' (Gen. 39:10) [which refers to a point at which the property of Judah serves as the locus for government]?"
 - D. "It refers to the hewn-stone chamber [supreme court offices], which was located in the property of Judah.
 - E. "For it is said, 'Moreover, he abhorred the tent of Joseph and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim but chose the tribe of Judah' (Ps. 78:67-68).
 - F. "But the main building [following Hammer] was built in the property of Joseph in Shilo."
- 5. A. R. Judah says, "The house of the sanctuary was located in the property of Judah,] for it is said, 'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah who are little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of you shall one come forth to me that is to be ruler in Israel' (Mic. 5:1).
 - B. "And Ephrathah refers only to Bethlehem: 'And Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, that is Bethlehem' (Gen. 35:19)."
 - C. R. Meir says, "It was in the property of Benjamin, her son, that she died, for it is said, 'And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died to me in the land of Canaan in the way, when there was still some way to come to the Ephrath' (Gen. 38:7).
 - D. "And Ephrathah refers only to Bethlehem, as it is said, 'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah who are little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of you shall one come forth to me that is to be ruler in Israel' (Mic. 5:1).
 - E. "Might I suppose that it was in the property of Joseph, her other son?"
 - F. "Scripture states, 'Lo, we heard of it as being in Ephrath, we found it in the field of the wood' (Ps. 132:6).
 - G. "Scripture speaks of him who was compared in his lifetime to a forest, and who is that? It is Benjamin, for it is said, 'Benjamin is a wolf that raveneth' (Gen. 39:27)."

Judah cited Mic. 5:1 too prove that the house of the sanctuary was located in the domain of Judah, and Meir cites the same verse to show that it was in the property of Benjamin.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XXV:I.

18. A. "and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore:"
- B. On account of four reasons did "Israel see the Egyptians dead [upon the seashore and not in the depths of the ocean]:"
- C. so that the Israelites should not say, "Just as we came up from the sea on this side, so the Egyptians came up from the sea on that side."
- D. So that the Egyptians should not say, "Just as we perished in the sea, so the Israelites perished in the sea."
- E. So that the Israelites might collect the spoil, since the Egyptians were loaded with silver, gold, precious stones, and pearls.
- F. And so that the Israelites might set their eyes on them and know them and reprove them: "I will reprove you and set the cause before your sight" (Ps. 50:21); "Then my enemy shall see it and shame shall cover her" (Micah 7:10).

Micah explains why the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead on the shore.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XXXIII:I.

1. A. "Who is like you, O Lord, among gods? [Who is like you, majestic in holiness, terrible in glorious deeds, doing wonders?]:"
18. A. Another comment on the verse, "doing wonders:"
- B. He does wonders for the patriarchs and is going to do wonders for the children:
- C. "As in the days of your exodus from the land of Egypt, I shall show him marvelous things" (Mic. 7:15).
- D. "I shall show him what I did not show to the ancestors. For lo, the wonders and acts of might that I am going to do with the children are greater than the wonders, such as I never did for the ancestors."
- E. Thus it is said, "To him who alone does great wonders, for his mercy endures for ever" (Ps. 136:45); "Blessed be the Lord god, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; amen and amen" (Ps. 72:18-19).

The coming redemption of Israel will compare with the exodus from Egypt, but God will do greater wonders than he did for the ancestors, so Mic. 7:15.

2. *Micah in Sifra, the Two Sifrés and Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael*

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL LX:I.

1. A. "When a man sells his daughter as a slave:"
23. A. "[he shall not diminish] her food, [her clothing, or her marital rights]:"
 - B. "[her food:] this refers to her sustenance:
 - C. "'who also eat the flesh of my people' (Micah 3:3); 'He caused flesh also to run upon them as the dust' (Ps. 78:27).
 - D. "'her clothing:'
 - E. "this is meant literally.
 - F. "'or her marital rights:'
 - G. "this refers to sexual relations:

Micah contributes philological evidence.

Micah in the Yerushalmi

YERUSHALMI BERAKHOT 5:2

- [I:1.A] [Why do they mention the rain in the blessing which deals with resurrection?] Just as resurrection [restores] life to the world, so too does rainfall [restore] life to the world.
- [P] Said R. Samuel bar Nahmani, "When Israel sins and does evil deeds, the rains are withheld. When they bring an elder, such as R. Yosé the Galilean, to intercede for them, the rains fall again.
- [Q] "But the dew does not fall on account of the merit of any living being. What is the basis [in Scripture for this view]? 'Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the Lord, like showers upon the grass, which tarry not for [the sake of] men nor wait for the [merit of] sons of men' [Micah 5:7]."

Micah compares Israel among the nations to dew, maintaining that it is given by God without regard to human merit.

YERUSHALMI BERAKHOT 9:1

- [I:9][I] Said R. Hiyya the Elder to R. Simeon ben Halafta b. Rabbi, "[Like the break of day] so is the redemption of Israel. It begins little by little and, as it proceeds, it grows greater and greater."
- [J] What is his basis [for this comparison of daybreak and redemption]? [Scripture says,] "When I sit in darkness the Lord will be a light to me" [Micah 7:8, i.e. he will redeem me].
- [K] [By way of illustration of this last teaching:] So it was at the outset [the redemption of Israel in the time of Esther, for example, proceeded slowly as it says,] "And Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate" [Esther 2:21].
- [L] And thereafter [it grew greater as the passage indicates], "So Haman took the robes and the horse [and he arrayed Mordecai]" [Esther 6:11].

- [M] And thereafter, "Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes" [Esther 8:15].
- [N] And thereafter, "The Jews had [the] light [of redemption] and gladness and joy and honor" [Esther 8:16]. [The redemption proceeds slowly at first and then quickly

Micah compares redemption to the light that gradually overcomes darkness.

YERUSHALMI BERAKHOT 1:4

- [I:3.A] Said. R. Tarfon, "I was coming by the road and I reclined to recite the Shema' in accordance with the words of the House of Shammai. And I placed myself in danger of [attack by] bandits."
- [B] They said to him, "Fittingly, you have only yourself to blame [for what might have befallen you]. For you violated the words of the House of Hillel."
- [I] R. Haninah the son of R. Ada in the name of R. Tanhum b. R. Hiyya, "The words of the elders are more stringent than the words of the prophets." As it is written, "[I tell them,] 'Do not preach' — thus they preach. [I tell them,] 'One should not preach of such things,' [and they say,] 'Disgrace will not overtake us' [Micah 2:6]." And it is written, "[If a man should go about and utter empty words and lies, saying,] 'I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,' [he would be the preacher for this people] [Micah 2:11]." [That is, if the people do not wish to hear words of the prophet, God says do not preach it to them. But you must preach to them the words of the elders whether they want to hear them or not.]
- [J] To what may the [relation between] prophet and elder be compared? [This parable explains:] A king sent his two agents to a province. Concerning one he wrote, "If he does not display to you my seal and my stamp do not give him credence." And concerning the other he wrote, "Even if he does not display to you my seal, lend him credence without seal or stamp."
- [K] Accordingly concerning the prophet it is written, "[If a prophet arises among you. . .] and gives you a sign or a wonder [Deut. 13:1] [then you should give him credence]."
- [L] However here [concerning the elders] it is written, "That [you shall heed the priests and the judge] according to the instructions which they give you" [Deut. 17:11] [you must give them credence even though they do not display any sign or wonder].

Prophetic teachings depend on the willingness of the people to hear them, but words of the elders are to be set forth whether or not they want to hear them.

YERUSHALMI BERAKHOT 1:5

- [I:3][F] [F-J discuss the practice of not reciting the verses of the Ten Commandments and the story of Balaam.] *For both R. Matena*

and R. Samuel bar Nahman said, "By rights they should recite the verses of the Ten Commandments every day. And why do they not do so? On account of the claims of the heretics. So that people should not have any cause to say that only these [Ten Commandments] were given to Moses on Mount Sinai."

- [G] R. Samuel bar Nahman [said] in the name of R. Judah bar Zebida, "By rights they should recite the passages [which recount the story of] Balak and Balaam [Num. 22-24] every day. And why do they not recite them? In order not to trouble the congregation [with too much daily recitation]."
- [H] [And on what basis could they justify the recitation of the story of Balak and Balaam?] R. Huna said, "Because that passage contains a reference to lying down and rising up. [Like the Shema] it should be recited twice daily. For it says, 'Behold a people! As a lioness it rises up and as a lion lifts itself; it does not lie down till it devours the prey' [Num. 23:24]."
- [I] R. Yosé be R. Bun said, "[They could have justified the recitation of the story of Balaam] because that passage contains a reference to the exodus from Egypt, ['God brings them out of Egypt' [Num. 23:22],] and to kingship ['And the shout of a king is among them' [Num. 23:21].]"
- [J] Said R. Eliezer, "[They could have justified the recitation of the story of Balaam] because the story is referred to in the Torah [Num. 22-24], in the Prophets, ['My people remember what Balak king of Moab devised and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him' [Micah 6:5]] and in the Writings ['No Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God; for they did not meet the children of Israel with bread and water but hired Balaam against them to curse them' [Neh. 13:1-2]]."

Micah supplies justification for reciting the story of Balak and Balaam every day, even though that is not the practice.

YERUSHALMI YOMA 3:2

- [I:3. A] *One time R. Hiyya the Elder and R. Simeon b. Halapta were walking in the valley of Arbel at daybreak. They saw that the light of the morning star was breaking forth. Said R. Hiyya the Elder to R. Simeon b. Halapta, "Son of my master, this is what the redemption of Israel is like — at first, little by little, but in the end it will go along and burst into light.*
- [B] " *What is the scriptural basis for this view? 'Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me' (Mic. 7:8).*
- [C] "So, in the beginning, 'When the virgins were gathered together the second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate' (Esther 2:19).

- [D] “But afterward: ‘So Haman took the robes and the horse, and he arrayed Mordecai and made him ride through the open square of the city, proclaiming, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor’ (Esther 6:11).
- [E] “And in the end: ‘Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a great golden crown and a mantle of fine linen and purple, while the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced’ [Esther 8:15].
- [F] “And finally: ‘The Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor’ (Esther 8:16).”

As above.

YERUSHALMI SUKKAH 4:4

- [III:2. A] R. Ba Saronegayyah interpreted, “‘And the Lord will give victory to the tents of Judah first, [that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over that of Judah]’ (Zech. 12:7). It is written, ‘And ... give victory.’”
- [B] R. Zakkai interpreted, “[Writhe and grown, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail;] for now you shall go forth from the city and dwell in the open country; [you shall go to Babylon. There you shall be rescued, there the Lord will redeem you from the hand of your enemies]’ (Micah 4:10), ‘My presence will be in the field.’”
- [C] Hananiah, son of the brother of R. Joshua says, “‘I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage’ (Ex. 20:2). It is written, ‘You were taken out [too], [that is, God also was in bondage but was taken out].’”

Micah speaks of the exile to Babylon and the redemption of Israel from there.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 1:1

- [I:2. A] [The prayer for rain is included in the paragraph of the Prayer dealing with the resurrection of the dead, because] just as the resurrection of the dead means life for the world, so the coming of rain means life for the world.
- [S] Said R. Samuel bar Nahman, “When Israel carries out transgressions and does bad deeds, the rain is held back. They then bring an elder in their own behalf, of the order of R. Yosé the Galilean, and he intercedes for them, and forthwith, the rain falls. But dew does not come down on account of [the intercession of] a mere mortal creature.
- [T] “What is the scriptural basis for that view? ‘... like dew from the Lord, like showers upon the grass, which tarry not for men nor wait for the sons of men’” (Mic. 5:6).

Dew comes down not because of human merit but as an act of divine grace.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 2:1

- [III:6] [I] *R. Berekhiah fasted for thirteen fast days, and it did not rain. In the end, locusts came. He went in and preached before the community, "Our brethren! See what we have done. Is this not that which the prophet rebukes us with:*
- [J] *"Their hands are upon what is evil, to do it diligently; [the prince asks and the judge is ready to ask for a bribe, and the great man utters the evil desire of his soul; thus they weave it together]' (Mic. 7:3).*
- [K] *"Their hands are upon what is evil'— They harm each other with their hands and then ask for a favor.*
- [L] *"The prince asks'— Where can he receive his bribe?*
- [M] *"And the judge is ready for a bribe'— [He says] 'Pay me and I will pay you.'*
- [N] *"And the great man utters the evil desire of his soul; thus they weave it together"— They make their speech a cover, they make it a screen for their sins. And who will undo it [the screen]?*
- [O] *"The best of them is like a brier, [the most upright of them worse than a thorn hedge. The day of your watchmen, of your punishment has come; now their confusion is at hand.]' (Mic. 7:4)— The best of them are like these thorns.*
- [P] *"The most upright of them worse than a thorn hedge'— The upright of them are like these thorns.*
- [Q] *"The day of their watchman, of their punishment, has come.' The day which you have looked forward to is your downfall. The day which we have hoped for to bring us relief has come to us with locusts.*
- [R] *"Now their confusion is at hand.' Because they are agitated and cry, rain falls."*

Mic. 7:3 is expounded clause by clause.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 3:4

- [I:3.A] R. Joshua ben Yair in the name of R. Phineas b. Yair: "There were three that the Holy One, blessed be he, created and regretted that he had created them, and these are they: The Chaldeans, the Ishmaelites, and the impulse to do evil.
- [B] "The Chaldeans: 'Behold the land of the Chaldeans! This is the people that was not. [Assyria, which founded it for ships, which erected their siege towers, has turned it into a ruin]' (Is. 23:13). Oh that they were not!
- [C] "The Ishmaelites: 'The tents of robbers are at peace, and those who provoke God are secure, who bring their god in their hand'

- [D] The impulse to do evil: 'In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away, and those whom I have afflicted" (Mic. 4:6).
- [E] R. Berekhiah, R. Abba bar Kahana, R. Joshua b. Yair in the name of R. Phineas b. Yair: "Lo, it is as if I have afflicted [them, that is, it is as if God himself gave them the evil impulse]."

Mic. 4:6 implies that God created the evil impulse.

YERUSHALMI NEDARIM 11:3

- [I:2] [A] [T] *And further note the following:* Priests and Levites who assist in the threshing floors — they do not give them heave offering or tithe, and if one has given it to them, lo, this one has profaned it!
- [U] "The priests shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, which they offer to the Lord" (Lev. 22 :15). And they profane them.
- [V] Furthermore they have said: That which they have designated as heave offering [in such a case] is not heave offering, nor as tithes, tithes, and they which they have declared consecrated is not holy.
- [W] And concerning them the Scripture has said, "Its heads give judgment for a bribe, its priests teach for hire, its prophets divine for money" (Mic. 3 :11). And the Omnipresent brings on them three punishments.
- [X] That is in line with that which is written: "Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins; and the mountain of the house a wooded height" (Mic. 3 :12).

The heads, priests, and prophets brought down Israel and are blamed for the loss of Jerusalem.

YERUSHALMI QIDDUSHIN 1:9

- [I:4] [I] Said R. Yohanan, "If you hear a teaching of R. Eliezer, son of R. Yosé the Galilean, incline your ear like a water clock and listen carefully."
- [J] For R. Yohanan said, "R. Eliezer, son of R. Yosé the Galilean, says, 'Even if 999 angels argue against a person, and a single angel argues in his favor, the Holy One, blessed be he, inclines the scales in his favor.'
- [K] "And that is not the end of the matter as to that angel. But even if 999 aspects of the argument of that single angel argue against a man, but a single aspect of his case of that single angel argues in favor, the Holy One, blessed be he, still inclines the scales in favor of the accused."
- [L] What is the scriptural basis for that statement? " 'If there be for him an angel.' One of the thousand" is not written, but rather "one

part of the thousand,” meaning one-thousandth of the aspects of the arguments of that single angel.

- [M] What is written immediately following? “And he is gracious to him and says. ‘Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom.’”
- [N] “Deliver him” through the atonement of suffering.
- [O] “I have found a ransom”— he has found a ransom for himself.
- [P] What you have said applies in this world, but as to the world to come, if the man has a larger measure of merits, he inherits the Garden of Eden, and if he has a larger measure of transgressions, he inherits Gehenna.
- [Q] If they were equally balanced?
- [R] R. Yosé b. Haninah said, “forgiving sin” (Mic. 7 :18).
- [S] R. Abbahu said, “It is written, ‘forgiving’” (Mic. 7 :18).
- [T] What does the Holy One, blessed be he, do?
- [U] He snatches one of his bad deeds, so that his good deeds outweigh the balance.
- [V] Said R. Eleazar, “ ‘To thee, O Lord, belongs steadfast love, for thou dost requite a man according to his work’ (Ps. 62 :12).
- [W] “And if he has no works you give them to him out of your own store.”
- [X] *That is the opinion of R. Eleazar, for R. Eleazar said* “ ‘Abundant in mercy’ (Ex. 34: 6) teaches that he inclines the scale in favor of mercy.”

God is forgiving and does everything he can to show mercy, so Micah.

YERUSHALMI QIDDUSHIN 1:9

- [II:1] A] [With reference to the statement, **Whoever has learning in Scripture, Mishnah, and right conduct will not quickly sin, since it is said, And a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Qoh. 4:12). And whoever does not have learning in Scripture, Mishnah, and right conduct has no share in society:**] R. Jeremiah said R. Samuel b. Isaac raised the question, “ ‘Righteousness guards him whose way is upright, but sin overthrows the wicked’ (Prov. 13: 6).
- [B] “ ‘Misfortune pursues sinners, but prosperity rewards the righteous’ (Prov. 13: 21). ‘He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness’ (1 Sam. 2: 9). ‘Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he shows favor. The wise will inherit honor, but fools exalt disgrace’ (Prov. 3: 34-35). Now is it possible that they build up the fence and lock the gates [so that the Holy One helps the sinner to sin]? It is thus, that they build up the fence and lock the gate.”
- [C] But thus did R. Jeremiah say in the name of R. Samuel bar R. Isaac, “[If] a man keeps himself from transgression one time, then a second and a third time, the Holy One, blessed be he, keeps him

from transgressing further; as it is said, 'Behold, God does all these things twice, three times, with a man, to bring his soul from the pit, that he may see the light of life'" (Job 33: 29).

- [D] Said R. Zeira, "And that is on condition that the man not go back upon himself and repeat what he has done: 'A threefold cord is not broken forever' (Qoh. 4:12) is not written, but rather 'A threefold cord is not quickly broken.' But if you apply pressure to it, it will snap."
- [E] R. Huna in the name of R. Abbahu: "The Holy One, blessed be he — before him there [truly] is no such thing as forgetting. But it is as if, on account of Israel, he becomes forgetful, for it is said, 'Who is a God like thee, forgiving sin, and passing over transgression, for the remnant of his inheritance?' (Mic. 7:18)."
- [F] It is written *ns'* [i.e., forgetting sin].
- [G] And so David said, "You did forgive the iniquity of your people; you did pardon all their sin. Selah" (Ps. 85: 2).

God forgets sins and shows mercy, Mic. 7:18.

YERUSHALMI QIDDUSHIN 2:9

- [A] He who consecrated a woman with food in the status of heave offering, tithes, or gifts [to be given to the priest, purification water, purification ash —
- [B] lo, this woman is betrothed,
- [C] and even if he is an Israelite.
- [I:1.A] R. Yosé b. Haninah said, "A man hands over his tithes in exchange for a favor for his own benefit."
- [B] R. Yohanan said, "A man does not do so."
- [C] *What is the scriptural basis for R. Yosé b. [63b] Haninah's view?*
- [D] "And every man's Holy Things shall be his" (Num. 5 :10).
- [E] *And how does R. Yohanan interpret that verse?*
- [F] "They will be his" — Let him give them to anyone he wills.
- [G] *The Mishnah stands at variance with the statement of R. Yosé b. Haninah: "Qonam if priests or Levites will derive benefit from me — they take his priestly and Levitical offerings against his will [M. Ned. 11:3].*
- [H] *Interpret it to apply to him who says, "I do not want to give any sort of priestly gift at all." You should know that that is the case, for we have learned: If he said, "Qonam if these particular priests or these particular Levites derive benefit from me, " they hand over his tithes and offerings to others.*
- [I] *The following Tannaitic teaching stands at variance with R. Yohanan: He who says, "Here is a sela, and hand over this firstling to the son of my daughter, who is a priest" [it is allowed].*
- [J] *Interpret it to apply to a case in which he wants to give it to two priests, and the son of his daughter is one of them, and he says to*

him, "Here is this *sela*, and give the whole of it to the son of my daughter, who is a priest."

- [K] *They asked before R. Zeira, "[The stated case clearly involves an Israelite speaking to another Israelite. But is it prohibited if it is] a priest speaking to an Israelite?"*
- [L] [He said to them,] "Rabbi prohibits [even in such a case]."
- [M] *What R. Yosé said [in the same matter] he did not tell them.*
- [N] R. Hezekiah in the name of R. Aha, "Thus did he say to them: In the opinion of R. Yosé b. Haninah, A priest to an Israelite [it also is forbidden]."
- [O] "Why is it forbidden?"
- [P] "Is it not because of appearances?"
- [Q] "So too R. Yohanan maintains that in the case of an Israelite to an Israelite [such a transaction] is forbidden for appearances' sake, [so Yohanan has an answer too]."
- [R] Said R. Yosé bar Bun, "What we have here is nothing less than the profanation of God's name, and will you maintain that it is prohibited merely because of appearances?!"
- [S] *And further note the following: Priests and Levites who assist in the threshing floors — they do not give them heave offering or tithe,*
- [T] *and if one has given it to them, lo, this one has profaned it!*
- [U] "The priests shall not profane the holy things of the people of Israel, which they offer to the Lord" (Lev. 22 :15).
- [V] *And they indeed profane them.*
- [W] *Thus they have said: That which they have designated as heave offering [in such a case] is not heave offering, nor as tithes, tithes, and that which they have declared consecrated is not holy.*
- [X] *And concerning them the Scripture has said, "Its heads give judgment for a bribe, its priests teach for hire, its prophets divine for money" (Mic. 3 :11).*
- [Y] *And the Omnipresent brings on them three punishments.*
- [Z] *That is in line with what is written: "Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins; and the mountain of the house a wooded height" (Mic. 3: 12).*
- [AA] *The Mishnah stands at variance with the position of R. Yohanan: **He who betrothed a woman with food in the status of heave offering or tithe, or gifts to be given to the priest or with purification water, lo, this woman is betrothed, even if he is an Israelite.** [So one may betroth and so derive benefit from his tithes, for if that is not so, with what does he betroth?]*
- [BB] *Interpret the passage to speak of heave offerings he inherited from the father of his mother, who was a priest [and not that which he has set aside for his own crop's heave offering].*

Mic. 3:11-12 mean that because of the sins of the heads, priests, and prophets, Zion, Jerusalem, and the mountain of the house are ruined.

YERUSHALMI SANHEDRIN 10:1

[A] All Israelites have a share in the world to come,

[I:2] [AA] “But — as it were — in behalf of Israel he turns absentminded.”

[BB] *What is the Scriptural basis for this statement?*

[CC] “[Who is a God like thee,] pardoning iniquity [and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance]?” (Mic. 7:1 8).

[DD] And so did David say, “Thou didst forgive the iniquity of thy people; thou didst pardon all their sin” (Ps. 85:2).

God’s forgiveness is effected through forgetfulness of the sins that have been committed, so Micah.

YERUSHALMI SANHEDRIN 11:4

[A] A more strict rule applies to the teachings of scribes than to the teachings of Torah.

[I:1] [I] Said R. Hinena son of R. Ada in the name of R. Tanhum bar Hiyya: “More stringent are the teachings of elders than the teachings of prophets, for it is written, ‘Do not preach’ — thus they preach’ (Mic. 2:6). And it is said, ‘If a man should go about and utter wind and lies, saying, ‘I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,’ he would be the preacher for his people” (Mic. 2:11).

[J] A prophet and an elder — to what are they comparable? To a king who sent two senators of his to a certain province. Concerning one of them he wrote, “If he does not show you my seal and signet, do not believe him.” But concerning the other one, he wrote, “Even though he does not show you my seal and signet, believe him.”

[K] So in the case of a prophet, he has had to write, “If a prophet arises among you... and gives you a sign or a wonder...” (Deut. 13:1).

[L] But here [with regard to an elder]: “. . . according to the instructions which they give you...” (Deut. 17:11) [without a sign or a wonder].

As above.

YERUSHALMI ABODAH ZARAH 2:7

[I:3. A] Associates in the name of R. Yohanan: “The words of scribes are more beloved than the words of Torah and more cherished than words of Torah: ‘For your palate is like the best wine’ (Song of Sol. 7:9).”

[E] R. Haninah in the name of R. Idi in the name of R. Tanhum b. R. Hiyya: “More stringent are the words of the elders than the words of the prophets. For it is written, ‘Do not preach’ — thus they preach — one should not preach of such things ((Micah 2:6). And it is written, ‘[If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,

saying,] “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,” he would be the preacher for this people!” (Micah 2: 11).

- [F] “A prophet and an elder — to what are they comparable? To a king who sent two senators of his to a certain province. Concerning one of them he wrote, ‘If he does not show you my seal and signet, do not believe him.’ But concerning the other one he wrote, ‘Even though he does not show you my seal and signet, believe him.’ So in the case of the prophet, he has had to write, ‘If a prophet arises among you . . . and gives you a sign or a wonder...’ (Deut. 13:1). But here [with regard to an elder:] ‘...according to the instructions which they give you...’ (Deut. 17:11) [without a sign or a wonder].”

As above.

YERUSHALMI SHEBUOT 1:6

- [I:6][W] *But this did R. Jeremiah in the name of R. Samuel bar R. Isaac [say],* “[If] a man keeps himself from transgression one time, then a second and a third time, the Holy One, blessed be he, keeps him, as it is said, ‘Behold, God does all these things twice, three times, with a man, to bring back his soul from the Pit, that he may see the light of life’ (Job 33:29).”
- [X] *Said R. Zira,* “*And that is on condition that the man not go back upon himself [and repeat what he has done]:* ‘A threefold cord is not quickly broken forever’ (Qoh. 4:12) is not written, but rather, ‘A threefold cord is not quickly broken.’ *But if you apply pressure to it, it will snap.*”
- [Y] R. Huna in the name of R. Abbahu: “The Holy One, blessed be he — before him there [truly] is no such thing as forgetting. But it is as if, on account of Israel, he becomes forgetful, for it is said, ‘Who is a God like thee, pardoning iniquity, and passing over transgression, for the remnant of his inheritance?’ (Mic. 7:18). “And it is written, David said, ‘You did forgive the iniquity of your people’ (Ps. 85:2).”

As above, God’s forgiveness overcomes his memory, so Micah.

Micah in Genesis Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah and Pesiqta deRab Kahana

GENESIS RABBAH

GENESIS RABBAH XXII:VII.

1. A. "Cain said to Abel his brother, 'Let us go out to the field'" (Gen. 4:8):
 - B. [Treating the word "spoke" as meaning, "had words with," or quarreled, we ask:] concerning what did they quarrel?
 - C. They said, "Come and let us divide up the world. One will take the real estate, the other, the movables."
 - D. One said, "The land on which you are standing belongs to me."
 - E. The other said, "Even what you're wearing belongs to me."
 - F. The one said, "Strip."
 - G. The other said, "Bug off."
 - H. And, as matters played themselves out: "[And when they were in the field], Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him" (Gen. 4:8).
2. A. R. Joshua of Sikhnin in the name of R. Levi: "Both of them took the real estate of the world, and both of them took the movables. Then what was the quarrel about? This one said, 'In my domain will the house of the sanctuary be built,' and that one said, 'In my domain.'
 - B. "'And when they were in the field' (Gen. 4:8) [indicates it, for] the word 'field' can refer only to the house of the sanctuary, as it is said, 'Zion shall be ploughed as a field' (Micah 3:12).
 - C. "And, as matters played themselves out: 'Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him' (Gen. 4:8)."

Micah contributes a proof text of a philological character.

GENESIS RABBAH XXVIII:V.

1. A. "From the face of the ground" (Gen. 6:7):
 - B. Said R. Abba bar Kahana, "What was done by the ten tribes was not done by the generation of the Flood.
 - C. "With respect to the generation of the Flood, it is written, 'And every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all day' (Gen. 6:5). With regard to the ten tribes: 'Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds' (Mic. 2:1) which is to say, even by night. And how do we know that they did it by day as well? 'When the morning is light, they execute it' (Mic. 2:1).
 - D. "Nonetheless, of those [of the generation of the Flood] not a remnant was left, while of these [the ten tribes] a remnant was left.
 - E. "It was on account of the merit of the righteous men and righteous women who were destined to emerge from [the ten tribes that a remnant was spared].
 - F. "That is in line with this verse: 'And behold there shall be left a remnant therein that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters' (Ez. 14:22), that is, on account of the merit of the righteous men and righteous women who were destined to emerge from [the ten tribes a remnant was spared]."

Micah indicts the ten tribes of sins worse than those committed by the generation of the flood.

GENESIS RABBAH XL:I.

1. A. "Now there was a famine in the land" (Gen. 12:10):
 - B. "Behold the eye of the Lord is toward those who fear him" (Ps. 33:18).
 - C. This refers to Abraham.
 - D. "For now I know that you fear God" (Gen. 22:12).
2. A. "Toward those who wait for his mercy" (Ps. 33:18).
 - B. "You will show faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham" (Mic. 7:20).
3. A. "To deliver their soul from death" (Ps. 33:19):
 - B. [Referring to Abraham, the verse alludes] to the death that Nimrod [had prepared for] him.
4. A. "And to keep them alive in famine" (Ps. 33:19):
 - B. "And there was famine in the land, and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there" (Gen. 12:10).

Micah identifies Jacob and Abraham as those who wait for God's mercy,
P. 33:18.

GENESIS RABBAH XLI:III.

3. A. "And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents" (Gen. 13:5):
 - B. Four advantages did Lot enjoy owing to Abraham.
 - C. "And Lot went with him" (Gen. 12:4).
 - D. "And Lot...also..." (Gen. 13:5).
 - E. "And he also brought back his brother Lot and his goods" (Gen. 14:16).
 - F. "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow [rebellion]" (Gen. 19:29).
 - G. Now corresponding to these matters Lot's descendants [the Ammonites and Moabites] ought to have paid us back with acts of decency. And it was not enough for them not to pay us back with acts of decency, but they did deeds of evil to us.
 - H. That is in line with these verses of Scripture:
 - I. "And he [Moab] sent messengers to Balaam...Come now, therefore, I pray you, curse this people" (Num. 22:5).
 - J. "And he gathered to him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and he went and smote Israel" (Judges 3:13).
 - K. "And it came to pass after this that...the children of Ammon and with them some of the Ammonites came against Jehoshaphat to battle" (2 Chr. 20:1).
 - L. "The adversary has spread out his hand upon all her treasures" (Lam. 1:10).
 - M. Their sin is then recorded in four passages:
 - N. "An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the Lord...because they met you not with bread and water in the way" (Deut. 23:4).
 - O. "Because they did not meet the children of Israel with bread and water" (Neh. 13:2).'
 - P. "My people, remember now what Balak, king of Moab, devised" (Mic. 6:5).
 - Q. Four prophets moreover came and pronounced doom against them, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah.
 - R. Isaiah: "The burden of Moab" (Is. 15:1).
 - S. Jeremiah: "Then I will cause an alarm of war to be heard against Rabbah of the children of Ammon" (Jer. 49:2).
 - T. Ezekiel: "I will open the flank of Moab...together with the children of Ammon, to the children of the east...and I will execute judgments upon Moab" (Ez. 25:9).
 - U. Zephaniah: "Surely Moab shall be as Sodom and the children of Amon as Gomorrah" (Zeph. 2:9).

Micah records the villainy of the Moabites, along with other prophets.

GENESIS RABBAH XLII:II.

1. A. R. Samuel commenced [discourse by citing the following verse]:
 "And this also is a grievous evil, that in all points as he came so shall he go" (Qoh. 5:15).
- B. Said R. Samuel, "Just as he came, namely, with slops, so shall he leave [the world], namely, with slops."
2. A. Said R. Abin, "Just as [Israel's history] began with the encounter with four kingdoms, so [Israel's history] will conclude with the encounter with the four kingdoms.
- B. "Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, Tidal, king of Goiim, Amraphel, king of Shinar, and Arioch, king of Ellasar, four kings against five" (Gen. 14:9).
- C. "So [Israel's history] will conclude with the encounter with the four kingdoms: the kingdom of Babylonia, the kingdom of Medea, the kingdom of Greece, and the kingdom of Edom."
3. A. R. Phineas said in the name of R. Abun, "But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, nor do they understand his counsel, for he has gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing floor" (Mic. 4:12).
- B. "Why did 'all these join forces' (Gen. 14:3)? So that they might come and fall by the hand of Abraham: 'And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel' (Gen. 14:1)."

Micah explained why the four kingdoms assembled.

GENESIS RABBAH XLVIII:X.

2. A. "Let a little water be brought" (Gen. 18:4):
- B. Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he, "You have said, 'Let a little water be brought' (Gen. 18:4). By your life, I shall pay your descendants back for this: 'Then sang Israel this song,' spring up O well, sing you to it" (Num. 21:7)."
- C. That recompense took place in the wilderness. Where do we find that it took place in the Land of Israel as well?
- D. "A land of brooks of water" (Deut. 8:7).
- E. And where do we find that it will take place in the age to come?
- F. "'And it shall come to pass in that day that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem" (Zech. 14:8).
- G. ["And wash your feet" (Gen. 18:4)]: [Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he,] "You have said, 'And wash your feet.' By your life, I shall pay your descendants back for this: 'Then I washed you in water' (Ez. 16:9)."
- H. That recompense took place in the wilderness. Where do we find that it took place in the Land of Israel as well?
- I. "Wash you, make you clean" (Is. 1:16).
- J. And where do we find that it will take place in the age to come?
- K. "When the Lord will have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion" (Is. 4:4).

- L. [Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he,] “You have said, ‘And rest yourselves under the tree’ (Gen. 18:4). By your life, I shall pay your descendants back for this: ‘He spread a cloud for a screen’ (Ps. 105:39).”
- M. That recompense took place in the wilderness. Where do we find that it took place in the Land of Israel as well?
- N. “You shall dwell in booths for seven days” (Lev. 23:42).
- O. And where do we find that it will take place in the age to come?
- P. “And there shall be a pavilion for a shadow in the day-time from the heat” (Is. 4:6).
- Q. [Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he,] “You have said, ‘While I fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourself’ (Gen. 18:5). By your life, I shall pay your descendants back for this: ‘Behold I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you’ (Ex. 16:45)”
- R. That recompense took place in the wilderness. Where do we find that it took place in the Land of Israel as well?
- S. “A land of wheat and barley” (Deut. 8:8).
- T. And where do we find that it will take place in the age to come?
- U. “He will be as a rich grain field in the land” (Ps. 82:16).
- V. [Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he,] “You ran after the herd [‘And Abraham ran to the herd’ (Gen. 18:7)]. By your life, I shall pay your descendants back for this: ‘And there went forth a wind from the Lord and brought across quails from the sea’ (Num. 11:27).”
- W. That recompense took place in the wilderness. Where do we find that it took place in the Land of Israel as well?
- X. “Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle” (Num. 32:1).
- Y. And where do we find that it will take place in the age to come?
- Z. ““And it will come to pass in that day that a man shall rear a young cow and two sheep” (Is. 7:21).
- AA. [Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he,] “You stood by them: ‘And he stood by them under the tree while they ate’ (Gen. 18:8). By your life, I shall pay your descendants back for this: ‘And the Lord went before them’ (Ex. 13:21).”
- BB. That recompense took place in the wilderness. Where do we find that it took place in the Land of Israel as well?
- CC. “God stands in the congregation of God” (Ps. 82:1).
- DD. And where do we find that it will take place in the age to come?
- EE. “The breaker is gone up before them...and the Lord at the head of them” (Mic. 2:13).

Micah contributes the fact that in the age to come, God will reward Abraham’s descendants for standing for the angels.

GENESIS RABBAH LIV:I.

1. A. "At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham, 'God is with you in all that you do'" (Gen. 21:22).
- B. "When a man's ways please the Lord, even his enemies are at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7).
- C. R. Yohanan said, "The reference to one's enemies speaks, in fact, of one's wife: 'A man's enemies are the people of his own house' (Mic. 7:6)."
- D. There was the case of a woman who complained against her husband to the government, and they cut off his head.
- E. And some say that they also cut off her head.

Micah 7:6 speaks of peace in the household.

GENESIS RABBAH LV:V.

1. A. "With. what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before God on high...[Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul]?" (Mic. 6:6):
- B. R. Joshua in the name of R. Levi: "Even though the statement was made with reference to Mesha, king of Moab, it speaks in fact about Isaac:
- C. "'With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before God on high...Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' (Mic. 6:6)."

Micah speaks of the binding of Isaac.

GENESIS RABBAH LXV:XXIII.

1. A. ["See the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed" (Gen. 27:27):] Another matter: this teaches that the Holy One, blessed be he, showed him the house of the sanctuary as it was built, wiped out, and built once more.
- B. "See the smell of my son:" This refers to the Temple in all its beauty, in line with this verse: "A sweet smell to me shall you observe" (Num. 28:2).
- C. "...is as the smell of a field:" This refers to the Temple as it was wiped out, thus: "Zion shall be ploughed as a field" (Mic. 3:12).
- D. "...which the Lord has blessed:" This speaks of the Temple as it was restored once more in the age to come, as it is said, "For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for ever" (Ps. 133:3).

Micah supplies the context in which "a field" refers to the Temple.

GENESIS RABBAH LXVIII:XI.

1. A. "Taking one of the stones of the place, [he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep]" (Gen. 28:11):

- B. R. Judah said, "He took twelve stones. He said, 'So did the Holy One, blessed be he, decree that twelve tribes would come forth. Now Abraham did not produce them, and Isaac did not produce them. As for me, if these stones will stick together, I shall know that I am going to produce twelve tribes.'
- C. "When he saw that the stones stuck together, he knew that he would set up the twelve tribes."
- D. R. Nehemiah said, "He took three stones. He said, 'As to Abraham, the Holy One, blessed be he, joined his name to him, as to Isaac, the Holy One, blessed be he, joined his name to him, so, as for me, if these three stones will stick together, I shall know that the name of the Holy One, blessed be he, will be joined to mine.'
- E. "When he saw that the stones stuck together, he understood that the name of the Holy One, blessed be he, would be joined to his."
- F. Rabbis say, "Since the word 'stones' refers to the smallest plural, it must mean that he took two stones. He said, 'As to Abraham, from him came forth Ishmael and the sons of Keturah. As from Isaac, from him came forth Esau. And as to me, if these three stones will stick together, I shall know that no refuse will come forth from me.'"
2. A. R. Levi and R. Eleazar in the name of R. Yosé b. Zimra: "He arranged them like a roof-gutter [Freedman] and put only one of them under his head, since he was afraid of wild beasts."
3. A. R. Berekhiah, R. Levi in the name of R. Hama bar Haninah: "It is written, 'For lo, the Lord comes forth out of his place...and the mountains shall be molten under him'" (Mic. 1:3-4).
- B. "And as to him upon whom the Holy One, blessed be he, was revealed, how much the more so [will the rocks melt and fuse]!"

Micah speaks of Sinai.

GENESIS RABBAH LXIX:V.

1. A. "...and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north, and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves" (Gen. 28:13-14):
- B. [Lacking here: Just as the dust of the earth is from one end of the world to the other, so your children will be from one end of the world to the other.]
- C. Just as the dust of the earth is blessed only with water, so your children will be blessed only through the merit attained by study of the Torah, which is compared to water [hence: through water].
- D. Just as the dust of the earth wears out metal utensils and yet endures forever, so Israel endures while the nations of the world come to an end.

- E. Just as the dust of the world is treated as something on which to trample, so your children are treated as something to be trampled upon by the government.
 - F. That is in line with this verse: "And I will put it into the hand of them that afflict you" (Is. 51:23), that is to say, those who make your wounds flow .
 - G. Nonetheless, it is for your good that they do so, for they cleanse you of guilt, in line with this verse: "You make her soft with showers" (Ps. 65:11).
 - H. "That have said to your soul, Bow down, that we may go over" (Is. 51:23):
 - I. What did they do to them? They made them lie down in the streets and drew ploughs over them."
 - J. R. Azariah in the name of R. Aha: "That is a good sign. Just as the street wears out those who pass over it and endures forever, so your children will wear out all the nations of the world and will live forever."
2. A. "... and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north, and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves" (Gen. 28:13-14):
- B. Said R. Abba bar Kahana, "'You are the one who will split the sea,' in line with this verse: 'The breaker has gone up before them' (Mic. 2:13)." [The word for "the west" is "the sea," and "you shall spread" is read as "you shall break, hence the statement at hand (Freedman, p. 633, n. 1).]

Israel will split the sea, the breaker of Mic. 2:13.

GENESIS RABBAH LXXIII:II.

- 1. A. "He has remembered his mercy and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God" (Ps. 98:3):
- B. "He has remembered his mercy" refers to Abraham: "Mercy to Abraham" (Mic. 7:20).
- C. "... and his faithfulness" refers to Jacob: "You will show faithfulness to Jacob" (Mic. 7:20).
- D. "...to the house of Israel" the elder.
- E. Who was the house of our father, Abraham? Was it not Rachel?
- F. In regard to all of the others it is written, "And the children of Leah, the first born of Jacob was Reuben...and the children of Zilpah, Leah's maid, were Gad and Asher...and the children of Bilhah, Rachel's maid, were Dan and Naphtali" (Gen. 35:23-26).
- G. But in connection with the children of Rachel it is written, "The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin" (Gen. 46:19). [Only Rachel is designated as Jacob's wife.]

Mic. 7:20 speaks of the patriarchs and intersects with Ps. 98:3.

GENESIS RABBAH LXXV:VIII.

1. A. "And Jacob sent:" (Gen. 32:3):
- B. This is what Solomon said through the Holy Spirit: "Blessings are upon the head of the righteous but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence" (Prov. 10:6).
- C. This verse is stated only with regard to Jacob and Esau.
- D. "Blessings are upon the head of the righteous" refers to Jacob.
- E. "...but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence" speaks of Esau, the wicked man.
- F. Fortunate are the righteous, who are blessed both on earth and in heaven. That is the way things are: "So that he who is blessed in earth shall be blessed by the God of truth" (Is. 65:16).
- G. This tells you that in response to all of the blessings which Isaac bestowed upon Jacob, the Holy One, blessed be he, responded and bestowed a blessing above.
- H. Isaac blessed him as follows: "So God give you of the dew of heaven" (Gen. 27:28).
- I. Correspondingly, the Holy One, blessed be he, blessed him with dew and said, "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew" (Mic. 5:6).
- J. Isaac blessed him as follows: "And of the fatness of the earth" (Gen. 27:28).
- K. Correspondingly, the Holy One, blessed be he, blessed him with grain and said, "And he will give the rain for your seed, wherewith you sow the ground, and the bread of the increase of the ground, and it shall be fat and plentiful" (Is. 30:23).

Micah 5:6 compares Israel to the dew.

GENESIS RABBAH LXXXIV:X.

1. A. "Now Joseph had a dream and when he told it to his brothers, they only hated him the more. He said to them, 'Hear this dream which I have dreamed: behold we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose and stood upright; and behold, your sheaves gathered round it, and bowed down to my sheaf.' His brothers said to him, 'Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to have dominion over us?'" (Gen. 37:4-8):
- B. He said, "This is how your prophets will rebuke you: 'Hear what the Lord says' (Mic. 6:1)."

Micah is the model of prophetic rebuke.

GENESIS RABBAH LXXXV:I.

1. A. "It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers [and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shua; he married her and went in to her]" (Gen. 38:1):

- B. "Judah has done treacherously [and an abomination is committed in Israel...for Judah has profaned the holiness of the Lord which he loves and has married the daughter of a strange god]" (Mal. 2:11).
 - C. [God] said to [Judah], "You have denied, Judah, you have lied, Judah."
 - D. "...and an abomination is committed in Israel...for Judah has profaned," which is to say, Judah has become unconsecrated.
 - E. "...the holiness of the Lord which he loves and has married the daughter of a strange god."
 - F. "It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers [and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shua; he married her and went in to her]."
2. A. "I will yet bring to you, O inhabitant of Mareshah, him who shall possess you, the glory of Israel shall come even to Adullam" (Mic. 1:15).
- B. The reference is to the Holy One of Israel.
 - C. "...to Adullam shall come" the King of Israel.
 - D. "To Adullam he shall come:" "It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shua; he married her and went in to her."

Micah 1:15 is subjected to a clause by clause exegesis.

GENESIS RABBAH LXXXV:XIV.

- 1. A. "But he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out, and she said, 'What a breach you have made for yourself!' Therefore his name was called Perez" (Gen. 38:29):
- B. "This one is the master of all who make breaches, for from you will come forth: 'The breaker is gone up before them' (Mic. 2:13)."

Mic. 2:13 clarifies Gen. 38:29.

LEVITICUS RABBAH

LEVITICUS RABBAH I:IV

- 1. A. R. Abin in the name of R. Berekhiah the Elder opened [discourse by citing the following verse]: "'Of old you spoke in a vision to your faithful ones, saying, 'I have set the crown upon one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people'" [Ps. 89:20].
- B. "[The Psalmist] speaks of Abraham, with whom [God] spoke both in word and in vision.

- C. "That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'After these words the word of God came to Abram in a vision, saying . . . ' [Gen. 15:1].
- D. "' . . . to your faithful one' — 'You will show truth to Jacob, faithfulness to Abraham' [Mic. 7:20].
- E. "' . . . saying, 'I have set the crown upon one who is mighty' — for [Abraham] slew four kings in a single night.'
- F. "That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'And he divided himself against them by night . . . and smote them'" (Gen. 14:15).

Mic. 7:20 speaks of Jacob and Abraham as the faithful ones of Ps. 89:20.

LEVITICUS RABBAH X:II

1. A. R. Azariah in the name of R. Judah b. R. Simon interpreted the verse ["'You love righteousness and hate wickedness, therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows" (Ps. 45:7)] to speak of Isaiah:
- B. "Said Isaiah, 'I was strolling in my study house, and I heard the voice of the Holy One [blessed be he] saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us" [Is. 6:8].
- C. "'When I sent Micah, they hit him on the cheek.'"
- D. "That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'They smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek' [Mic. 4:14].
- E. "'When I sent Amos, they called him the stammerer.'"
- F. "[Isaiah] said, 'The Holy One, blessed be he, had no one better upon whom to cause his Presence to rest than that tongue-tied stammerer!'"
- G. Said R. Phineas, "Why was he called Amos? Because his tongue was heavy-laden (amus)."
- H. "'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'"
- I. "Forthwith: 'And I said, Here am I! Send me!' [Is. 6:8].
- J. "[God] said to him, 'Isaiah, my children are depraved, they are troublesome. If you agree to be humiliated and beaten up by my children, you may go on my mission, but if not, you may not go on my mission.'
- K. "He said to him, '[I agree] on that condition: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them who pulled out the hair" (Is. 50:6). Am I not worthy of going on a mission to your children?'
- L. "He said to him, 'Isaiah, You love righteousness. You love to show my children to be righteous.
- M. "'You hate wickedness.' You hate declaring them to be guilty.'
- N. "'Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows.'
- O. "What is the meaning of 'above your fellows'?
- P. "He said to him, 'By your life! In the case of all other prophets, they each received the power of prophecy from another prophet:

“And he took of the spirit that was upon him and put it on the seventy elders” [Num. 11:25]. “And they said, ‘The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha’” (2 Kgs. 2:15).

- Q. “But you [receive the gift of prophecy] directly from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be he: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me” [Is. 61:1].
- R. “By your life! All the other prophets prophecy prophecies without repetition, but you [will prophecy] words of consolation that are [even] repeated: “Arise, arise” [Is. 51:9], “Awake, awake” [Is. 51:17], “Rejoice, yes, I will rejoice” [Is. 61:10], “I, even I, am he who comforts you” [Is. 51:12], “Comfort you, comfort you, my people”” (Is. 40:1).

Micah was humiliated by the Israelites, Mic. 4:14.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XI:VII

1. A. R. Tanhuma and R. Hiyya the Elder state the following matter, as does R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Eleazar the Modite, “The following exegetical principle came up in our possession from the Exile:
- B. “Any passage in which the words, ‘And it came to pass,’ appear is a passage that relates misfortune.”
- C. R. Ishmael b. R. Nahman in the name of R. Nathan: “This exegetical principle also came up in our possession from the Exile:
- D. “Any passage, in which the words ‘And it came to pass in the days of . . . ‘ appear is a passage that relates misfortune.”
- E. Said R. Ishmael b. R. Nathan, “There are five such passages.”
- AA. They said to him, “We have given our [objections]. Now give your [proofs about good fortune].”
- BB. He said to them, “‘And it shall come to pass on that day that a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, [and because of the abundance of milk which they give, he will eat curds]’ [Is. 7:21]. ‘And it shall come to pass in that day that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem’ [Zech. 14:8]. ‘And it shall come to pass that he will be like a tree planted on streams of water’ [Ps. 1:3]. ‘And it shall come to pass that he will be like a tree planted by water’ [Jer. 17:8]. ‘And it shall come to pass that the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples [as dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass]’ [Mic. 5:6]. [All of these usages signify good fortune.]”
- CC. They raised the following objection: “And it shall come to pass on the day on which Jerusalem is taken . . . “ (Jer. 38:28).
- DD. He said to them, “This too does not signify misfortune. For on that day the Israelites received a full pardon for all their sins.
- EE. “That is in line with what R. Ishmael b. R. Nahman said, ‘The Israelites received a full pardon for all their sins on the day on which the Temple was destroyed.’”

- FF. “That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: “The punishment of your iniquity is completed, daughter of Zion, and he will no more take you away into exile”” (Lam. 4:22).

Mic. 5:6 is an example of how “And it shall come to pass” signifies good fortune.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XVII:I

1. A. “[The Lord said to Moses and Aaron,] When you come into the land of Canaan, [which I give you for a possession, and I put a leprous disease in a house in the land of your possession, then he who owns the house shall come and tell the priest, ‘There seems to me to be some sort of disease in my house’]” (Lev. 14:33-34).
- B. “Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. [But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had well nigh slipped, for I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked]” (Ps. 73:1-3).
- C. Is it possible [to suppose that God is good] to everybody?
- D. Scripture says, “. . . to those who are pure in heart.” These are those whose heart is pure in [doing] religious duties.
- E. “Blessed are the men whose strength is in you, [in whose heart are the highways to Zion]” (Ps. 84:5).
- F. Is it possible to suppose [that this applies] to everybody?
- G. Scripture says, “. . . to those in whose heart are the highways . . . “ These are the ones in whose heart are paved the ways of the Torah.
- H. “Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, [and to those who are upright in their hearts]” (Ps. 125:4).
- I. Is it possible to suppose [that this applies] to everybody?
- J. Scripture says, “. . . to those who are upright in their hearts.”
- K. “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, [yea, he knows them that trust in him]” (Nah. 1:7).
- L. Is it possible to suppose [that this applies] to everybody?
- M. Scripture says, “He knows them that trust in him.”
- N. “The Lord is good to those who wait for him” (Lam. 3:25).
- O. Is it possible to suppose [that this applies] to everybody?
- P. Scripture states, “To the soul that seeks him” (Lam. 3:25).
- Q. “The Lord is near to those that call on him” (Ps. 145:18).
- R. Is it possible to suppose [that this applies] to everybody?
- S. Scripture says, “To those that call upon him in truth” (Ps. 145:18).
- T. “Who is God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression [for the remnant of his inheritance]” (Mic. 7:18).
- U. Is it possible to suppose [that this applies] to everybody?
- V. Scripture says, “For the remnant of his inheritance.”

Mic. 7:18 speaks of God’s forgiveness for his inheritance, not for everybody.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XXII:II

1. A. And rabbis say, “‘And the superfluities of the earth’ [Qoh. 5:8] [is to be interpreted as follows:] ‘Even things that you regard as superfluous in the world, such as flies, fleas, and gnats, also belong [within] the [purposeful] creation of the world.’
- B. “‘For it is written, ‘And the heavens and the earth were finished [and all the host of them,’ compassing flies, fleas, and gnats]” (Gen. 2:1).
2. A. “‘A king is made servant to the field” (Qoh. 5:8).
- B. “‘A king” refers to the Holy One, blessed be he, concerning whom it is written, “‘The Lord is king, he is clothed in majesty” (Ps. 93:1) [God is servant to Zion].
- C. “‘Is made servant to the field” refers to Zion, concerning which it is written, “‘Zion will be ploughed like a field” (Mic. 3:12).

Micah 3:12 designates the meaning of “field” at Qoh. 5:8.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XXVII:VI

1. A. “‘O my people, what have I done to you, in what have I wearied you? Testify against me” (Mic. 6:3).
- B. Said R. Aha, “‘Testify against me’ and receive a reward, but ‘Do not bear false witness’ [Ex. 20:13] and face a settlement of accounts in the age to come.”
2. A. Said R. Samuel b. R. Nahman, “‘On three occasions the Holy One, blessed be he, came to engage in argument with Israel, and the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, ‘Can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.’
- B. “‘One was when he said to them, ‘Come, and let us reason together, says the Lord’ [Is. 1:18]. When the Holy One, blessed be he, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel’s] advantage: ‘If your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow’ [Is. 1:18].
- C. “‘Then the nations of the world were astonished, and said, ‘This is repentance, and this is rebuke? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.’
- D. “‘[A second time was] when he said to them, ‘Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord’ [Mic. 6:2], the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, ‘How can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.’
- E. “‘When the Holy One, blessed be he, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel’s] advantage: ‘O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Testify against me’ [Mic. 6:3]. ‘Remember what Balak king of Moab devised’ [Mic. 6:5].

- F. "Then the nations of the world were astonished, saying, 'This is repentance, and this is rebuke, one following the other? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'
- G. "[A third time was] when he said to them, 'The Lord has an indictment against Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways' [Hos. 12:2], the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'How can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- H. "When the Holy One, blessed be he, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'In the womb he [Jacob = Israel] took his brother [Esau = other nations] by the heel [and in his manhood he strove with God. He strove with the angel and prevailed, he wept and sought his favor]'" (Hos. 12:3-4).
3. A. Said R. Yudan b. R. Simeon, "The matter may be compared to a widow who was complaining to a judge about her son. When she saw that the judge was in session and handing out sentences of punishment by fire, pitch, and lashes, she said, 'If I report the bad conduct of my son to that judge, he will kill him now.' She waited until he was finished. When he had finished, he said to her, 'Madam, this son of yours, how has he behaved badly toward you?'
- B. "She said to him, 'My lord, when he was in my womb, he kicked me.'
- C. "He said to her, 'Now has he done anything wrong to you?'
- D. "She said to him, 'No.'
- E. "He said to her, 'Go your way, there is nothing wrong in the matter [that you report].'
- F. "So, when the Holy One, blessed be he, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage:
- G. "'In the womb he took his brother by the heel' [Mic. 12:3].
- H. "Then the nations of the world were astonished, saying, 'This is repentance and this is rebuke, one following the other? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'"
4. A. "And how have I wearied you?" (Mic. 6:3).
- B. Said R. Berekhiah, "The matter may be compared to the case of a king, who sent three messengers to a certain city, and the inhabitants of the city stood up before them and paid them service in awe, trembling, fear, and trepidation.
- C. "So the Holy One, blessed be he, said to Israel, 'I sent you three messengers, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
- D. "'Now did they eat any of your food? Did they drink any of your drink? Did they impose upon you in any way? Is it not through their merit that you are maintained?'
- E. "'The mana was through the merit of Moses, the well through the merit of Miriam, and the clouds of glory through the merit of Aaron.'"

5. A. Said R. Isaac, "The matter may be compared to the case of a king who sent his proclamation to a city. What did the inhabitants of the city do? They stood up and bared their heads and read the proclamation in awe, trembling, fear, and trepidation.
- B. "So the Holy One, blessed be he, said to Israel, 'As to the proclamation of the Shema and the proclamation of mine [the Torah] [that I sent you], I did not impose on you by telling you to read [the Shema] either standing on your feet or having bared your heads, but only [at your convenience:] "When you sit in your house and when you walk by the way"" [Deut. 6:7].
6. A. Said R. Judah b. R. Simon, "Said the Holy One, blessed be he, 'I handed ten beasts to you, three in your domain, and seven not in your domain.
- B. "The three in your domain: "the ox, sheep, and the goat" [Deut. 14:4].
- C. "The seven not in your domain: "the hart, gazelle, roebuck, wild goat, pygarg, antelope, and mountain sheep!" [Deut. 14:5].
- D. "I did not trouble you, and I did not tell you to go up into the mountains and to tire yourselves in the fields to bring me an offering of those beasts that are not within your domain.
- E. "I asked only for those that are in your domain, the ones that grow at your crib: "Ox, sheep or goat"" (Lev. 22:27).

Mic. 6:3 promises a settlement of accounts in the age to come. Mic. 6:2 has the nations of the world rejoice when Israel has a controversy with God, with special reference to Balak. Mic. 12:3 speaks of Jacob and Esau. Mic. 6:3 amplifies Micah's question, how have I wearied you, now with reference to Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XXXII:VIII

2. A. "And he said to me, 'What do you see,' and I said, 'I see, and behold, a wholly golden candelabrum, with a bowl [guleh] on top of it" (Zech. 4:2).
- B. What is the meaning of the phrase, "And a guleh on top of it"?
- C. Two Amoras: One of them said, "[Guleh, to be read as] golah, exile."
- D. The other said, "Golah, meaning, redeemer."
- E. In the view of the one who said that it is to be read, golah, exile, the Israelites were exiled to Babylonia, and the Presence of God went into exile with them [at their head]. That is in line with the following verse: "On your account I have been sent to Babylonia" (Is. 43:14).
- F. The one who said that it is to be read golah, meaning redeemer, or savior, [cites the following verse]: "Our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name" (Is. 47:4).
- G. "The breaker is gone up [before them, they have broken forth and passed on, by the gate, and are gone out from it; and their king

4. *Micah in Genesis Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah and Pesiqta deRab Kahana*

passed on before them, and the Lord at the head of them]” (Mic. 2:13). [The operative phrase is at the end, “The Lord is at the head of them.”]

Mic. 2:13 is taken to refer to the Lord as redeemer of Israel.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA III:IV

1. A. R. Banai in the name of R. Huna commenced discourse by citing the following verse: “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord [but a just weight is his delight. When pride comes, then comes disgrace] (Prov. 11:1-2).”
- B. Said R. Banai in the name of R. Huna, “If you have seen a generation, the measures of which are perverted, know that the government is going to come and declare war against that generation. What verse of Scripture so indicates? ‘A false balance is an abomination to the Lord.’ And what is written immediately following? ‘When pride comes, then comes disgrace.’”
2. A. R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Abba bar Kahana, “It is written: Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales and with a bag of deceitful weights (Micah 6:11).
- B. “Shall I acquit the man with wicked scales: is it possible even to imagine that God would acquit one with perverted scales? But: a bag of deceitful weights [means, even in your own bag, they will remain deceitful weights.”

Micah 6:11 is amplified in line with Prov. 11:1-2.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA VI:IV

1. A. “...the regular daily whole-offering of two yearling rams without blemish:”
- B. [Explaining the selection of the lambs,] the House of Shammai and the House of Hillel [offered opinions as follows:]
- C. The House of Shammai say, “Lambs are chosen because the letters that spell the word for lamb can also be read to mean that ‘they cover up the sins of Israel,’ as you read in Scripture: ‘He will turn again and have compassion upon us, he will put our iniquities out of sight’ (Micah 7:19).”
- D. And the House of Hillel say, “Lambs are selected because the letters of the word lamb can yield the sound for the word, clean, for they clean up the sins of Israel.
- E. “That is in line with this verse of Scripture: ‘If your sins are like scarlet, they will be washed clean like wool’ (Is. 1:18).”

- F. Ben Azzai says, "...the regular daily whole-offering of two yearling rams without blemish' are specified because they wash away the sins of Israel and turn them into an infant a year old."

Mic. 7:19 supplies a proof-text for the stated proposition.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA IX:V

1. A. "O my people, what have I done to you, in what have I wearied you? Testify against me" (Mic. 6:3).
- B. Said R. Aha, "'Testify against me' and receive a reward, but 'Do not bear false witness' (Ex. 20:13) and face a settlement of accounts [Leviticus Rabbah adds:] in the age to come."
2. A. Said R. Samuel b. R. Nahman, "On three occasions the Holy One, blessed be He, came to engage in argument with Israel, and the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'Can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- B. "One was when he said to them, 'Come, and let us reason together, says the Lord' (Is. 1:18). When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage: 'If your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow' (Is. 1:18).
- C. "Then the nations of the world were astonished, and said, 'This is repentance, and this is rebuke? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'
- D. "[A second time was] when he said to them, 'Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord' (Mic. 6:2), so the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'How can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- E. "When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage: 'O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Testify against me' (Mic. 6:3). 'Remember what Balak king of Moab devised' (Mic. 6:5).
- F. [Leviticus Rabbah adds:] "Then the nations of the world were astonished, saying, 'This is repentance, and this is rebuke, one following the other? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'
- G. "[A third time was] when he said to them, 'The Lord has an indictment against Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways' (Hos. 12:2), the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'How can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- H. "When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'In the womb he [Jacob = Israel] took his brother [Esau = other nations] by the

heel [and in his manhood he strove with God. He strove with the angel and prevailed, he wept and sought his favor] '(Hos. 12:3-4)."

Micah provides cases to illustrate the proposition stated at 2.A.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA IX:IV

1. A. "That which is already has been, that which is to be already has been. [God seeks that which is pursued]" (Qoh. 3:15).
2. A. R. Aha in the name of R. Simeon b. Halapta: "Whatever the Holy One, blessed be He, is destined to do in the age to come in some small measure already has he done through the righteous in this world.
3. A. "God seeks what has been driven away" (Qoh. 3:15):
4. A. [Leviticus Rabbah adds:] R. Yosé b. R. Yudan in the name of R. Yosé b. R. Nehorai says, "It is always the case that the Holy One, blessed be He, demands an accounting for the blood of those who have been pursued from the hand of the pursuer.
3. A. [Leviticus Rabbah adds: Said R. Yudan b. R. Simeon,] "The matter may be compared to a widow who was complaining to a judge about her son. When she saw that the judge was in session and handing out sentences of capital punishment [Leviticus Rabbah adds:] punishment by fire, pitch, and lashes, she said, 'If I report the bad conduct of my son to that judge, he will kill him now.' She waited until he was finished. When he had finished, he said to her, 'Madam, this son of yours, how has he behaved badly toward you?'
 - B. "She said to him, 'My lord, when he was in my womb, he kicked me.'
 - C. "He said to her, 'Now has he done anything wrong to you?'
 - D. "She said to him, 'No.'
 - E. "He said to her, '[Leviticus Rabbah adds: Go your way], there is nothing wrong in the matter [that you report].
 - F. [Leviticus Rabbah adds:] "So, when the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage:
 - G. [Leviticus Rabbah adds:] "In the womb he took his brother by the heel (Mic. 12:3)
 - H. "Then the nations of the world were astonished, saying, 'This is repentance and this is rebuke, one following the other? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'"
4. A. Said R. Berekhiah [Leviticus Rabbah: Isaac], "The matter may be compared to the case of a king who sent his proclamation to a city. What did the inhabitants of the city do? They stood up and bared their heads and read the proclamation in awe, trembling, fear, and trepidation.
 - B. "So the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel, 'The proclamation of the Shema is my proclamation [that I sent you]. I did not impose

on you by telling you to read [the Shema] either standing on your feet or having bared your heads, but only [at your convenience: merely] When you sit in your house and when you walk by the way (Deut. 6:7).” [Leviticus Rabbah supplies the following: And how have I wearied you? (Mic. 6:3). Said R. Berekhiah, “The matter may be compared to the case of a king, who sent three messengers to a certain city, and the inhabitants of the city stood up before them and paid them service] in awe, trembling, fear, and trepidation. So the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel, ‘I sent you three messengers, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Now did they eat any of your food? Did they drink any of your drink? Did they impose upon you in any way? Is it not through their merit that you are maintained? The mana was through the merit of Moses, the well through the merit of Miriam, and the clouds of glory through the merit of Aaron.’”]

Mic. 12:3 supplies a case, and Mic. 6:3 amplifies the proposition.

PESIQTÁ DE RAB KAHANA X:VI

2. A. A Samaritan asked R. Meir, saying to him, “Do you not maintain that Jacob was a truth-teller?”
- B. He said to him, “Indeed so, for it is written, ‘You give truthfulness to Jacob’ (Micah 7:20).”
- C. He said to him, “And did he not say this: ‘And of all that you give me I will give the tenth to you’?”
- D. He said to him, “[Yes.] He separated the tribe of Levi as one of the ten.”
- E. He said to him, “Then should he not have separated a tenth of the other two tribes?”
- F. He said to him, “You maintain that they were twelve tribes, but I say that they were fourteen, as it is said, Ephraim and Manasseh even as Reuben and Simeon shall be mine (Gen. 48:5).”
- G. He said to him, “All the more so. You support my case. You add more flour, so I’ll add more water.”
- H. He said to him, “Do you not concede that there were four patriarchs?”
- I. He said to him, “Yes.”
- J. He said to him, “Deduct the four firstborn of each of the patriarchs from the fourteen, for the firstborn is not tithed. Why? Because he is already holy, and what is already consecrated cannot serve to exempt what is consecrated [and that leaves ten, hence Levi was enough].”
- K. He said to him, “Happy is your nation on account of what is within it.”

Mic. 7:20 proves that Jacob told the truth.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XIII:VIII

5. A. Another matter concerning "The words of Jeremiah: [reading the phrase, the words of, construed as my word through, hence my word through Jeremiah:]" Said the Holy One, blessed be He, to Jeremiah, "Jeremiah, I have been seeking of them [that they carry out] my words.
- B. "I said to them, 'I am the Lord your God' (Ex. 20:2), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'Saying to a piece of wood, You are my father' (Jer. 2:27).
- C. "I said to them, 'You shall have no other gods before me' (Ex. 20:2), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, '...worshipping the host of heaven on the roofs' (Zeph. 1:5).
- D. "I said to them, 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain' (Ex. 20:7), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'Surely they swear falsely' (Jer. 5:2).
- E. "I said to them, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy' (Ex. 20:8), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'You have despised my holy things and you have profaned my Sabbaths' (Ez. 22:8).
- F. "I said to them, 'Honor your father and your mother' (Ex. 20:12), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'In you have they made light of father and mother' (Ez. 22:7).
- G. "I said to them, 'You shall not murder you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal' (Ex. 20:13), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'You steal, murder, and commit adultery' (Jer. 7:9).
- H. "I said to them, 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor' (Ex. 20:13), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'They bend their tongue their bow to falsehood' (Jer. 9:2).
- I. "I said to them, 'You shall not covet' (Ex. 20:14), but they did not act in accord with that statement, but rather, 'They covet fields and seize them, houses and take them away' (Mic. 2:2)."

Mic. 2:2 shows that the Israelites violated one of the ten commandments.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XIII:XI

1. A. Another matter concerning The words of Jeremiah:
 - B. The name [referring to the letters r m y h] means, the Lord went up.
2. A. In ten upward stages the Presence of God departed: from the cherub to the cherub, from the cherub to the threshold of the temple-building; from the threshold of the temple to the two cherubim; from the two cherubim to the eastern gate of the sanctuary; from the eastern gate of the sanctuary to the [wall of the] temple court; from the [wall of the] temple court to the altar; from the altar to the

- roof; from the roof to the city wall, from the city wall to the city, from the city to the Mount of Olives.
- B. "...from the ark cover to the cherub: 'And he rode upon a cherub and flew. (2 Sam. 22:11).
 - C. "...from the cherub to the cherub: 'And the glory of the Lord mounted up from the cherub to the threshold of the house' (Ez. 10:45).
 - D. "...from the threshold of the temple to the two cherubim: 'And the glory of the Lord went forth from off the threshold of the house and stood over the cherubim' (Ez. 10:18). Lo, it was necessary to say only, 'And the glory of the Lord came...'
 - F. "...from the two cherubim to the eastern gate of the sanctuary: 'The cherubs raised their wings and flew above the earth before my eyes' (Ez. 10:9).
 - G. "...from the eastern gate of the sanctuary to the [wall of the] temple court: 'And the courtyard was filled with the splendor of the glory of the Lord' (Ez. 10:4).
 - H. "...from the [wall of the temple] court to the altar: 'I saw the Lord standing beside the altar' (Amos 9:1).
 - I. "...from the altar to the roof: 'It is better to dwell on the corner of the roof' (Prov. 21:9).
 - J. "...from the roof to the city wall: 'Lo, he showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing on the wall made by a plumb line' (Amos 7:7).
 - K. "...from the city wall to the city: 'A voice cries, The Lord into the city' (Mic. 6:9).
 - L. "...from the city to the Mount of Olives: 'And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain' (Ez. 11:23)."

Micah contributes a fact to the itinerary.

PESIQTA DE RAB KAHANA XVI:IV

- 1. A. "You have loved right and hated wrong; so God, your God, has anointed you above your fellows with oil, the token of joy" (Ps. 45:8):
- B. R. Azariah in the name of R. Aha interpreted the verse to speak of our father, Abraham: "You find that before the Holy One, blessed be He, brought the flood on the Sodomites, our father, Abraham, said before the Holy One, blessed be He, 'Lord of the ages, You have bound yourself by an oath not to bring a flood upon the world. What verse of Scripture indicates it? 'These days recall for me the days of Noah, as I swore that the waters of Noah's flood should never again pour over the earth, [so now I swear to you never again to be angry with you or reproach you]' (Is. 54:9). True enough, you are not going to bring a flood of water, but you are going to

bring a flood of fire. Are you now going to act deceitfully against the clear intent of that oath? [If so you will not carry out the oath!]

- C. “‘Far be it from you to do this thing, to kill the righteous like the wicked’ (Gen. 18:25).’ Will not the judge of all the earth do justly?’ (Gen. 18:25).
- F. [Resuming discourse broken off at C:] “‘When I sent Micah, they hit him on the cheek.’ ‘They smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek’ (Mic. 4:14).
- G. “Now: ‘whom shall I send, And who will go for us’ (Is. 6:8)?”
- H. “Forthwith: ‘Here am I, send me’ (Is. 6:8).”

Micah attests to the humiliation visited by the Israelites on their leaders.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XVI:VIII

- 1. A. How will you comfort me through vanity, and as for your answers, there remains only faithlessness (Job 21:34):
 - B. Said R. Abba bar Kahana [on the meaning of the word translated as faithlessness], “Your words [of comfort and consolation, that Job’s friends had provided him] require clarification.”
 - C. Rabbis say, “Your words contain contradictions.” [We shall now have a long series of examples of how God’s messages to the prophets contradict themselves.]
- 5. A. Micah went to give comfort. He said to the city, “The Holy One, blessed be He, has sent me to you to bring you comfort.”
 - C. She said to him, “What do you have in hand.”
 - D. He said to her, “Who is like God to you who pardons iniquity and passes by transgression” (Mic. 7:18).
 - E. She said to him, “Yesterday, you said to me, ‘For the transgression of Jacob is all this and for the sins of the house of Israel’ (Mic. 1:56), and now you say this to me? Which shall we believe, the first statement or the second?”
- 12. A. The prophets went to the Holy One, blessed be He, saying to him, “Lord of the ages, Jerusalem has not accepted the comfort [that we brought her].”
 - B. Said to them the Holy One, blessed be He, “You and I together shall go and comfort her.”
 - C. Thus we say: “Comfort, comfort my people” but read the letters for “my people” as” with me.”

Micah supplies an example in the established pattern.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XVI:XI

- 1. A. “[Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.] Speak tenderly to the heart of Jerusalem and declare to her [that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins]” (Is. 40:1-2).

- B. When they sinned with the head, they were smitten at the head, but they were comforted through the head.
 - C. When they sinned with the head: "Let us make a head and let us return to Egypt" (Num. 14:4).
 - D. ...they were smitten at the head: "The whole head is sick" (Is. 1:5).
 - E. ...but they were comforted through the head: "Their king has passed before them and the Lord is at the head of them" (Mic. 2:13).
3. A. When they sinned with the ear, they were smitten at the ear, but they were comforted through the ear.
- B. When they sinned with the ear: "They stopped up their ears so as not to hear" (Zech. 7:11).
 - C. ...they were smitten at the ear: "Their ears shall be deaf" (Mic. 7:16).
 - D. ...but they were comforted through the ear: "Your ears shall hear a word saying, [This is the way]" (Is. 30:21).

Micah contributes a detail to one of the executions of the established pattern.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XXI:IV

1. A. R. Phineas in the name of R. Reuben said, "The Holy One, blessed be He, is going to bring Sinai, Tabor, and Carmel, and to build the house of the sanctuary on top of them.
- B. "What verse of Scripture indicates it? 'In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be set over all other mountains, lifted high above the hills. [All the nations shall come streaming to it, and many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us climb up on to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways, and we may walk in his paths'] (Is. 2:2-3)."
- C. Said R. Homa, "And is that enough for you? [There is more to be seen in the cited verse, specifically:] the house of the sanctuary will recite a song, and the mountains will respond to it.
- D. "What verse of Scripture indicates it? '[In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be set over all other mountains,] lifted high above the hills' (Mic. 4:1). The word for lifted high bears the meaning of raising up a song, in line with this verse of Scripture: 'Kenaniah, officer of the Levites, was in charge of the music, because of his proficiency, [Berekhiah and Elkanah were door keepers for the ark, while the priests...sounded trumpets before the ark of God]' (1 Chr. 15:22-23)."

Micah affirms that the house of the sanctuary will raise up a song in the end of days.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XXV:II

2. A. R. Huna in the name of R. Abbahu, "It is as if, while forgetfulness is not a trait of his, for the sake of Israel he turns forgetful.
- B. "Who is a god like you? You take away guilt, you pass over the sin [of the remnant of your own people, you do not let your anger rage for ever but delight in love that will not change] (Mic. 7:18).
- C. "And so said David: 'You have borne the transgression of your people, you have covered over all their sin. Sela' (Ps. 85:3)."

Micah says God forgets the sins of the Israelites as part of his mercy.

Micah in Esther Rabbah I Ruth Rabbah Song of Songs Rabbah Lamentations Rabbah and The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan

ESTHER RABBAH I

ESTHER RABBAH I XI:I

2. A. [With reference to the verse, "In those days I saw in Judah some treading winepresses on the Sabbath" (Neh. 13:15):]
 - B. R. Helbo said, "'those days' were a time of wailing."
 - C. R. Bibi said, "The word for 'that' [carries letters that may be read,] 'woe for those days,' as in the following: 'Wail, woe worth the day' (Ez. 22:1)."
 - D. Said R. Isaac, "Let there be a lament for those days: 'And lament with a doleful lamentation' (Mic. 2:4) [following Simon, p. 26]."

Micah instructs Israel to mourn in those days.

ESTHER RABBAH I XII:I

5. A. **Another comment on the clause, "the army chiefs of Persia and Media:"**
 - B. There are cases in which Scripture speaks first of Persia then of Media, and cases in which Scripture speaks first of Media, then of Persia.
 - C. When the royal family is in Media, Persia is secondary to it, and when the royal family is in Persia, Media is secondary to it.
6. A. Why is it called "Persia"?

- B. [Since the Hebrew word for Persia uses letters that may be read “divide” or “divisions,” the reason is that] it received dominion in parts:
- C. one in the time of Tardah,
 D. another in the time of Ardaban,
 E. and another in the age to come: “And this shall be peace, when the Assyria shall come into our land” (Mic. 5:4).

Micah speaks of the age to come.

RUTH RABBAH

RUTH RABBAH V:1

7. A. Woe to the generation that has false measures.
 B. For said R. Benaia in the name of R. Huna, “If you have seen a generation that has false measures, the government will come and exact a penalty from that generation.
 C. “How do we know it? ‘A false balance is an abomination to the Lord’ (Prov. 11:1), followed by, ‘When presumption comes, then shame comes’ (Prov. 11:2).”
8. A. Said R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Abba, “It is written: ‘Shall I be pure with wicked balances?’ (Micah 6:11).
 B. “Is it possible for a generation whose measures are false to be considered worthy?
 C. “But ‘And with a bag of deceitful weights’ (Mic. 6:11).”

Micah condemns the use of false weights.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH II:VII

1. A. **“For your love is better than wine:”**
 B. Words of Torah complement one another, friends of one another, close to one another,
 C. in line with the usage [of the consonants that are translated “love”] in the following verse: “or his uncle or his uncle’s son” (Lev. 25:49).
4. A. R. Abba b. R. Kahana in the name of R. Judah b. Pazzi derived the same lesson from the following:
 B. Said R. Tarfon, “I was coming along the road [in the evening] and reclined to recite the Shema as required by the House of Shammai. And [in doing so] I placed myself in danger of [being attacked by] bandits.” [They said to him, “You are yourself responsible [for what might have befallen you], for you violated the words of the House of Hillel.”] [M. Berakhot 1:3G-H].

- C. You see that had he not recited the Shema at all, he would have violated a positive commandment alone. Now that he has recited the Shema, he has become liable for his life.
 - D. That proves that Words of scribes are more precious than words of Torah.
5. A. R. Hanina b. R. Aha in the name of R. Tanhum b. R. Aha said, "They are subject to more stringent penalties than the words of the Torah and of the prophets.
- B. "It is written, 'Do not preach, they preach' (Mic. 2:6). [Simon, p. 32, n. 9: implying that prophecy can be interrupted, but not so the teaching of the sages.]
 - C. "[The relationship of teachings of scribes and prophets] yields the following simile: the matter may be compared to the case of a king who sent his agents to a town. Concerning one of them he wrote, 'If he shows you my seal and signature, believe him, and if not, do not believe him,' and concerning the other of them he wrote, 'Even if he does not show you my seal and signature, believe him.'

Micah implies that the teachings of the sages take priority over the prophetic utterances.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH IV:III

2. A. **For said R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Eleazar, "[Genesis Rabbah XXVIII:V.1:] "From the face of the ground" (Gen. 6:7), Said R. Abba bar Kahana,] "What was done by the ten tribes was not done by the generation of the Flood.**
- B. "With respect to the generation of the Flood, it is written, 'And every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all day' (Gen. 6:5).
 - C. "With regard to the ten tribes: 'Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds' (Mic. 2:1) which is to say, even by night. And how do we know that they did it by day as well? 'When the morning is light, they execute it' (Mic. 2:1).
 - D. "Nonetheless, of those [of the generation of the Flood] not a remnant was left, while of these [the ten tribes] a remnant was left.
 - E. [Genesis Rabbah XXVIII:V.1:] "It was on account of the merit of the righteous men and righteous women who were destined to emerge from [the ten tribes that a remnant was spared].
 - F. [Genesis Rabbah XXVIII:V.1:] "That is in line with this verse: 'And behold there shall be left a remnant therein that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters' (Ez. 14:22), that is, on account of the merit of the righteous men and righteous women, the men and women prophets, who were destined to emerge from [the ten tribes a remnant was spared]."

Micah condemns the northern Israelites in terms that exceed the condemnation of the generation of the flood.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH XVIII:III

3. A. Rabbis say, “[With reference to ‘a lily of the valleys’], said the Community of Israel before the Holy One, blessed be He, ‘I am the one, and I am beloved.
- B. “For I am [Simon} plunged into the valley of Gehenna.
- C. “But he Holy One, blessed be He, will draw me up from the depths: ‘He brought me up also out of the tumultuous pit’ (Ps. 40:3).
- D. “Then I shall blossom forth in good deeds and say a song:
- E. ““And he has put a new song in my mouth” (Ps. 40:4).”
4. A. The statement of Rabbis accords with the view of R. Eleazar the Modite: “In the age to come the angels in charge of the other nations will come to accuse Israel before the Holy One, blessed be He,
- B. “saying to him, ‘Lord of the world, these have worshipped idolatry, and those have worshipped idolatry.
- C. ““These have practiced fornication and those have practiced fornication.
- D. ““These have shed blood and those have shed blood.
- E. “How come these go down to Gehenna, while those do not go down?”
- F. “And the Holy One, blessed be He, will answer them, saying, ‘If so, then let all of the nations go to Gehenna with their gods.’
- G. “That is in line with this verse: ‘For let all the peoples walk each one in the name of its god’ (Mic. 4:5).”

Micah distinguishes Israel from the nations.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH XXX:IV

12. A. **Said R. Nehorai, “In the generation in which the son of David will come, the youth will humiliate the elders,**
- B. “the elders will stand up before the youth.
- C. ““The daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man’s enemies are the men of his own house’ (Mic. 7:6).
- D. “And a son will not be ashamed before his father.”
13. A. R. Nehemiah says, “Before the days of the Messiah poverty will increase, there will be inflation, while the vine will give its fruit, the wine will sour.
- B. “The entire kingdom will turn to heresy.
- C. “And there will be no reproof.”
14. A. Said R. Abba b. Kahana, “The son of David will come only in a generation the leadership of which is in the hands of dogs.”
15. A. Said R. Levi, “The son of David will come only in a generation the leadership of which is impudent and liable to annihilation.”
16. A. Said R. Yannai, “If you see one generation after another cursing and blaspheming, expect the Messiah:
- B. ““Wherewith your enemies have taunted, O Lord, wherewith your enemies have taunted the footsteps of your anointed’ (Ps. 89:52);

then 'Blessed be the Lord forevermore, amen and amen' (Ps. 89:53)."

Micah speaks of the generation in which the Messiah will appear.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH XXXII:II

4. A. "[Catch us the foxes, the little foxes,] that spoil the vineyards, [for our vineyards are in blossom]:"
- B. "that spoil the vineyards" refers to Israel: "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel" (Isa. 5:7).
5. A. "...for our vineyards are in blossom:"
- B. "There is no cluster to eat, nor first-ripe fig which my soul desires" (Mic. 7:1).

Israel spoils the vineyards, so Micah, and there are no grapeclusters.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH LVII:I

13. A. "and a splendid crown on your head:"
- B. This refers to the Presence of God:
- C. "you shall also be a crown of beauty in the hand of God" (Isa. 62:3); "And their king is passed on before them, and the Lord at the head of them" (Mic. 2:13).

God's presence is Israel's crown.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH LXXVI:IV

3. A. [Leviticus Rabbah XXVII:VI.2ff.:] Said R. Samuel b. R. Nahman, "On three occasions the Holy One, blessed be He, came to engage in argument with Israel, and the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'Can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- B. "One was when he said to them, 'Come, and let us reason together, says the Lord' [Isa. 1:18]. When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage: 'If your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow' [Isa. 1:18].
- C. "Then the nations of the world were astonished, and said, 'This is repentance, and this is rebuke? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'
- D. "[A second time was] when he said to them, 'Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord' [Mic. 6:2], the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'How can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- E. "When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage: 'O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied

- you? Testify against me' [Mic. 6:3]. 'Remember what Balak king of Moab devised' [Mic. 6:5].
- F. "Then the nations of the world were astonished, saying, 'This is repentance, and this is rebuke, one following the other? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.'
- G. "[A third time was] when he said to them, 'The Lord has an indictment against Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways' [Hos. 12:2], the nations of the world rejoiced, saying, 'How can these ever [dare] engage in an argument with their creator? Now he will wipe them out of the world.'
- H. "When the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: 'In the womb he [Jacob = Israel] took his brother [Esau = other nations] by the heel [and in his manhood he strove with God. He strove with the angel and prevailed, he wept and sought his favor]'" (Hos. 12:3-4).
4. A. Said R. Yudan [b. R. Simeon], "The matter may be compared to a widow who was complaining to a judge about her son. When she saw that the judge was in session and handing out sentences of punishment by fire, pitch, and lashes, she said, 'If I report the bad conduct of my son to that judge, he will kill him now.' She waited until he was finished. When he had finished, he said to her, 'Madam, this son of yours, how has he behaved badly toward you?'
- B. "She said to him, 'My lord, when he was in my womb, he kicked me.'
- C. "He said to her, 'Now has he done anything wrong to you?'
- D. "She said to him, 'No.'
- E. "He said to her, 'Go your way, there is nothing wrong in the matter [that you report].'
- F. "[Lev. R. adds:] So, when the Holy One, blessed be He, saw that the nations of the world were rejoicing, he turned the matter to [Israel's] advantage:
- G. "'In the womb he took his brother by the heel' (Mic. 12:3). [Then the nations of the world were astonished, saying, 'This is repentance and this is rebuke, one following the other? He has planned only to amuse himself with his children.']"
- H. R. Eleazar b. R. Simon said, "The God of Jacob, our father, has paid honor to him."

Micah explains why God is forgiving to the Israelites and defends them from the nations of the world.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH LXXXVI:I

1. A. "Who is this that looks like the dawn:"
- B. There is the following story:

- C. R. Hiyya and R. Simeon b. R. Halafta at dawn were going in the valley of Arbel, and they saw the morning star coming up.
- D. Said R. Hiyya the Elder to R. Simeon b. R. Halafta, "That is how the redemption of Israel will break forth: 'Though I sit in darkness, the Lord is a light for me' (Mic. 7:8) – at first it comes bit by bit, but then it sparkles, and afterward it breaks forth with great power, and finally it overspreads the sky.
- E. "So at the outset: 'In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate' (Est. 2:21);
- F. "then: 'Mordecai went forth from the presence of the king in royal apparel' (Est. 8:15);
- G. "and finally: 'The Jews had light and gladness' (Est. 8:16)."

God is Israel's light and will redeem Israel step by step, so Micah.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH LXXXVIII:1

- 4. A. Another explanation of the verse, "'Before I was aware, my fancy set me in a chariot beside my prince.'"
- B. Scripture speaks of Mordecai.
- C. Yesterday: "He put on sackcloth with ashes" (Est. 4:1).
- D. Today: "And Mordecai went forth from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white" (Est. 8:15).
- E. So in his own regard he recited the verse, "Before I was aware, my fancy set me in a chariot beside my prince."
- 5. A. Another explanation of the verse, "'Before I was aware, my fancy set me in a chariot beside my prince.'"
- B. Scripture speaks of the Community of Israel.
- C. The Community of Israel says to the nations of the world, "'Do not rejoice against me, O my enemy; though I have fallen, I shall arise' (Mic. 7:8).
- D. "When I dwelled in darkness, the Holy One, blessed be He, brought me forth to light: 'Though I sit in darkness, the Lord is a light to me' (Mic. 7:8)."
- E. So in her own regard she recited the verse, "Before I was aware, my fancy set me in a chariot beside my prince."
- 6. A. Justus, a tailor in Sepphoris, went up to the government and was received by the king.
- B. The king said to him, "Ask me for something, and I shall give it to you."
- C. He said to him, "Make me the duke of our locale."
- D. The king gave it to him.
- E. After he had assumed the position, he left it.
- F. And those who knew him said, "It's the same man," but others who knew him said, "It's not the same."
- G. One of them said to them, "When he goes through the market, if he glances at that tailor's seat on which he used to sit and stitch, it is the same man, but if not, it is not the same man."

- H. He passed through the market and began to look at the stool on which he had sat and stitched, so they knew that he was the same man.
- I. He said to them, "You are surprised at me, but I am more surprised at myself than you are."
- J. And they recited in his regard the verse, "Before I was aware, my fancy set me in a chariot beside my prince,"
- K. meaning, with me the Prince, the Eternal, walked.

God will save Israel, even though she has fallen, and brings light to her.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH CXI:III

- 15. A. Said R. Abba b. R. Kahana, "If you have seen the benches in the Land of Israel filled with Babylonians, look forward for the coming of the Messiah.
- B. "How come? 'He has spread a net for my feet' (Lam. 1:13). [The word for net has consonants shared with the word for Persians, so, Simon, p. 317, n. 1, 'The presence of Babylonians (Persians) is a net to draw the Messiah.]"
- 16. A. R. Simeon b. Yohai taught on Tannaite authority, "If you have seen a Persian horse tied up to gravestones in the Land of Israel, look forward to the footsteps of the Messiah.
- B. "How come? 'And this shall be peace: when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes among men' (Mic. 5:4)."

Micah foretells the coming of the Messiah.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XXIV.I.

- 1. A. R. Yohanan commenced [by citing the following verse of Scripture]: "The Valley of Vision Pronouncement" – ["The Valley of Vision Pronouncement. What can have happened to you that you have gone, all of you, up on the roofs, O you who were full of tumult, you clamorous town, you city so gay? Your slain are not the slain of the sword, nor the dead of battle. Your officers have all departed; they fled far away; your survivors were all taken captive, taken captive without their bows. That is why I say, 'Let me be, I will weep bitterly. Press not to comfort me for the ruin of my poor people.' For my Lord God of Hosts had a day of tumult and din and confusion – Kir raged in the Valley of Vision, and Shoa on the hill; while Elam bore the quiver in troops of mounted men, and Kir bared the shield – and your choicest lowlands were filled with chariots and horsemen; they stormed at Judah's gateway and pressed

beyond its screen. You gave thought on that day to the arms in the Forest House, and you took note of the many breaches in the city of David. And you collected the water of the Lower Pool; and you counted the houses of Jerusalem and pulled houses down to fortify the wall; and you constructed a basin between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you gave no thought to him who planned it, you took no note of him who designed it long before. My Lord God of Hosts summoned on that day weeping and lamenting, to tonsuring and girding with sackcloth. Instead there was rejoicing and merriment, killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine: 'eat and drink for tomorrow we die!' Then the Lord of Hosts revealed himself to my ears: 'This iniquity shall never be forgiven you until you die,' said my Lord God of Hosts (Isaiah 22:1-14):"]

20. A. "My Lord God of Hosts summoned on that day to weeping and lamenting, [to tonsuring and girding with sackcloth]:"
- B. Said the ministering angels before him, "Lord of the world, it is written, 'Honor and majesty are before him' (1 Chr. 16:27), and yet do you speak in this manner?"
- C. He said to them, "I will teach you. This is in line with the following verse: 'Strip yourselves naked, put the cloth about your loins! [Lament upon the breasts for the pleasant fields, for the spreading grapevines, for my people's soil – it shall be overgrown with briars and thistles – yes and for all the houses of delight, for the city of mirth]' (Isa. 32:11-13).
- D. "So will you be lamenting.
- E. "'Lament upon the breasts:' for the destruction of the first temple and for the destruction of the second.
- F. "'for the pleasant fields:' for my desirable house, which I have turned into a barren field: 'Zion shall be ploughed as a field' (Micah 3:12).
- G. "'for the spreading grapevines:' this refers to Israel: 'You did pluck up a vine out of Egypt' (Ps. 80:9)."

Micah provides the identification of the field to which reference is made.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XXV.I.

3. A. In ten upward stages the Presence of God departed: from the cherub to the cherub, from the cherub to the threshold of the temple-building; from the threshold of the temple to the two cherubim; from the two cherubim to the eastern gate of the sanctuary; from the eastern gate of the sanctuary to the [wall of the] temple court; from the [wall of the] temple court to the altar; from the altar to the roof; from the roof to the city wall, from the city wall to the city, from the city to the Mount of Olives.

- B. [From Pesiqta de Rab Kahana 13:11 supply: ...from the ark cover to the cherub: "And he rode upon a cherub and flew"(2 Sam. 22:11).]
- C. ...from the cherub to the cherub: "And the glory of the Lord mounted up from the cherub to the threshold of the house" (Ezek. 10:45).
- D. ...from the cherub to the threshold of the house: "And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon it was to the threshold of the house" (Ezek. 9:3).
- E. ...from the threshold of the temple to the two cherubim: "And the glory of the Lord went forth from off the threshold of the house and stood over the cherubim" (Ezek. 10:18). Lo, it was necessary to say only, And the glory of the Lord came.... And you say, "went forth"? What is the meaning of "went forth"?
- F. Said R. Hana, "The matter may be compared to the case of a king who was leaving his palace in a rage. After he went forth, he came back and he kissed the walls and embraced the columns and wept and said, 'May you remain whole, O my royal house, may you remain whole, O my beloved palace, from now on let there be wholeness.'
- G. "So after the Presence of God went forth from the house of the sanctuary, it would return and kiss the walls and embrace the columns and say, 'May you remain whole, O house of my sanctuary, may you remain whole, O my royal palace, my you remain whole, my beloved house, from now on let there be wholeness.'"
- H. ...from the two cherubim to the eastern gate of the sanctuary: "The cherubs raised their wings and flew above the earth before my eyes" (Ezek. 10:9).
- I. ...from the eastern gate of the sanctuary to the [wall of the] temple court: "And the courtyard was filled with the splendor of the glory of the Lord" (Ezek. 10:4).
- J. ...from the [wall of the] temple court to the altar: "I saw the Lord standing beside the altar" (Amos 9:1).
- K. ...from the altar to the roof: "It is better to dwell on the corner of the roof" (Prov. 21:9).
- L. ...from the roof to the altar [Pesiqta: city wall]: "I saw the Lord standing beside the altar" (Amos 9:1).
- M. ...from the altar to the wall: "and behold, the Lord was standing on the wall made by a plumb line" (Amos 7:7).
- N. What is "a plumb line"?
- O. It is the sanhedrin of seventy-one members.
- P. How do we know?
- Q. From the numerical value of the letters of the word for plumb line, which add up to seventy-one.
- R. "And the Lord said, 'Behold, I will set a plumb line'" (Amos 7:8):
- S. Said R. Judah bar Simon, "It was from the wall to the city, as it is said, 'Listen, the Lord cries to the city' (Micah 6:9)."

- T. ...from the city to the Mount of Olives: "And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain" (Ezek. 11:23).

Micah helps trace the departure of God from Jerusalem.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XXXVI.VII.

1. A. "[She weeps bitterly in the night,] tears on her cheeks:"
 - B. it is on account of her priests: "And they shall give to the priest the shoulder, two cheeks, and maw" (Dt. 18:3).
2. A. Another interpretation of the verse, "[She weeps bitterly in the night,] tears on her cheeks:"
 - B. it is on account of her heroic soldiers: "And Samson found a new jawbone of an ass" (Judges 15:15).
3. A. Another interpretation of the verse, "[She weeps bitterly in the night,] tears on her cheeks:"
 - B. it is on account of her judges: "They smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (Mic. 4:14).

Micah refers to the humiliation of the judges.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XLIV.I.

1. A. "The enemy has stretched out his hands over all her precious things:"
3. A. ["yea, she has seen the nations invade her sanctuary, those whom you did forbid to enter your congregation:"]
 - B. ["And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents" (Gen. 13:5):] Four advantages did Lot enjoy owing to Abraham.
 - C. "And Lot went with him" (Gen. 12:4).
 - D. "And Lot...also..." (Gen. 13:5).
 - E. "And he also brought back his brother Lot and his goods" (Gen. 14:16).
 - F. "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow [rebellion]" (Gen. 19:29).
 - G. Now corresponding to these matters Lot's descendants [the Ammonites and Moabites] ought to have paid us back with acts of decency. And it was not enough for them not to pay us back with acts of decency, but they did deeds of evil to us.
 - H. That is in line with these verses of Scripture:
 - I. "And he [Moab] sent messengers to Balaam...Come now, therefore, I pray you, curse this people" (Num. 22:5).
 - J. "And he gathered to him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and he went and smote Israel" (Judges 3:13).

- K. "And it came to pass after this that...the children of Ammon and with them some of the Ammonites came against Jehoshaphat to battle" (2 Chr. 20:1).
- L. And there is the present instance: "The adversary has spread out his hand upon all her treasures" (Lam. 1:10).
- M. Their sin is then recorded in four passages:
- N. "An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the Lord...because they met you not with bread and water in the way" (Deut. 23:4).
- O. "Because they did not meet the children of Israel with bread and water" (Neh. 13:2).
- P. "My people, remember now what Balak, king of Moab, devised" (Mic. 6:5).
- Q. Four prophets moreover came and pronounced doom against them, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah.
- R. Isaiah: "The burden of Moab" (Isa. 15:1).
- S. Jeremiah: "Then I will cause an alarm of war to be heard against Rabbah of the children of Ammon" (Jer. 49:2).
- T. Ezekiel: "I will open the flank of Moab...together with the children of Ammon, to the children of the east...and I will execute judgments upon Moab" (Ezek. 25:9).
- U. Zephaniah: "Surely Moab shall be as Sodom and the children of Amon as Gomorrah" (Zeph. 2:9).

Micah refers to the Moabite treachery against Abraham's heirs.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XLVII.I.

- 15. A. Said R. Simeon b. Yohai, "If you have seen a Persian horse tied up at a grave in the land of Israel, look for the footsteps of the king-messiah.
- B. "What scriptural verse suggests so? 'And this shall be peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land' (Mic. 5:4)."

Micah foresaw the Persian hegemony over the Land of Israel.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH LVI.I.

- 2. A. "for my groans are many and my heart is faint:"
- B. You find that with every thing with which the Israelites sinned, they were smitten, and with that same thing they will be comforted. When they sinned with the head, they were smitten at the head, but they were comforted through the head.
- C. When they sinned with the head: Let us make a head and let us return to Egypt (Num. 14:4).
- D. ...they were smitten at the head: The whole head is sick (Isa. 1:5).
- E. ...but they were comforted through the head: Their king has passed before them and the Lord is at the head of them (Mic. 2:13).

3. A. When they sinned with the eye, they were smitten at the eye, but they were comforted through the eye.
- B. When they sinned with the eye: [The daughters of Zion...walk]...with wanton eyes (Isa. 3:16).
- C. ...they were smitten at the eye: My eye, my eye runs down with water (Lam. 1:16).
- D. ...but they were comforted through the eye: For every eye shall see the Lord returning to Zion (Isa. 52:8).
4. A. When they sinned with the ear, they were smitten at the ear, but they were comforted through the ear.
- B. When they sinned with the ear: They stopped up their ears so as not to hear (Zech. 7:11).
- C. ...they were smitten at the ear: Their ears shall be deaf (Mic. 7:16).
- D. ...but they were comforted through the ear: Your ears shall hear a word saying, [This is the way] (Isa. 30:21).

Micah contributes two facts to the pattern.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH LXXXVII.I.

4. A. Along these same lines: "Do good, O Lord, to the God" (Ps. 125:4).
- B. Might one suppose that God is good to all?
- C. Scripture says, "And to those who are upright in their hearts" (Ps. 125:5).
5. A. Along these same lines: "The Lord is near to all those who call upon him" (Ps. 145:18).
- B. Might one suppose that God is good to all?
- C. Scripture says, "To all who call upon him in truth" (Ps. 145:18).
6. A. Along these same lines: "Who is a God like you, who pardons iniquity and passes by transgression" (Mic. 8:18).
- B. Might one suppose that God is good to all?
- C. Scripture says, "Of the remnant of his heritage" (Mic. 8:18).
7. A. "It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord:"
- B. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "Even though the Holy One, blessed be He, is angry with his servants, the righteous, in this world, in the world to come he goes and has mercy on them.
- C. "That is in line with this verse: 'It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.'"
8. A. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth:"
- B. The yoke of the Torah, the yoke of a wife, the yoke of the government.

Micah holds that God is good to the remnant of his heritage, not to all persons indiscriminately.

THE FATHERS ACCORDING TO RABBI NATHAN

THE FATHERS ACCORDING TO RABBI NATHAN XXXIV:VIII.

1. A. There were ten descents that the Presence of God made into the world.

XXXIV:IX.

1. A. In ten upward stages the Presence of God departed, from one place to the next: from the ark cover to the cherub, from the cherub to the threshold of the temple-building; from the threshold of the temple to the two cherubim; from the two cherubim to the roof of the sanctuary; from the roof of the sanctuary to the wall of the temple court; from the wall of the temple court to the altar; from the altar to the city; from the city to the Temple mount; from the temple mount to the wilderness.
- B. from the ark cover to the cherub: "And he rode upon a cherub and flew" (2 Sam. 22:11).
- C. from the cherub to the threshold of the temple-building: "And the glory of the Lord mounted up from the cherub to the threshold of the house" (Ez. 10:45).
- D. from the threshold of the temple to the two cherubim: "And the glory of the Lord went forth from off the threshold of the house and stood over the cherubim" (Ez. 10:18).
- E. from the two cherubim to the roof of the sanctuary: "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop" (Prov. 21:9).
- F. from the roof of the sanctuary to the wall of the temple court: "And behold the Lord stood beside a wall made by a plumbline" (Amos 7:7).
- G. from the wall of the temple court to the altar: "I saw the Lord standing beside the altar" (Amos 9:1).
- H. from the altar to the city: "Hark, the Lord cries to the city" (Mic. 6:9).
- I. from the city to the Temple mount: "And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood upon the mountain" (Ez. 11:23).
- J. from the temple mount to the wilderness: "It is better to dwell in a desert land" (Prov. 21:19).
- K. And then to on high: "I will go and return to my place" (Hos. 5:15).

Micah contributes to the list of ascents from the Temple to Heaven that God made.

Micah in the Bavli

BAVLI BERAKHOT 5:1 I.

26. A. And R. Eleazar said, "Hannah spoke insolently against the heights.
 B. "For it is said, 'And Hannah prayed against the Lord' (1 Sam. 1:10).
 C. "This indicates that she spoke insolently against the heights [of God]."
 D. And R. Eleazar said, "Elijah spoke insolently against the heights, as it says, 'For you turned their heart backwards' (1 Kgs. 18:37)."
 E. Said R. Samuel bar R. Isaac, "How do we know that the Holy One, blessed be he, went and conceded that Elijah was right?
 F. [32A] As it is written, 'And whom I have wronged' (Mic. 4:6)."

Micah holds that God conceded he was wrong.

BAVLI BERAKHOT 5:1 I.

27. A. Said R. Hama b. R. Hanina, "Were it not for these three verses of Scripture [Simon, p. 195, n. 6: which show that God is responsible for the evil impulse], the feet of (the enemies of) Israel should be moved [for Israel would bear the blame for its sinfulness].
 B. "One: 'Whom I have wronged' (Mic. 4:6).
 C. "The second: 'Behold as the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, house of Israel' (Jer. 18:6).
 D. "The third: 'I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh' (Ez. 36:26).
 E. *R. Papa said, "The matter derives from here: 'And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes' (Ex. 36:27). [So God causes one thing or the other.]"*

God conceived he had wronged Israel.

BAVLI BERAKHOT 9:1

- I.28. A. Said R. Hanina, "He who sees a well in a dream will see peace.
 B. "For it is said, 'And Isaac's servants dug in the valley and there found a well of living water' (Gen. 26:19)."
 C. R. Nathan says, "It means he has found Torah.
 D. "For it is said, 'For whoever finds me finds life' (Prov. 8:35), and here it says, 'A well of living water' (Gen. 26:19)."
 E. Raba said, "It means, literally, life."
- I.29. A. Said R. Hanan, "Three signs of peace [in a dream] are these: seeing a river, a bird, and a pot.
 B. "A river: 'Behold I will extend peace to her like a river' (Is. 66:12).
 C. "A bird: 'As birds hovering, so will the Lord of hosts protect Jerusalem' (Is. 31:5).
 D. "A pot: 'Lord, you will establish peace for us' (Is. 26:12)."
 E. Said R. Hanina, "But that statement applies to seeing in a dream a pot in which there is no meat: 'They chop them in pieces, as that which is in the pot and as flesh within the cauldron' (Mic. 3:3)."

Seeing a pot in a dream is an indicator of peace, but that is a pot without meat, in line with Mic. 3:3.

BAVLI BERAKHOT 9:1 II.

2. J. [58A] Said R. Jeremiah b. Eleazar, "When Babylonia was cursed, its neighbors were cursed, but when Samaria was cursed, its neighbors were blessed.
 K. "When Babylonia was cursed, its neighbors were cursed, as it is written, 'I will also make it a possession for the bittern and pools of water' (Is. 14:23).
 L. "But when Samaria was cursed, its neighbors were blessed, as it is written, 'Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the field, a place for planting vineyards' (Mic. 1:6)."
 M. And R. Hamnuna said, "He who sees a large crowd of Israelites says, 'Blessed is the one who is wise in knowing secrets.'"

Micah says the neighbors turned Samaria into vineyards, so benefiting from its destruction.

BAVLI SHABBAT 20:1 III.

10. A. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
 B. R. Yosé b. Elisha says, "If you see a generation on which great troubles break, go and examine the judges of Israel, for any punishment that comes into the world comes only on account of the judges of Israel, as it is said, 'Hear this, please you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who abhor judgment and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine

for money, yet will they lean upon the Lord? (Mic. 3:9-11). They are wicked, yet they put their trust in him who by speaking brought the world into being. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, will bring upon them three punishments for three transgressions for which they bear responsibility, as it is said, 'Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest' (Mic. 3:12).

- C. "And the Holy One, blessed be He, will bring his Presence to rest on Israel only when the wicked judges and rulers will come to an end in Israel, as it is said, 'And I will turn my hand upon you and thoroughly purge away your dross and will take away all your tin, and I will restore your judges as at the first and your counselors as at the beginning' (Isa. 1:25-26)."

Micah holds that the heads of the Israelites commit iniquity and bring disaster down on Israel. God will dwell in Israel only when the wicked rulers cease to govern.

BAVLI ERUBIN 2:1 I.

16. A. And said R. Jeremiah b. Eleazar, "When Babylonia was cursed, its neighbors were cursed, but when Samaria was cursed, its neighbors were blessed.
- B. "When Babylonia was cursed, its neighbors were cursed, as it is written, 'I will also make it a possession for the bittern and pools of water' (Isa. 14:23).
- C. "But when Samaria was cursed, its neighbors were blessed, as it is written, 'Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the field, [19A] a place for planting vineyards' (Mic. 1:6)."

As above.

BAVLI ERUBIN 6:1-2 I.

21. A. Said R. Barona said Rab, "Whoever sleeps in the cell in which a husband and wife are sleeping — concerning him Scripture states, 'The women of my people you cast out from their pleasant houses' (Mic. 2:9)."
- B. And said R. Joseph, "That is so even if the wife was menstruating."

Micah condemns one who deprives a couple of privacy.

BAVLI PESAHIM 6:1-2 II.

2. A. "Then shall the lambs feed as in their pasture" (Isa. 5:17) –
- B. Said Manassayya bar Jeremiah said Rab, "[The letters that make up the word 'as in their pasture' are to be read:] 'as was spoken about them.'"

- C. *What is the meaning of 'as was spoken about them'?*
- D. Said Abbaye, "'and the waste places of the fat ones shall wanderers eat' (Isa. 5:17)."
- E. *Said to him Raba, "Now if it were written, 'the waste places,' it would have been quite all right as you state matters, but since the language is, 'and the waste places,' this makes a fresh point."*
- F. *Rather, said Raba, "It is in accord with what R. Hananel said Rab said, for said R. Hananel said Rab, 'The righteous are destined to resurrect the dead.' Here it is written, 'and the waste places of the fat ones shall wanderers eat,' and elsewhere: 'then shall Bashan and Gilead feed as in the days of old' (Mic. 7:14). Bashan refers to Elisha, who came from Bashan: 'And Janai and Shaphat in Bashan' (1 Chr. 6:12), and 'Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah' (1 Kgs. 3:11); Gilead refers to Elimah: 'And Elijah the Tishbite, who was one of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab' (1 Kgs. 17:1)." [And Elisha and Elijah resurrected the dead (Freedman).]*

Micah 7:14 predicts that the righteous will resurrect the dead.

BAVLI ERUBIN 10:8 I.

- 4. A. *Said a certain Sadducean to R. Joshua b. Hananiah, "You're a brier: 'The best of them is as a brier' (Mic. 7:4)."*
- B. *He said to him, "Idiot! Look at the end of the same verse of Scripture: 'The upright man is better protection than a tabernacle' (Mic. 7:4). So what's the sense of 'the best of them is as a brier'? Just as briars close a gap, so the best among us protect us all. Another reading of 'the best of them is as a brier': It is because they crush [reading the word for brier as though it had a letter that yielded crush] the wicked in Gehenna: 'Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs brass, and you shall beat in pieces many peoples' (Mic. 4:13)."*

Micah 7:4, 13 mean the best of the Israelites close the gaps and the righteous crush the wicked in Gehenna.

BAVLI PESAHIM I.

- 39. A. *So in any event, it is clear, all parties concur that we have to recite a blessing before doing the action. How do we know it?*
- B. Said R. Judah said Samuel, "In the case of carrying out all religious duties, one says a blessing prior [to doing] them and then goes on to carry them out."
- C. *How do we know that the language "over" means, prior to the performance of the deed?*
- D. *Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, "Said Scripture, 'Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain and caught up with the Cushite' (2 Sam.*

18:23) [Freedman: passed in front of him, and similarly here, where the same root occurs, it means, in front of or prior to].”

- E. *Abbaye said, “From the following: ‘And he himself passed over before them’ (Gen. 33:3); ‘and their kind has passed on before them and the Lord is at the head of them’ (Mic. 2:13).”*

Mic. 2:13 proves that one says a blessing prior to performing the religious duty to which the blessing refers, because “pass on” means “prior to.”

BAVLI PESAHIM 8:1

6. A. “The word of the Lord that came to Hosea son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah, Jotham Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah” (Hos. 1:1):
- B. Four prophets prophesied in the same period, but the greatest of them all was Hosea, for it is said, “The Lord spoke first with Hosea” (Hos. 1:2). But did he speak first of all with Hosea? Is it not the fact that, from Moses to Hosea, there were numerous prophets?
- C. Said R. Yohanan, “‘first,’ means, he was the first of the four prophets who prophesied at that same time, and these are they: Hosea, Isaiah, Amos, and Micah.
- D. “Said the Holy One, blessed be he, to Hosea, ‘You sons of sinned, ‘and he should have said, ‘They are your sons, the sons of those you have favored, the sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So turn your mercies to them.’ Now it wasn’t enough that that’s not what he said, but he said before him instead, ‘Lord of the world, all the world is yours, exchange them for some other nation.’
- E. “Said to him the Holy One, blessed be he, ‘Then what shall I do with this old man? I’ll instruct him, “Go, marry a whore and have children of a whore for yourself,” and then I’ll order him, “Send her away from you.” If he can send her away, so then I’ll send Israel away.’ For it is said, ‘And the Lord said to Hosea, Go take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry’ (Hos. 1:2), and it is written, ‘So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim’ (Hos. 1:3).”

Micah was a contemporary of Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah.

BAVLI PESAHIM 10:7 II.

35. A. *There we have learned in the Mishnah: Where they are accustomed [119B] to repeat [the last nine verses of Ps. 118], let one repeat. [Where it is the custom] to say them only once, let one say them only once. [Where it is the custom] to say a blessing after it, let one say a blessing after it. Everything follows the custom of the locality [M. Sukkah 3:11A-D].*
- B. Said *Abbaye*, “That rule pertains only to saying a blessing after the Hallel Psalms. But as to reciting a blessing before repeating them, it is one’s religious duty to say such a blessing.”

- C. For R. Judah said Samuel said, "In the case of carrying out all religious duties, one says a blessing prior (cWBR) [to doing] them and then goes on to carry them out."
- D. *And how do we know that the word (cWBR) means "prior"?*
- E. Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, "It is written, 'Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain and he overtook (LcBR) the Cushite' (2 Sam. 18:23) [meaning that he got ahead of him, hence attained priority]."
- F. Abbaye said, "It is from the usage of the word at hand in the following verse, 'And he himself went before them' (Gen. 33:3)."
- G. *There are those who say that it derives from the following usage:* "And their king has gone ahead in front of them, and the Lord is at the head of them" (Mic. 2:13).

As above.

BAVLI YOMA 1:1 IV:

- 5. A. Why was the first sanctuary destroyed? Because in it were practiced three vices: idolatry, fornication, and murder.
- B. Idolatry: "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it" (Is. 28:20).
- C. *What is the sense of*, "For the bed is shorter than that one can stretch himself on it"?
- D. Said R. Jonathan, "This bed is too short for two neighbors to stretch out in at one time."
- E. *What is the sense of* "And the covering is narrower"?
- F. Said R. Samuel bar Nahmani, "*When R. Jonathan would reach this verse of Scripture, he would cry. 'He of whom it is written, 'He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap' (Ps. 33:7) — should a molten statue rival him!'*"
- G. Fornication: "Moreover the Lord said, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet' (Is. 3:16).
- H. "because the daughters of Zion are haughty" (Is. 3:16)? They would go along with a tall girl beside a short one. [It means that the walked along with haughty bearing].
- I. "and walk with outstretched necks" (Is. 3:16)? They walked heel by toe mincingly (Freedman)].
- J. "and wanton eyes" (Is. 3:16)? *They filled their eyes with eye paint and gestured to men.*
- K. "walking and mincing"? "They would walk with heel touching toe.
- L. "and making a tinkling with their feet:"
- M. Said R. Isaac [of the household of R. Ammi], "This teaches that they would put myrrh and balsam in their shoes and would walk through the market places of Jerusalem. When they came near

- Jewish boys, they would stomp on the ground and the perfume spurted out on them, so that lust filled them like a snake's venom."
- N. Murder: "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood in great volume until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another" (2 Kgs. 21:16).
- O. [Following the re-arrangement of the text by Jung:] They were wicked, but they placed their faith in the Holy One blessed be he.
- P. For it is written, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money, yet will they lean upon the Lord and say, 'Is not the Lord in the midst of us? No evil shall come upon us'" (Mic. 3:11).
- Q. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be he, brought down upon them three evil decrees as against the three vices that were theirs: "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field and Jerusalem shall become heaps and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest" (Mic. 3:12).
- R. But as to the second sanctuary, in which the people were engaged in Torah and practice of the commandments and acts of loving kindness, on what account was it destroyed? It was because of gratuitous hatred.
- S. That fact serves to teach you: gratuitous hatred weighs in the balance against the three cardinal sins of idolatry, fornication, and murder.

Mic. 3:11-12 indicate that in first Temple times the heads, priests, and prophets were corrupt yet trusted in God and God punished them with three punishments for their three vices. In second Temple times there was only the single vice of gratuitous hatred.

BAVLI SUKKAH 3:11 III.

1. A. Where it is the custom to say a blessing after it, let one say a blessing after it [M. 3:11C]:
- B. Said Abbayye, "That rule pertains only to saying a blessing after the Hallel-psalms. But as to reciting a blessing before repeating them, it is one's religious duty to say such a blessing."
- C. For R. Judah said Samuel said, "In the case of carrying out all religious duties, one says a blessing prior (cWBR) [to doing] them and then goes on to carry them out."
- D. *And how do we know that the word ('WBR) means "prior"?*
- E. *It is in line with that which R. Nahman bar Isaac has said, "It is written, 'Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain and he overtook (L'BR) the Cushite' (2 Sam. 18:23) [meaning that he got ahead of him, hence attained priority]."*
- F. *Said Abbayye, "It is from the usage of the word at hand in the following verse, 'And he himself went before them' (Gen. 33:3)."*
- G. *And if you wish, you may derive the same meaning implicit in the verse from the following usage: "And their king has gone ahead in front of them, and the Lord is at the head of them" (Mic. 2:13).*

As above.

BAVLI SUKKAH 4:1-4 IV:

7. A. *Raba interpreted [Scripture as follows], "What is the sense of what is written, 'How beautiful are your steps in sandals, O prince's daughter' (Song 7:2)?*
- B. "How beautiful are the steps of Israel when they come up for a festal pilgrimage.
- C. "'Prince's daughter' — daughter of Abraham, our father, who was called a prince, as it is said, 'The princes of the peoples are gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham' (Ps. 47:10).
- D. "'The God of Abraham' and not the God of Isaac and Jacob?
- E. "The sense is, 'The God of Abraham, who was first of the converts [to God].'"
8. A. *A Tannaite authority of the house of R. Anan taught, "What is the sense of Scripture's statement, 'The roundings of your thighs' (Song 7:2)?*
- B. "Why are the teachings of Torah compared to the thigh?
- C. "It is to teach you that, just as the thigh is kept hidden, so teachings of Torah are to be kept hidden."
- D. *That is in line with what R. Eleazar said, "What is the sense of the verse of Scripture, 'It has been told you, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: only to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God' (Mic. 6:8)?*
- E. "'To do justly' refers to justice.
- F. "'To love mercy' refers to doing deeds of loving kindness.
- G. "'And to walk humbly with your God' refers to taking out a corpse for burial and bringing the bride in to the marriage-canopy.
- H. "And is it not a matter of argument a fortiori:
- I. "Now if, as to matters which are ordinarily done in public, the Torah has said, 'To walk humbly,' matters which are normally done in private, all the more so [must they be done humbly and in secret, that is, the giving of charity is done secretly]."
- J. Said R. Eleazar, "Greater is the one who carries out an act of charity more than one who offers all the sacrifices.
- K. "For it is said, 'To do charity and justice is more desired by the Lord than sacrifice' (Prov. 21:3)."
- L. And R. Eleazar said, "An act of loving kindness is greater than an act of charity.
- M. "For it is said, 'Sow to yourselves according to your charity, but reap according to your loving kindness' (Hos. 10:12).
- N. "If a man sows seed, it is a matter of doubt whether he will eat a crop or not. But if a man harvests the crop, he most certainly will eat it."
- O. And R. Eleazar said, "An act of charity is rewarded only in accord with the loving kindness that is connected with it.

- P. "For it is said, 'Sow to yourselves according to your charity, but reap according to your loving kindness' (Hos. 10:12)."

Mic. 6:8 refers to justice, deeds of loving kindness, and acts of beneficence carried out in private.

BAVLI SUKKAH 5:2 II:

13. A. Said R. Yohanan, "There is in man a small organ, which makes him feel hungry when he is sated,
 B. "and makes him feel sated when he is hungry,
 C. "as it is said, 'When they were starved, they became full' (Hos. 13:6)."
14. A. Said R. Hana bar Aha, "In the school house they say, There are four things that the Holy One, blessed be he, regrets he created, and these are they:
 B. "'The Exile, the Chaldeans, the Ishmaelites, and the inclination to do evil.'
 C. "'The Exile,' as it is written, 'Now, therefore, what am I doing here says the Lord, since my people is taken away for nothing' (Is. 52:5).
 D. "'The Chaldeans,' as it is written, 'Behold the land of the Chaldeans, this is the people that was not' (Is. 23:13).
 E. "'The Ishmaelites,' as it is written, 'The tents of the robbers prosper, and they who provoke God are secure since God has brought them with his hand' (Job 12:6).
 F. "'The inclination to do evil,' as it is written, '[And I will gather her that is driven away] and her that I have afflicted' (Mic. 4:6)."
15. A. Said R. Yohanan, "Were it not for the following three verses of Scripture, the feet of (those who hate) Israel would have sunk.
 B. "One, as it is written, 'And her that I have afflicted' (Mic. 4:6) [in creating the impulse to do evil].
 C. "The second, as it is written, 'Behold, as the clay in the hand of the potter, so are you [in my hand, O House of Israel]' (Jer. 18:6).
 D. "The third, as it is written, 'And I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh' (Ez. 36:26)."
 E. R. Papa said, "Likewise the following: 'And I will put my spirit into you' (Ez. 36:27)."
16. A. "And the Lord showed me four craftsmen" (Zech. 2:3):
 B. Who were the four craftsmen?
 C. Said R. Hana bar Bizna said R. Simeon the Pious, "The Messiah, son of David, and the Messiah, son of Joseph, and Elijah, and the righteous priest."
 D. R. Sheshet objected, "If so, then what about the verse of Scripture, 'And he said to me, These are the horns which scattered Judah' (Zech. 2:4). These [horns] are the ones who had come to restore [Israel's condition, and not to afflict them]!"

- E. He said to him, "Go on to the end of the verse, 'These then are come to frighten them, to cast down the horns of the nations, which lifted up their horn against the Land of Judah, to scatter it' (Zech. 2:4). [Slotki, p. 251, n. 11: This shows that the 'horns' refer to the enemies of Israel and not to the craftsmen.]"
- F. He said to him, "What do I need to get involved with Hana in matters of [interpretation] of scriptural lore!"
17. A. "And this shall be peace: when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him seven shepherds and eight princes among men" (Mic. 5:4).
- B. Who are the seven shepherds?
- C. David in the middle, Adam, Seth and Methuselah on his right, Abraham, Jacob and Moses, on his left.
- D. And who are the eight princes among men?
- E. Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah, the Messiah, and Elijah.

God regrets having created the impulse to do evil, Mic. 4:6. The seven shepherds and eight princes of Mic. 5:4 are named.

BAVLI ROSH HASHANAH 1:1

- [VIII.3] [J] **R. Eliezer says, "From what verse in Scripture do we know that the patriarchs were born in Tishré? For it is written [1 Kgs. 8:2]: 'And all the men of Israel assembled to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, [which is the seventh month, (that is, Tishré)].' [This means they gathered in] the month in which the mighty ones (*ethanim*) of the world [the patriarchs] were born."**
- [K] *How do you know that the word ethan refers to strong ones? For it is written [Num. 24:21: "And (Balaam) looked on the Kenite and took up his discourse, and said], 'Enduring [*ethan*] is your dwelling place, [and your nest is set in the rock].'" And it says [Mic. 6:2]: "Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord, and you enduring [*ethan*] foundations of the earth."*
- [L] And it says [Song 2:8]: "The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills."

Micah supplies philological data.

BAVLI ROSH HASHANAH 1:2

- [I.20. A] **The House of Hillel say, "But [God] who abounds in mercy leans towards [a judgment of] mercy."**
- [B] *How does [God] act?*
- [C] R. Eleazar says, "He presses down [on the side of the balance-scale representing merit], as it is said [Mic. 7:19]: 'He will again have compassion upon us. He will push down our iniquities.'"

- [D] R. Yosé bar Hanina said, “He lifts [the side of the balance-scale representing wrongdoings], as it is said [Mic. 7:18: ‘Who is a God like you], raising iniquity and passing over transgression.”
- [E] *It is taught on Tannaite authority in the house of R. Ishmael: He passes over the first transgression [of each type], and this is [God’s] attribute [of mercy].*
- [F] Said Raba, “The transgression itself is not erased, *so that, if there [turns out to] be a majority of transgressions, [God] considers it with the others.*”

Micah supplies philological data.

BAVLI ROSH HASHANAH 1:2

- [I.21.A] **Raba said, “[As for] anyone who passes over his right [to exact punishment against another], they pass over all of his transgressions,**
- [B] “as it says [Mic. 7:18: ‘Who is a God like you], pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression.’
- [C] “For whom does [God] pardon iniquity? For the one who pardons transgression [in others].”
- [D] *Rab Huna the son of Rab Joshua was ill. Rab Pappa entered to ask about him. He saw that he was in his final illness. [Pappa therefore] said to those [present], “Prepare a [burial] shroud for him!” In the end [however, Huna] recovered. Rab Pappa was embarrassed to see him.*
- [E] *[Pappa] said to him, “[When you were ill] what did you see?”*
- [F] *[Huna] said to him, “Indeed, it was as [you thought], but the holy one, blessed be he, said to them [that is, to the heavenly court], ‘Since [Huna] did not [needlessly assert his rights [against others], do not assert [yourselves] against him, ‘as it says [Mic. 7:18]: “Pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression.”’ For whom does [God] pardon iniquity? For the one who pardons transgression [in others].”*
- [G] [We continue with an unrelated analysis of the continuation of Mic. 7:18:] “[Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression] for the remnant of his inheritance?”
- [H] Said R. Aha bar Hanina, “[This is like] a fat tail that has a thorn in it. [God passes over transgression] ‘for the remnant of his inheritance,’ but not for all [the people] of his inheritance!”
- [J] [17b] **[The verse means that God passes over the transgression of] whoever makes himself as though he were a remnant [by humbling himself and behaving like the righteous (Rashi)].**

To forgive and not follow up on one’s rights is to imitate God, who pardons iniquity, so Micah.

BAVLI ROSH HASHANAH 4:4A-E

- [I.6. A] Said R. Judah bar Idi said R. Yohanan, “The divine presence [Shekhinah] made ten journeys [in leaving the land and people of Israel prior to the destruction of the first Temple]. [That is, “The Divine Presence left Israel by ten stages” (Simon, p. 147)]. [This we know from] Scripture. And corresponding to these [stages], the Sanhedrin was exiled [successively to ten places of banishment]. [This we know from] tradition.”
- [B] The divine presence [Shekhinah] made ten journeys [in leaving Israel prior to the destruction of the first Temple]. [This we know from] Scripture: [It went] (1) from the ark-cover to the cherub; [delete: and from (one) cherub to the (other) cherub;] (2) and from the cherub to the threshold [of the Holy-of-Holies]; (3) and from the threshold to the [Temple] court; (4) and from the court to the altar; (5) and from the altar to [Temple roof; (6) and from the roof to wall; (7) and from the wall to the city; (8) and from the city to the mountain; (9) and from the mountain to the wilderness; (10) and from the wilderness it ascended and dwelled in its place [in heaven]—as it is said [Hos. 5:15]: “I will return again to my place, [until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face].”
- [C] From the ark-cover to the cherub; [delete: and from (one) cherub to the (other) cherub;] (2) and from the cherub to the threshold [of the Holy-of-Holies]—as it is written [Ex. 25:22, proving that the original location of the divine presence was above the ark-cover]: “There I will meet with you, and [from above the ark-cover, from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark of the testimony], I will speak with you.” And [showing that, later, the divine presence had moved to the cherub] it is written [II Sam. 22:11]: “He rode on a cherub and flew.” And [proving that the divine presence then moved to the threshold] it is written [Ez. 9:3]: “Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherubim on which it rested to the threshold of the house.” (3) And from the threshold to the [Temple] court — as it is written [Ez. 10:4]: “And the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the Lord.” (4) And from the court to the altar—as it is written [Amos 9:1]: “I saw the Lord standing beside the altar.” (5) And from the altar to [Temple] roof— as it is written [Prov. 21:9]: “It is better to live in a corner of the roof [than in a house shared with a contentious woman].” (6) And from the roof to wall—as it is written [Am. 7:1: “He showed me]: behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line.” (7) And from the wall to the city—as it is written [Micah 6:9]: “The voice of the Lord cries to the city.” (8) And from the city to the mountain—as it is written [Ez. 11:23]: “And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.” (9) And from the mountain to the wilderness—as it is written [Prov. 21:19]: “It is better to live in a land of wilderness

[than with a contentious and fretful woman].” (10) And from the wilderness it ascended and dwelled in its place [in heaven]—as it is said [Hos. 5:15]: ‘I will return again to my place, [until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face].’

Mic. 6:9 indicates that in the ten stages by which God left Jerusalem, one was from the wall to the city.

BAVLI TAANIT 1:5

- [I.7] [E] Rather, a person should suffer right along with the community, for so we find concerning our lord, Moses, that he shared in suffering with the community: “But Moses’ hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it” (Ex. 17:12) — Now didn’t Moses have a single cushion or stool on which to sit? But this is what Moses said, “Since the Israelites are in trouble, so I will be with them in trouble.”
- [F] And whoever shares in the troubles of the community gains merit to see the consolation [that is coming] to the community.
- [G] Now perhaps a person might say, “Who will testify against me?” Well, the very stones of the house and the beams of the house of a person are the witnesses against him, as it is said, “For the stone shall cry out of the wall and the beam out of the timber shall answer it” (Hab. 2:11).”
- [H] The household of R. Shila say, “Two ministering angels who keep someone company are the ones who will testify against him: ‘For he will give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways’ (Ps. 91:11).”
- [I] R. Hideqa says, “A man’s own soul testifies against him: ‘Keep the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom’ (Mic. 7:5). Now what is that which lies in a man’s bosom? You have to say, it is the spirit.”
- [J] And there are those that say, “A man’s own limbs will testify against him: ‘Therefore you are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God’ (Is. 43:12).”

One’s intimate thoughts are reported for judgment, so Mic. 7:5.

BAVLI MEGILLAH 3:1 III.

1. A. In a place where it is customary to recite a blessing [in conjunction with the reading], one recites a blessing (M 3:1C1).
- B. Said Abbaye: They did not teach [this] other than [regarding the blessing recited] after it; but before it, there is a requirement to recite a blessing.
- C. As said Rav Judah, said Samuel: One recites a blessing over all commandments, as one is about to perform them.

- D. *How does one know that this [Hebrew word] 'over [here translated "about to"] is an expression of preceding?*
- E. Said Rav Nahman bar Isaac, said Scripture: "and Ahimaaz ran through the valley and passed [i.e., preceded the arrival of] the Kushite" (2 Sam. 18:23).
- F. *Abbaye said from here:* "and he passed before them" (Gen. 33:3).
- G. *And if you wish, say from here:* "and their king passed before them, and God was at their head" (Mic. 2:13).

Micah 2:13 attests that "over" means "before."

BAVLI HAGIGAH 2:2 VI:

- 3. A. Expounded R. Judah b. R. Nahmani, R. Simeon b. Laqish's public representative, "*What is the meaning of the verse, 'Don't trust a friend, and don't put confidence in a buddy' (Mic. 7:5)?*"
- B. "If the impulse to do evil tells you, 'Sin, and the Holy One, blessed be he, will forgive you,' don't you believe it! 'Don't trust a friend...' [since the word for friend and evil use the same consonants, this yields the conclusion:] the meaning of 'wicked' here is only, 'the impulse to do evil,' in line with the verse, 'For the inclination of man's heart is evil' (Gen. 8:21).
- C. "And the meaning of 'buddy' here is only the Holy One, blessed be he, in line with the verse, 'You are the buddy of my youth' (Jer. 3:4).
- D. "Now perhaps you might imagine, 'Who will testify against me?' Well, the very stones of the house and the beams of the house of a person are the witnesses against him, as it is said, 'For the stone shall dry out of the wall and the beam out of the timber shall answer it' (Hab. 2:11)."
- E. And sages say, "A man's own soul testifies against him: 'Keep the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom' (Mic. 7:5). Now what is that which lies in a man's bosom? You have to say, it is the spirit."
- F. R. Zeriqa said, "Two ministering angels who keep someone company are the ones who will testify against him: 'For he will give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways' (Ps. 91:11)."
- G. And sages say, "A man's own limbs will testify against him: 'Therefore you are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God' (Is. 43:12)."

One should not share confidences even with close friends, Mic. 7:5.

BAVLI SOTAH 9:5-6 II.

- 1. A. **They brought it down into a rugged valley (and rugged is meant literally, hard...) [M. 9:5D]:**

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. How do we know that the word “rugged” means “hard”?
- D. As it is said, [46B] “Rugged is your dwelling place and your nest is set in the rock” (Num. 24:21), and it says, “Hear, O mountains, the Lord’s controversy, and you rugged foundations of the earth” (Mic. 6:2).
- E. Others say, “How do we know that the word ‘rugged’ means ‘old’?”
- F. “As it is said, ‘It is an old nation, it is an ancient nation’ (Jer. 5:15).”

Micah contributes a philological fact.

BAVLI KETUBOT 4:4 IX.

- 4. A. *Said Raba, “The following Tannaite authority takes the view that the provision of support for the wife derives from the law of the Torah, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- B. “‘Her food’ (Ex. 21:10) refers to maintaining the wife, in line with the verse of Scripture, ‘Who also eat the meat of my people’ (Mic. 3:3).
- C. “‘Her garment’ (Ex. 21:10) means what it says.
- D. “‘Her conjugal rites’ (Ex. 21:10) refers to sexual relations, as it is said, ‘If you shall afflict my daughters’ (Gen 31:50).”
- E. R. Eleazar said, “‘Her food’ (Ex. 21:10) refers to conjugal rights: ‘None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him to uncover their nakedness [in which the same root occurs]’ (Lev. 18:6).
- F. “‘Her garment’ (Ex. 21:10) means what it says.
- G. “‘Her conjugal rites’ (Ex. 21:10) refers to maintaining the wife, in line with the verse, ‘And he afflicted you and made you hunger’ (Deut. 8:3).”
- H. [48A] R. Eliezer b. Jacob says, “‘Her food...her garment’ (Ex. 21:10) – provide her with clothing according to her age, that is, a man shall not provide a mature wife with the clothing of an adolescent, or the adolescent wife with the clothing of a mature woman.
- I. “‘Her garment...her conjugal rites’ (Ex. 21:10) means: A man shall provide his wives with clothing appropriate to the season, that is, not something new in summer, not something worn out in winter.”

Micah 3:3 defines the meaning of a phrase at Ex. 21:10.

BAVLI QIDDUSHIN 1:9 II.

- 15. A. *Said Levi to Samuel, “Your eminence, provide me with produce that may or may not be orlah fruit and I’ll eat it.”*
- B. *R. Avayya and Rabbah bar R. Hanan supplied one another with produce that may or may not be orlah fruit.*

- C. *Say the sharpest wits in Pumbedita*, “The prohibition of orlah produce does not apply outside of the Land of Israel.”
- D. *R. Judah sent word to R. Yohanan reporting this ruling, to which he sent word in reply*, “Shut away the rule governing produce that may or may not be orlah fruit, suppress the rule as it concerns produce that certainly are orlah fruit, and announce that produce in this classification must be stored away and not eaten. And whoever takes the view, the prohibition of orlah produce does not apply outside of the Land of Israel – may he have no children or grandchildren ‘that shall cast the line by lot in the congregation of the Lord’ (Mic. 2:5).”
- E. *Well, then, in accord with which authority do the sharpest wits in Pumbedita make their decision?*
- F. *They make their ruling in accord with the following, which has been taught on Tannaite authority: R. Eleazar b. R. Yosé says in the name of R. Yosé b. Durmasqah, who made the statement in the name of R. Yosé the Galilean, who made the statement in the name of R. Yohanan b. Nuri, who made the statement in the name of R. Eliezer the Elder: “The prohibition of orlah produce does not apply outside of the Land of Israel [T. Or. 1:8P].”*

Mic. 2:5 is cited.

BAVLI BABA MESIA 7:2 I.

14. E. *Rather, said Raba*, “Both in the Land of Israel and outside of the Land, dipping one olive in salt does not establish liability to separate tithes [since the value is negligible] while for two of them it does. If, however, the worker has stipulated that he is to eat, whether he salts or whether he does not salt, he may eat one by one, but he may not eat two by two. If he did not make a stipulation and did not salt them, he may eat two by two. If he salts them, he may eat them one by one, but not two by two, even if he has gotten permission from the householder, since they became produce that is fully ready for tithing but not yet tithed, since it is salting that imposes the liability.” [Freedman: The first rule then refers to eating two at a time; no stipulation having been made, they may not be dipped in salt. The second version refers to a case in which a stipulation was made; since the mere stipulation establishes a liability for two, it follows that he must eat the fruit singly, and that being so, the Tannaite authority can state in general terms that he may salt them.]
- F. *And how do we know that salting establishes liability only for two?*
- G. *Said R. Mattena*, “Scripture says, ‘For he has gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing floor’ (Mic. 4:12).” [Freedman: There

can be no storage, the final stage of which imposes liability, without gathering, and there cannot be a gathering of less than two.]

Mic. 4:12 defines what is required to impose liability to tithing.

BAVLI BABA BATRA 1:6

- IV.6. A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
 B. This is the correct order of the prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the twelve prophets.
- IV.7. A. *Let's consider:*
 B. *Hosea came first: "God spoke first to Hosea" (Hos. 1:2).*
 C. *But did he speak first of all with Hosea? And were there not any number of prophets from Moses to Hosea?*
 D. *And said R. Yohanan, "He was the first of the group of four prophets who prophesied at that time: Hosea, Isaiah, Amos, and Micah."*
 E. *So should not Hosea come first?*
 F. *Well, since his prophecies are written down along with those of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, and since Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are designated as the conclusion of prophecy, he is reckoned along with them.*
 G. *So why not write out his prophecy on its own and put it first?*
 H. *Well, his scroll is so small that if copied on its own it might get lost.*

Micah was a contemporary of Hosea, Isaiah, and Amos.

BAVLI SANHEDRIN 11:1-2 I.

104. A. Said Rab, "The son of David will come only when the monarchy [of Rome] will spread over Israel for nine months,
 B. "as it is said, 'Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she who travails has brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel' (Mic. 5:2)."

Micah predicts that the Messiah will come when the Romans have ruled the world for nine months, as long as it takes to produce a child.

BAVLI SANHEDRIN 11:1-2 VII.

11. A. "Therefore shall you give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath, the houses of Akhzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel" (Mic. 1:14):
 B. Said R. Hanina bar Pappa, "An echo came forth and said to them, 'He who killed the Philistine and gave you possession of Gath — to his sons you will give parting gifts.'"
 C. "Therefore the houses of Akhzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel" (Mic. 1:14) [Freedman, p. 693, n. 2: "Since you deal treacherously with the house of David, preferring the rule of the kings of Israel, therefore you shall be delivered into the hands of the heathen, whose religion is false."]

Micah condemns those that betray the house of David.

BAVLI SANHEDRIN 11:1-2 XI.

9. A. "He knows the mind of the most high" (Num. 24:16):
 - B. *Now if he did not know the mind of his own beast, how could he have known the mind of the most high?*
 - C. *What is the case of the mind of his beast?*
 - D. *People said to him, "What is the reason that you did not ride on your horse?"*
 - E. *He said to them, "I put it out to graze in fresh pasture."*
 - F. [The ass] said to him, "Am I not your ass" (Num. 22:30). [That shows he rode an ass, not a horse.]
 - G. *"[You are] merely for carrying loads."*
 - H. "Upon whom you rode" (Num. 22:30).
 - I. *"It was a happenstance."*
 - J. "Ever since I was yours, until this day" (Num. 22:30).
 - K. [The ass continued,] "And not only so, but I serve you for sexual relations by night."
 - L. *Here it is written, "Did I ever do so to you" (Num. 22:30) and elsewhere it is written, "Let her serve as his companion." [The same word is used, proving that sexual relations took place as with David and the maiden in his old age.]*
 - M. *Then what is the meaning of the statement, "He knows the mind of the Most High" (Num. 24:16)?*
 - N. He knew how to tell the exact time at which the Holy One, blessed be he, was angry.
 - O. *That is in line with what the prophet said to Israel, "O my people, remember now what Balak, king of Moab, consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteousness of the Lord" (Mic. 6:5).*
 - P. *What is the meaning of the statement, "That you may know the righteousness of the Lord" (Mic. 6:5)?*
 - Q. Said the Holy One, blessed be he, to Israel, "Know that I have done many acts of charity with you, that I did not get angry with you in the time of the wicked Balaam.
 - R. "For if I had become angry during all those days, there would not remain out of (the enemies of) Israel a shred or a remnant."
 - S. *That is in line with what Balaam said to Balak, "How shall I curse one whom God has not cursed? Or shall I rage, when the Lord has not raged?" (Num. 23:8).*
 - T. This teaches that for all those days the Lord had not been angry.
 - U. But: "God is angry every day" (Ps. 7:12).
 - V. And how long does his anger last? It is a moment, for it is said, "For his anger endures but a moment, but his favor is life" (Ps. 30:5).

- W. *If you wish, I shall propose, "Come, my people, enter into your chambers and shut your doors about you, hide yourself as it were for a brief moment, until the indignation be past" (Is. 26:20).*
- X. *When is he angry? It is in the first three hours [of the day], when the comb of the cock is white.*
- Y. *But it is white all the time?*
- Z. *All the other time it has red streaks, but when God is angry, there are no red streaks in it.*

Mic. 6:5 confirms that God was angry with Israel and Balaam knew when to curse Israel on that account. But God did not get angry at the time of Balaam, so Balaam's knowing God's mind did him no good.

BAVLI MAKKOT 3:15-16 II.

- 1. A. **Therefore he gave them abundant Torah and numerous commandments:**
 - B. R. Simelai expounded, "Six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses, three hundred and sixty-five negative ones, corresponding to the number of the days of the solar year, and two hundred forty-eight positive commandments, corresponding to the parts of man's body."
 - C. *Said R. Hamnuna, "What verse of Scripture indicates that fact? 'Moses commanded us Torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob' (Dt. 33:4). The numerical value assigned to the letters of the word Torah is [24A] six hundred and eleven, not counting, 'I am' and 'you shall have no other gods,' since these have come to us from the mouth of the Almighty."*
 - D. [Simelai continues:] "David came and reduced them to eleven: 'A Psalm of David: Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle, and who shall dwell in thy holy mountain? (i) He who walks uprightly and (ii) works righteousness and (iii) speaks truth in his heart and (iv) has no slander on his tongue and (v) does no evil to his fellow and (vi) does not take up a reproach against his neighbor, (vii) in whose eyes a vile person is despised but (viii) honors those who fear the Lord. (ix) He swears to his own hurt and changes not. (x) He does not lend on interest. (xi) He does not take a bribe against the innocent' (Psalm 15)."
 - E. "He who walks uprightly:" this is Abraham: "Walk before me and be wholehearted" (Gen. 17:1).
 - F. "and works righteousness:" this is Abba Hilqiahu.
 - G. "speaks truth in his heart:" for instance R. Safra.
 - H. "has no slander on his tongue:" this is our father, Jacob: "My father might feel me and I shall seem to him as a deceiver" (Gen. 27:12).
 - I. "does no evil to his fellow:" he does not go into competition with his fellow craftsman.
 - J. "does not take up a reproach against his neighbor:" this is someone who befriends his relatives.

- K. "in whose eyes a vile person is despised:" this is Hezekiah, king of Judah, who dragged his father's bones on a rope bed.
- L. "honors those who fear the Lord:" this is Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, who, whenever he would see a disciple of a sage, would rise from his throne and embrace and kiss him and call him, "My father, my father, my lord, my lord, my master, my master."
- M. "He swears to his own hurt and changes not:" this is R. Yohanan.
- N. For said R. Yohanan, "I shall continue fasting until I get home."
- O. "He does not lend on interest:" not even interest from a gentile.
- P. "He does not take a bribe against the innocent:" such as R. Ishmael b. R. Yosé.
- Q. "He who does these things shall never be moved:"
- R. When Rabban Gamaliel *reached this verse of Scripture, he would weep, saying, "If someone did all of these [virtuous deeds], then he will never be moved, but not merely on account of one of them."*
- S. They said to him, "Is it written, 'Who does all of these things;?' What is written is only 'who does these things,' meaning, even one of them."
- T. "For if you do not say this, then there is another verse of Scripture of which we have to take account: 'Do not defile yourselves in all of these things' (Lev. 18:24). Does this mean that one is unclean only if he touches all of these things, but not if he touches only one of them? But does it not mean, only one of them?"
- U. "Here too it means that only one of these things is sufficient."
- V. [Simelai continues:] "Isaiah came and reduced them to six: '(i) He who walks righteously and (ii) speaks uprightly, (iii) he who despises the gain of oppressions, (iv) shakes his hand from holding bribes, (v) stops his ear from hearing of blood (vi) and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil, he shall dwell on high' (Isaiah 33:25-26)."
- W. "He who walks righteously:" this is our father, Abraham: "For I have known him so that he may command his children and his household after him" (Gen. 18:19).
- X. "speaks uprightly:" this is one who does not belittle his fellow in public.
- Y. "he who despises the gain of oppressions:" for example, R. Ishmael b. Elisha.
- Z. "shakes his hand from holding bribes:" for example, R. Ishmael b. R. Yosé.
- AA. "stops his ear from hearing of blood:" *who will not listen to demeaning talk about a disciple of rabbis and remain silent.*
- BB. *For instance, R. Eleazar b. R. Simeon.*
- CC. "and shuts his eyes from looking upon evil:" that is in line with what R. Hiyya bar Abba said.
- DD. For said R. Hiyya bar Abba, "This is someone who does not stare at women as they are standing and washing clothes.
- EE. Concerning such a man it is written, "he shall dwell on high."

- FF. [Simelai continues:] “Micah came and reduced them to three: ‘It has been told you, man, what is good, and what the Lord demands from you, (i) only to do justly and (ii) to love mercy, and (iii) to walk humbly before God’ (Micah 6:8).”
- GG. “only to do justly:” this refers to justice.
- HH. “to love mercy:” this refers to doing acts of loving kindness.
- II. “to walk humbly before God:” this refers to accompanying a corpse to the grave and welcoming the bride.
- JJ. And does this not yield a conclusion a fortiori: if matters that are not ordinarily done in private are referred to by the Torah as “walking humbly before God,” all the more so matters that ordinarily are done in private.
- KK. [Simelai continues:] “Isaiah again came and reduced them to two : ‘Thus says the Lord, (i) Keep justice and (ii) do righteousness’ (Isaiah 56:1).
- LL. “Amos came and reduced them to a single one, as it is said, ‘For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel. Seek Me and live.’”
- MM. *Objected R. Nahman bar Isaac, “Maybe the sense is, ‘seek me’ through the whole of the Torah?”*
- NN. Rather, [Simelai continues:] “Habakkuk further came and based them on one, as it is said, ‘But the righteous shall live by his faith’ (Habakkuk 2:4).”

Micah 6:8 reduced all the divine imperatives to three: justice, acts of loving kindness, deeds that are utterly altruistic.

BAVLI MAKKOT 3:15-16 II:

4. A. Once upon a time Rabban Gamaliel, R. Eleazar b. Azariah, R. Joshua, and R. Aqiba were walking along the way and heard the roar of Rome all the way from Puteoli, at a distance of a hundred and twenty miles. They began to cry, but R. Aqiba brightened up.
- B. They said to him, “Why so cheerful?”
- C. He said to them, “Why so gloomy?”
- D. They said to him, “These Cushites worship sticks and stones and burn incense to idolatry but live in safety and comfort, while as to us, the house that was the footstool for our God is burned [24B] with fire! Why shouldn’t we cry?!”
- E. He said to them, “But that’s precisely why I rejoice. If those who violate his will have it so good, those who do his will all the more so!”
5. A. Once again, they were going up to Jerusalem. When they got to Mount Scopus, they tore their garments. When they reached the Temple mount, they saw a fox emerge from the house of the Holy of Holies. They began to cry, but R. Aqiba brightened up.
- B. They said to him, “Why so cheerful?”
- C. He said to them, “Why so gloomy?”

- D. They said to him, "The place of which it once was said, 'And the non-priest who draws near shall be put to death' (Num. 1:51) has become a fox hole, so shouldn't we weep?"
- E. He said to them, "But that's precisely why I rejoice. It is written, 'And I will take to me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah' (Is. 8:2). And what has Uriah the priest to do with Zechariah? Uriah lived during the first Temple, and Zechariah during the second, but Scripture had linked the prophesy of Zechariah to the prophesy of Uriah. In the case of Uriah: 'Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field' (Mic. 3:12). Zechariah: 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, there shall yet old men and old women sit in the broad places of Jerusalem' (Zech. 8:4). Until the prophesy of Uriah was fulfilled, I was afraid that the prophesy of Zechariah might not be fulfilled. Now that the prophesy of Uriah has come about, we may be certain that the prophesy of Zechariah will be fulfilled word for word."
- F. They said to him, "Aqiba, you have given us comfort, Aqiba, you have given us comfort."

Micah predicted the ruin of Zion.

BAVLI ABODAH ZARAH 1:1

- I.17. A. *And what is the meaning of the statement that he did not know the mind of his animal?*
- B. *When they saw him riding on his ass, they said to him, "How come you're not riding on a horse?"*
- C. *He said to them, "I sent it to the meadow."*
- D. Forthwith: "The ass said, Am I not your ass" (Num. 22:30).
- E. *He said to it, "Just as a beast of burden in general."*
- F. *She said to him, "Upon whom you have ridden" (Num. 22:30).*
- G. *He said to it, "Only from time to time."*
- H. *She said to him, "ever since I was yours (Num. 22:30). And not only so, but I serve you for riding by day and fucking by night."*
- I. For here the word "I was wont" is used, and the same letters bear the meaning of bed-mate: "...and she served him as a bed-mate" (1 Kgs. 1:2).
- I.18. A. *And what is the meaning of the statement that he could have known the mind of the Most High?*
- B. For he knew precisely that moment at which the Holy One, blessed be He, was angry.
- C. *That is in line with what the prophet had said to them, "O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted and what Balaam son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteousness of the Lord" (Mic. 6:5).*
- I.19. A. ["O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted and what Balaam son of Beor answered him from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteousness of the Lord" (Mic. 6:5)]:

- B. Said R. Eleazar, “Said R. Eleazar, “Said the Holy One, blessed be He, to Israel, ‘My people, see how many acts of righteousness I carried out with you, for I did not grow angry with you during all those [perilous] days, for if I had grown angry with you, there would not have remained from Israel a remnant or a survivor.’”
- C. “And that is in line with what Balaam says: ‘How can I curse seeing that God does not curse, and how can I be wrathful, seeing that the Lord has not been wrathful’ (Num. 23:8).”
- I.20.** A. And how long is his wrath? It is for a moment. And how long is a moment? The portion 1/53,848th of an hour is a moment.
- B. And how long is a moment?
- C. Said Amemar — others say, Rabina — “So long as it takes to say the word ‘moment.’”
- D. *And how on the basis of Scripture do we know that his wrath lasts for only a moment?*
- E. *As it is written*, “For his anger is for a moment, his favor is for a lifetime” (Ps. 30:6).
- F. *If you prefer*: “Hide yourself for a brief moment, until the wrath be past” (Isa. 26:20).
- I.21.** A. *When is he angry?*
- B. *Said Abbaye*, “*In the first three hours of the day, when the comb of the cock is white.*”
- C. *Isn’t it white all the rest of the day?*
- D. *At other times it has red streaks, but then it has none.*
- I.22.** A. *R. Joshua b. Levi — a certain Min would bother him about verses of Scripture. Once he took a chicken and put it between the legs of the bed and watched it. He reasoned, “When that hour comes, I shall curse him.”*
- B. *But when that hour came, he was dozing. He said, “What you learn from this experience is that it is not correct to act in such a way: ‘His tender mercies are over all his works’ (Ps. 145:9), ‘Neither is it good for the righteous to inflict punishment’ (Prov. 17:26).”*

As above.

BAVLI HULLIN 3:6-7 II.

- 15** A. Said Hezekiah, “What is the source of the assertion that an unclean egg is prohibited by the Torah?” As it states, “The ostrich” (Lev. 11:16) [*bt hy’nh*, lit.: the daughter of the Ya’anah]. And does the Ya’anah have a daughter? [No.] But what then is this [that the verse refers to]? This is an unclean egg.
- B. *But perhaps this is the name [of a kind of bird]. No, you cannot have concluded that. For it is written, “[Even the jackals give the breast and suckle their young,] but the daughter of my people has become cruel, like the ostriches [y’nym, not bt y’nym] in the wilderness” (Lam. 4:3).*

- C. Is it not the case [that a verse does refer to *bt*, the daughter]? *But lo, it is written*, “For this I will lament and wail; I will go stripped and naked; I will make lamentation like the jackals, and mourning like the ostriches [here: *bnwt*, daughters]” (Micah 1:8). [That does not prove it is the name of a kind of bird. It could mean here]: as the ostrich that mourns over its offspring.
- D. *But lo, it is written*, “[But wild beasts will lie down there, and its houses will be full of howling creatures;] there ostriches [here again: *bnwt*, daughters] will dwell, [and there satyrs will dance]” (Isa. 13:21). [It could mean here]: as the ostrich that dwells with its offspring.
- E. *But lo, it is written*, “The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches [again: *bnwt*]; [for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people]” (Isa. 43:20). [Now this must be the name of a kind of bird.] *For if you wish to conclude that this is an egg, can an egg sing [praise]?*
- F. *But it is written both ways [in that verse, i.e., two scribal alternatives]:* the Ya’anah and the daughter of the Ya’anah. *And this case is different because the scribe left a space between the two words. And since the scribe left a space [65a] between the two words, we may derive from this that there are two separate names [in the verse].*
- G. *But then consider this:* “[In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar,] Chedorlaomer [king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim]” (Gen. 14:1), *where the scribe left a space between the two words, will you say that here too there are two separate names [in the verse]? You could say [there is a difference between the two examples]. Here he left a space between the two words. He did not put them on two separate lines. But there he even put them on two separate lines. [So there is more justification in the former case to say they are separate names.]*

Micah 1:8 contributes the meaning of a word.

BAVLI NIDDAH 9:6-7 VII.

1. A. **What is water from boiled grits? Paste made from grits of peeled beans:**
 - B. *May I say that this sustains the position of R. Simeon b. Laqish, for R. Simeon b. Laqish has said, “There must be tasteless spittle with each of the other substances”?*
 - C. *Perhaps it is enough to make use of the breath of one’s mouth [to make the paste].*
2. A. *Our Mishnah’s [definition of the water from boiled grits] does not concur with the position of R. Judah, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority: R. Judah says, “Boiling liquid of crushed beans before salt is put into it [since salt would weaken the mixture].”*

3. A. *How do we know that the word translated "before" bears the meaning, "prior"?*
- B. Said R. Nahman b. Isaac, "Scripture says, 'Then Ahimaaz ran by way of the plain and overran the Cushite' (2 Sam. 18:23) [and the word translated 'overran' bears the same letters, hence, came prior to]."
- C. *Abbaye said, "Proof comes from here: 'And he himself passed over before them' (Gen. 33:3), and if you prefer, 'And their king is passed on before them, and the Lord is before them' (Mic. 2:13)."*

Micah 2:13 provides philological data.

Joel in the Mishnah, Tractate Abot and the Tosefta

THE MISHNAH

MISHNAH TAAANIT 1:2

- A. **They ask for rain only near [the time of] rain.**
- B. R. Judah says, "He who passes before the ark on the last day of the Festival —
- C. "the latter person [at the Additional Service] makes mention [of rain], the former one [at the Morning Service] does not make mention [of rain].
- D. "On the first day of Passover, the former person makes mention of rain, the latter person does not make mention of rain."
- E. Up to what time do they ask for rain?
- F. R. Judah says, "Until Passover is passed."
- G. R. Meir says, "Until the end of Nisan,
- H. "since it says, 'And he causes to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first [month]' (Joel 2:23)."

Joel refers to the whole month of Nisan, not merely part of it, as the rainy season.

MISHNAH TAAANIT 2:1

- A. The manner of fasting: how [was it done]?
- B. They bring forth the ark into the street of the town and put wood ashes on (1) the ark, (2) the head of the patriarch, and (3) the head of the court.
- C. And each person puts ashes on his head.
- D. The eldest among them makes a speech of admonition: "Our brothers, concerning the people of Nineveh it is not said, 'And God saw their sackcloth and their fasting,' but, 'And God saw their deeds, for they repented from their evil way' (Jonah 3:10)."

- E. "And in prophetic tradition it is said, 'Rend your heart and not your garments' (Joel 2:13)."

Joel is cited to prove that penitence is not only formal but heartfelt.

TRACTATE ABOT

TRACTATE ABOT 2:13

- A. R. Simeon says, "(1) Be meticulous in the recitation of the shema and the Prayer.
 B. "And (2) when you pray, don't treat your praying as a matter of routine.
 C. "But let it be a [plea for] mercy and supplication before the Omnipresent, blessed be he.
 D. "As it is said, 'For he is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and full of mercy, and repents of the evil' (Joel 2:13).
 E. "(3) And never be evil in your own eyes."

Joel supplies a proof-text for the stated proposition.

TOSEFTA

TOSEFTA TAANIT 1:1

- A. "They ask for rain until Nisan is over, since it says, 'And he causes the rain to come down for you, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month' (Joel 2:23)," the words of R. Meir [M. Ta. 1:2G-H].
 B. And sages say, "The former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan."
 C. Said to them R. Meir, "Now we find that a fruit-tree bears fruit for twelve months, while a crop ripens for six months.
 D. "Just as we find stated with regard to a fruit-tree, 'And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, [because the water for them flows from the sanctuary' (Ez. 47:12),
 E. "so does the crop bear fruit for fifteen days.
 F. "Thus you have learned that both the former rain and the latter rain come in Nisan."

Meir's citation of Joel recurs.

Joel in Sifra, the Two Sifrés and Mekhilta Attributed to R. Ishmael

SIFRA

I find nothing relevant.

SIFRÉ TO NUMBERS

Sifré to Numbers XCIV:I .

1. A. “And say to the people, “Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, [and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the hearing of the Lord, saying, ‘Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt’. Therefore the Lord will give you meat and you shall eat. You shall not eat one day or two days or five days or ten days or twenty days, but a whole month, until it comes out at your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before him saying, “Why did we come forth out of Egypt?”” But Moses said, ‘The people among whom I am number six hundred thousand on foot, and you have said, “I will give them meat that they may eat a whole month!” Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them to suffice them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them to suffice them?’ And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Is the Lord’s hand shortened? Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not’]” (Num. 11:18-23):
- B. The language “consecrate yourselves” means only “make yourselves ready for punishment.
- C. This is in line with the statement, “Prepare them like a flock for the butcher and *consecrate* them for the day of slaughter” (Jer. 12:3).
- D. And if further says, “Sanctify a fast, pronounce an assembly” (Joel 2:15).

- E. And Scripture further says, "I will consecrate destroyers against you, each with his weapons" (Jer. 22:7).

Joel uses the indicated language to refer to coming punishment.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCXXXIII:IV

1. A. "...for he will avenge the blood of his servants, [wreak vengeance on his foes, and cleanse the land of his people]:"
- B. Involved are two acts of vengeance,
- C. vengeance for the blood, vengeance for the violence.
- D. And how on the basis of Scripture do we know that Scripture regards all of the acts of violence which the nations of the world have committed against Israel as though they had shed innocent blood?
- E. As it is said, "I will gather all nations and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into judgment with them there for my people...Israel" (Joel 4:2).
- F. "Egypt shall be a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land" (Joel 4:19).
- G. At that time: "Judah shall be inhabited for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. And I will hold as innocent their blood that I have not held as innocent, and the Lord will dwell in Zion" (Joel 4:20-21).

Joel proves the stated position, that Scripture regards all acts of violence of the nations as though they ad shed innocent blood.

SIFRÉ TO DEUTERONOMY CCCXLII:I

1. A. "This is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, bade the Israelites farewell before he died" (Dt. 33:1):
2. A. And from him did all of the prophets learn [how to conduct themselves].
- B. For they would first say to Israel harsh words and then go and say to them words of comfort.
- C. Now, for instance, you have among the prophets none whose words were more harsh than Hosea.
- D. When he began to speak, he said, "Give them, O Lord, whatever you will give. Give them a miscarrying womb" (Hos. 9:14)
- E. But then he spoke to them words of comfort:
- F. "His branches shall spread, his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his fragrance as Lebanon. They who dwell under his shadow shall again make grain grown and shall blossom as the vine" (Hos. 144:7-8).

- G. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely...I will be as the dew to Israel, he shall blossom as the lily" (Hos. 14:5-6).
3. A. So too Joel, to begin with: "Hear this, you old men, and give ear, all you inhabitants of the land. Has this been in your days or in the days of your fathers? Tell your children about it...that which the palmer-worm has left the locust has eaten" (Joel 1:2-4).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "And I will return to you the years that the locust has eaten, the canker worm and the caterpillar and the palmer-worm" (Joel 2:25).
4. A. So too Amos, to begin with: "Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are in the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, crush the needy, say to their husbands, 'Bring that we may feast'" (Amos 4:1).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "Behold the days come...when the plowman will overtake the reaper" (Amos 9:13).
5. A. So too Micah, to begin with: "Who hate the good and love evil, who rob...who also eat the meat of my people and flay their skin off from them" (Mic. 3:2-3).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "Who is a God like you, who pardons the iniquity and ignores the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He does not remain angry forever, because he delights in mercy. He will again have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities and you will cast their sins into the depths of the sea. You will show faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old" (Mic. 7:18-20).
6. A. So too Jeremiah, to begin with: "Then I will take away from the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness" (Jer. 7:34).
- B. At the end, he said these words of comfort: "Then will the virgin rejoice in the dance" (Jer. 31:13).
7. A. Might one think that once the prophets have said words of consolation, they then go and once again say words of rebuke?
- B. Scripture states, "And you shall say, 'Thus shall Babylon sink and not rise again, because of the evil that I will bring upon her...thus far as the words of Jeremiah'" (Jer. 51:64).
- C. That shows that once the prophets have said words of consolation, they do not then go and once again say words of rebuke.

Like the other prophets, Joel begins with rebuke and then speaks words of consolation.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XII:I.

1. A. "And it shall come to pass [when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, as he has promised]:"

- B. Scripture assigns this rite for the time after their entry into the land and thereafter.
2. A. “[when you come to the land which the Lord will give you,] as he has promised:”
- B. Where did he so state the matter?
- C. “And I will bring you into the land” (Ex. 6:8).

3-27. Along these same lines:

- B. “This is that which the Lord has said, ‘Tomorrow is a solemn rest, a holy Sabbath’” (Ex. 16:23).
- C. Where did he state the matter?
- D. “And it shall come to pass on the sixth day that they shall prepare” (Ex. 16:5).
19. A. Along these same lines:
- B. “And I will sell your sons and your daughters...for the Lord has spoken” (Joel 4:8).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. “And he said, ‘Cursed be Canaan’” (Gen. 9:25).
20. A. Along these same lines:
- B. “Since the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall henceforth return no more that way’” (Dt. 17:16).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. “For since you have seen the Egyptians today, you shall see them again no more” (Ex. 14:13).
21. A. Along these same lines:
- B. “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together...they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord” (Is. 65:25).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. ““And I will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land” (Lev. 26:6).
22. A. Along these same lines:
- B. “Of the nations concerning which the Lord said to the people of Israel, ‘You shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you’” (1 Kgs. 11:2).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. “Neither shall you make marriages with them” (Dt. 7:3).
23. A. Along these same lines:
- B. “Then Solomon said, ‘The Lord said he would dwell in thick darkness’” (1 Kgs. 8:12).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. “For I appear in the cloud upon the ark-cover” (Lev. 16:2).
24. A. Along these same lines:
- B. “Then they shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day that I make, even my own treasure” (Mal. 3:17).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. “Then you shall be my own treasure” (Ex. 19:5).
25. A. Along these same lines:

- B. "And it shall come to pass that whoever will call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be those who escape as the Lord has said" (Joel 3:5).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. "And the peoples of the earth shall see" (Dt. 28:10).
26. A. Along these same lines:
- B. "And of them also I shall select priests and Levites, says the Lord" (Is. 66:21).
- C. Where had he stated the matter?
- D. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God" (Dt. 29:28).
27. A. So too here you state matters as follows:
- B. "And it shall come to pass:"
- D. Scripture assigns this rite for the time after their entry into the land and thereafter.

Joel supplies two examples of the general proposition announced at the outset.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XIX:I.

1. A. "When Pharaoh let the people go:"
30. A. "And the Lord went before them by day [in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way]:"
- B. It is not possible to say so, for has it not elsewhere been stated, "Do not I fill up heaven and earth, says the Lord" (Jer. 23:24); "And one called to the other and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the holy earth is full of his glory" (Is. 6:3); "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel...and the earth shone with his glory" (Ez. 43:2)?
- C. How then can Scripture say, "And the Lord went before them by day [in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way]"?
- D. Said Rabbi, "Antoninus sometimes would hold court on the platform past dusk, and his sons would sit with him as darkness fell. When he would leave the platform, he would take a torch and give light for his sons, and the great lords of state come up to him and say to him, 'Let us take the torch and give light before your sons.' But he would reply to them, 'It is not because I have no one else to take it and give light before my sons [that I do so], but in this way I mean to show you how beloved [to me] are my sons, so that you should treat them with honor as well.'
- E. "In this way the Holy One, blessed be he, would show to the nations of the world how beloved are the Israelites to him, for he himself went before them, so that [the nations of the world] would pay them respect.
- F. "Now it is not enough for them that in fact they do not treat them with respect, but they kill them in vile and unusual ways.
- G. "This is in line with the verse: 'I will gather all nations and will bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat' (Joel 4:2).

- H. "Might one suppose that this is on account of idolatry, incest, and murder?"
- I. "Scripture states, 'For my people and my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations' (Joel 4:2); 'Egypt shall be a desolation and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land' (Joel 4:19).
- J. "Then: 'Judah shall be inhabited forever....' When? 'When the Lord dwells in Zion' (Joel 4:19-21)."

Joel speaks of the coming glory of Israel.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XX:I.

- 1. A. "Then the Lord said to Moses, saying, 'Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp:'"
- 7. A. "For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, 'They are entangled in the land:'"
- B. The meaning of the word translated "entangled" is only disoriented:
- C. "How do the beasts groan, the herds of cattle are disoriented" (Joel 1:18).

Joel provides a philological datum.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XXVI:I.

- 1. A. "Then [Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, 'I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea:]:"
- 17. A. R. Yosé the Galilean says, "Lo, Scripture says, 'Out of the mouth of babies and sucklings you have founded strength' (Ps. 8:3).
- B. "...babies" refers to those yet in their mothers' womb: 'or as a hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants that never saw light' (Job 3:16).
- C. "...sucklings" refers to those who feed at their mothers' breasts: 'Gather the children and those that suck the breasts' (Joel 2:16)."
- D. Rabbi says, "...babies" refers to those old enough to be outside: 'To cut off the babies from the street' (Jer. 9:20), 'The babies ask for bread' (Lam. 4:4).
- E. "...sucklings" refers to those who feed at their mothers' breasts: 'Gather the children and those that suck the breasts' (Joel 2:16)."
- F. R. Meir says, "Even embryos in their mothers' wombs opening up their mouths and recited a song before the Omnipresent: 'Bless God in full assemblies, even the Lord, you who are from the fountain of Israel' (Ps. 68:27).
- G. "And it was not Israel alone that recited the song before the Omnipresent.

- H. “Even the ministering angels did so: ‘O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name In all the earth, whose majesty is rehearsed above the heavens’ (Ps. 8:2).”

Joel contributes philological evidence.

MEKHILTA ATTRIBUTED TO R. ISHMAEL XXVII:I.

8. A. “Before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah they were like a garden of the Lord in the land of Egypt” (Gen. 13:10).
B. Afterward: “And they made their father drink wine” (Gen. 19:33).
C. Where did they get wine in the cave?
D. The Holy One, blessed be he, made wine available for them: “And it shall come to pass on that day that the mountains shall drip sweet wine” (Joel 4:18).
E. If that is how he provides for those who anger him, all the more so for those who carry out his will.”

Joel provides a fact to answer the indicated question.

Joel in the Yerushalmi

YERUSHALMI PEAH [IV.A]

- [I] [Some workers] brought two radishes to [Rabbi] between Rosh Hashanah and the Great Fast [of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement]. It was the end of the Sabbatical year, [and so it was unclear if these plants had taken root before Rosh Hashanah, in which case they would be forbidden for use by Israelites]. [The radishes were so large that] they had to be carried by a camel. [Given their huge size, Rabbi] said to them, “Aren’t [the radishes] forbidden? Aren’t they aftergrowths [that took root during the Sabbatical year]?” [The workers] said to [Rabbi], “The produce had taken root after Rosh Hashanah,” [and had reached this large size merely due to the fertility of the Land of Israel]. At that very moment, Rabbi permitted [Israelites] to purchase vegetables immediately after the onset of the eighth year. [Even though this produce might appear just after the Sabbatical year, Rabbi reasoned that the fertile Land of Israel would produce vegetables of normal size almost immediately.] [Right away], they asked him, “But what do you make [of this verse], stated [in Scripture]? ‘The seeds have shriveled under their clods. [The granaries are desolate, barns are in ruins, for the new grain has failed]’ (Joel 1:17).” He replied to them, “Instead of collecting honey [as in former times], today we collect rotted vegetables.”

Joel refers to the poor crops of the Land.

YERUSHALMI BERAKHOT 9:1

- [I:8][QQ]R. Yudan [gave another discourse in the form of a parable] in his own name: [5] A man has a human patron. When this man faces trouble, he does not suddenly burst in [on his patron to ask for help]. Rather he comes and stands at his patron’s gate and calls to his patron’s servant or some member of his household. And he

[the servant] in turn informs the patron, "So and so is standing at the gate of your courtyard. Do you wish me to let him enter, or shall I let him stand outside?"

[RR] But the Holy One, blessed by He, is not like that. [God says,] "If a person faces trouble, he should not cry out to the angels Michael or Gabriel. But he should cry out to me and I will immediately answer him."

[SS] In this regard [it says], "All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered" [Joel 2:32 RSV].

Joel encourages calling on God's name forthwith, not on the name of the guardian angels.

YERUSHALMI BERAKHOT 9:1 [I:10]

[E] Said R. Tanhuma: Once a boat load of gentiles was sailing the Mediterranean. There was one Jewish child on the boat. A great storm came upon them in the sea. Each person took his idol in his hand and cried out. But it did not help them.

[F] Once they saw that their cries were of no avail, they turned to the Jewish child and said, "Child, rise up and call out to your God. For we have heard that he answers you when you cry out to him, and that he is heroic."

[G] The child immediately rose up and cried out with all his heart. The Holy One, blessed be He accepted his prayer and quieted the seas.

[H] When the ship reached dry land [at the port] everyone disembarked to purchase his needed staples. *They said to the child, "Don't you wish to buy anything?"*

[I] *He said to them, "What do you want of me? I am just a poor traveler."*

[J] *They said to him, "You are just a poor traveler? They are the poor travelers. Some of them are here, and their idols are in Babylonia. Some of them are here, and their idols are in Rome. Some of them are here and their idols are with them, but they do them no good. But wherever you go, your God is with you."*

[K] In this regard [the verse says], "All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered" [Joel 2:32 RSV].

Joel now registers that God is everywhere ready to save.

YERUSHALMI SHEQALIM 6: 2 I.1

[JJ] It has been taught: Said R. Judah, "Now in this world grain ripens in six months, and a fruit tree produces in twelve months. But in the world to come grain will ripen in one month."

[KK] What is the Scripture for this proposition? "They will bear fresh fruit every month" (Ezek 47:12).

[LL] Said R. Yose, "Now in this world grain ripens in six months, and a fruit tree produces fruit in twelve months. But in time to come

grain will ripen in fifteen days, and a fruit tree will produce fruit in one month.

[M] “For so we find in the time of Joel that the grain ripened in fifteen days and the omer-offering was made out of that grain.

[N] “What is the scriptural basis for this view?

[O] “Be glad, O sons of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord, your God; for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the latter rain, as before” (Joel 2: 23).

Joel celebrates the productivity of the Land.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 1:2

[I:2][D] R. Yosé, says, “Since in this world grain comes to ripen in six months, and the fruit trees produce fruit in twelve months, therefore in the world to come, grain will come to ripen in fifteen days, and a fruit tree will produce fruit in one month.

[E] “For so we find that the grain in the times of Joel came to ripen in fifteen days, and the first sheaf [omer] was offered from it.”

[F] What is the scriptural proof for this statement?

[G] “Be glad, O sons of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord, your God; for He has given the early rain in justice, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the latter rain, in the first [month].” (Joel 2:3). [The omer is offered on the sixteenth of the first month or Nisan.]

[H] *How does R. Yosé interpret the verse cited by R. Judah, “They will bear fresh fruit by the months” (Ezek. 47:12)?*

[I] In each and every month [the tree] will bear fruit.

As above.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 1:6

[A] **Once these [fasts] have gone by and they have not been answered, the court decrees a sequence of three more fasts for the community.**

[B] **They eat and drink [only] while it is still day [on the day prior to the fast].**

[C] **And they are forbidden [on the fast] to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations.**

[D] **And they lock the bathhouses.**

[I:1. A] R. Zeirah in the name of R. Jeremiah: “He who performs an act of labor on a community fast is as if he did an act of labor on the Day of Atonement.

[B] “What is the scriptural basis for this view?

[C] “Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. [Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the Lord your God; and cry to the Lord]” (Joel 1:14).

- [D] *And lo, it has been taught:* [As to a fast day] at night it is permitted, and in the day time it is forbidden [to labor]? [On the Day of Atonement, both night and day are times in which labor is not permitted.]
- [E] Said R. Zeirah, "Abba bar Jeremiah interpreted the matter as follows: 'Gather the people (Joel 2:16).' The prohibition applies from the time of the assembly of the people, [and so it is in the daytime that work is prohibited]."

Work is prohibited on fast days, so Joel.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 2:1

- [III:5. A] Said R. Eleazar, "Three acts nullify the harsh decree, and these are they: prayer, charity, and repentance."
- [B] And all three of them are to be derived from a single verse of Scripture:
- [C] "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, [pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land]" (2 Chron. 7:14).
- [D] "Pray"— this refers to prayer.
- [E] "And seek my face"— this refers to charity,
- [F] as you say, "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with beholding thy form" (Ps. 17:15).
- [G] "And turn from their wicked ways"— this refers to repentance.
- [H] Now if they do these things, what is written concerning them there?
- [I] "Then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."
- [J] R. Haggai preached this lesson of R. Eleazar every time there was a fast.
- [K] *Said R. Eleazar, "What happens at the end of the year is in accord with what has been done during the year.*
- [L] *"Take some dirt from the summer for the winter.*
- [M] *"When the north wind blows, look to the bricks of your house."*
- [N] "Any year in which they do not sound the *shofar* [for fasting] at the beginning will end up having the *shofar* sounded at the conclusion.
- [O] "Whoever does not take care for the produce of her fellow in the end will lose her own produce."
- [P] *Said R. Aha, "And most wine turns to vinegar [if it is not watched]."*
- [Q] *There were elders in Sepphoris, who, when the first rain came, could smell the dirt and tell the people how much water would come that*
- [S] Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "The repentance that the men of Nineveh carried out was deceitful."

- [T] What did they do?
- [U] R. Hunah in the name of R. Simeon b. Halaputa: "They set up calves inside, with the mothers outside, lambs inside, with the mothers outside, *and these bellowed from here, and those bellowed from there.*"
- [V] "They said, 'If we are not shown mercy, we shall not have mercy on them.'
- [W] "This is in line with that which is written: 'How the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed because there is no pasture for them; even the flocks of sheep are dismayed'" (Joel 1:18).
- [X] *Said R. Aha, "In Arabia that is how they act [toward their beasts, treating them cruelly]."*

Joel refers to the suffering of the beasts in times of drought.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 2:1

- [III:7. A] It is written, "Rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, [slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil]" (Joel 2:13).
- [B] Said R. Joshua b. Levi, "If you tear your hearts in repentance, you will not tear your garments as a sign of mourning either for your sons or for your daughters."
- [C] But: "[Return] to the Lord your God."
- [D] Why? "For he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger ['long in acts of patience'] and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil" (Joel 2:13).
- [E] R. Samuel bar Nahman in the name of R. Jonathan: "'Long acts of patience' [in the singular] is not written here, but rather, 'Long in acts of patience,' [in the plural], thus indicating that he is patient with the righteous, and he also is patient with the wicked."
- [F] R. Aha, R. Tanhum b. R. Hiyya in the name of R. Yohanan: "'Long in an act of patience' is not written here, but rather, 'Long in acts of patience.' [It means] he is patient before he begins to collect [imposing punishment on the sinner], and even when he has begun to collect [the penalty for doing evil], he is patient when he collects."
- [G] Said R. Haninah, "*He who has said that the All-Merciful is indulgent— may his innards be loosened. Rather, He is long in acts of patience but [if one does not repent] He collects His due.*"
- [H] Said R. Levi, "What is the meaning of, 'slow to anger'? It means, 'Distant from wrath.'
- [I] "It may be compared to a king who had two tough legions. The king said, 'If they dwell here with me in the metropolis, if the city-folk anger me now, they will put them down [with force]. But lo, I shall send them a long way away, so that if the city-folk anger me, while I am yet summoning the legions, the people will appease me, and I shall accept their plea.'

- [J] “Likewise the Holy One, blessed be He, said, ‘Anger and wrath are angels of destruction. Lo, I shall send them a long way away, so that if Israel angers me, while I am summoning and bringing them to me, Israel will repent, and I shall accept their repentance.’”
- [K] That is in line with the following verse of Scripture:
- [L] “They come from a distant land, from the end of the heavens, the Lord and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole earth” (Is. 13:5).
- [M] Said R. Isaac, “And not only so, but He locks [the gate] before them.”
- [N] That is in line with what is written: “The Lord has opened his armory and brought out the weapons of his wrath” (Jer. 50:25).
- [O] “While he is yet opening [the armory], while he is yet occupied, his mercy draws near.”

Joel portrays God as merciful and slow to anger.

YERUSHALMI TAANIT 2:1

- [III:2. A] It is written, “Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber” (Joel 2:16).
- [B] “The bridegroom leave his room”— this refers to the ark.
- [C] “And the bride her chamber”— this refers to the Torah.
- [D] Another interpretation: “The bridegroom leave his room”— this refers to the patriarch.
- [E] “And the bride her chamber”— this refers to the head of the court.
- [F] *R. Helbo said to R. Yudan the Patriarch, “Come out with us, and what is painful to you will pass. [If the patriarch comes out with us to a public fast, the prayers will be answered. Otherwise we cannot properly carry out the rite.]”*
- [G] *Said R. Yosé, “That is to say that these fasts that we carry out — they are not really fasts. Why not? Because the patriarch is not with us [so we cannot carry out the rite in the proper way].”*

The ark and the Torah are removed from their storage and brought into the public square on a fast day, and that is the sense of Joel’s statement on the bridegroom and bride.

Joel in Genesis Rabbah, Leviticus Rabbah and Pesiqta deRab Kahana

GENESIS RABBAH

GENESIS RABBAH XXXI:VI.

1. A. Another matter: "For the earth is filled with violence" (Gen. 6:13):
- B. Said R. Levi, "The word for violence refers to idolatry, fornication, and murder.
- C. "Idolatry: 'For the earth is filled with violence' (Gen. 6:13).
- D. "Fornication: 'The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylonia' (Jer. 51:35). [And the word for 'flesh' refers to incest, as at Lev. 18:6].
- E.. "Murder: 'For the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood' (Joel 4:19).
- F. "Further, the word for 'violence' stands for its ordinary meaning as well."

Joel supplies a proof text for the proposition that the word for violence speaks of murder.

GENESIS RABBAH XLII:III.

1. A. R. Tanhuma and R. Hiyya the Elder state the following matter, as does R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Eleazar [the Modite], "The following exegetical principle we brought up from the exile.
- B. "Any passage in which the words, 'And it came to pass' appear is a passage that relates misfortune."
6. A. R. Simeon b. Abba in the name of R. Yohanan: "Any context in which the words, 'And it came to pass...', appear serves to signify either misfortune or good fortune. If it is a case of misfortune, it is misfortune without parallel. If it is a case of good fortune, it is good fortune without parallel."

- T. They said to him, "We have given our objections, now you give your proofs about good fortune."
- U. He said to them, "'And it shall come to pass in that day that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem' (Zech. 14:8). 'And it shall come to pass in that day that a great horn shall be blown' (Is. 27:13). 'And it shall come to pass in that day that a man shall rear a youngling' (Is. 7:21). 'And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will set his hand again a second time to recover the remnant of his people' (Is. 11:11). 'And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine' (Joel 4:18). [All of these represent good fortune without parallel.]"
- V. They said to him, "'And it shall come to pass on the day on which Jerusalem is taken...' (Jer. 38:28)."
- W. He said to them, "This too does not signify misfortune but good fortune [without parallel], for on that day the Israelites received a full pardon for all their sins.
- X. "That is in line with what R. Samuel b. Nahman said, 'The Israelites received a full pardon for all their sins on the day on which the Temple was destroyed. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture, "The punishment of your iniquity is completed, daughter of Zion, and he will no more take you away into exile" (Lam. 4:22)."

Joel supplies a proof text for the stated proposition.

GENESIS RABBAH LI:VIII.

4. A. "And on the next day, the first-born said to the younger, ['Behold, I lay last night with my father;] let us make him drink wine [tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve offspring through our father']" (Gen., 19:34):
- B. Where did they get wine in the cave?
- C. Because the people of the area had a large supply of wine, they kept it in caves.
- D. Said R. Yudan bar Samuel, "It was a foretaste of the world to come, in line with this verse: 'And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine' (Joel 4:18)."

Joel presents a vision of the world to come.

GENESIS RABBAH LXX:VI.

1. A. "...so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God" (Gen. 28:20-22):
- B. R. Joshua of Sikhnin in the name of R. Levi: "The Holy One, blessed be he, took the language used by the patriarchs and turned it into a key to the redemption of their descendants.
- C. "Said the Holy One, blessed be he, to Jacob, 'You have said, "Then the Lord shall be my God." By your life, all of the acts of goodness,

blessing, and consolation which I am going to carry out for your descendants I shall bestow only by using the same language:

- D. ““Then in that day, living waters shall go out from Jerusalem” (Zech. 14:8). “Then in that day a man shall rear a young cow and two sheep” (Is. 7:21). “Then, in that day, the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people” (Is. 11:11). “Then, in that day, the mountains shall drop down sweet wine” (Joel 4:18). “Then, in that day, a great horn shall be blown and they shall come who were lost in the land of Assyria” (Is. 27:13).”

Joel uses “then,” “in that day” language to announce an act of goodness from God.

GENESIS RABBAH LXXV:VIII.

1. F. Fortunate are the righteous, who are blessed both on earth and in heaven. That is the way things are: “So that he who is blessed in earth shall be blessed by the God of truth” (Is. 65:16).
- G. This tells you that in response to all of the blessings which Isaac bestowed upon Jacob, the Holy One, blessed be he, responded and bestowed a blessing above.
- H. Isaac blessed him as follows: “So God give you of the dew of heaven” (Gen. 27:28).
- I. Correspondingly, the Holy One, blessed be he, blessed him with dew and said, “And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples as dew” (Mic. 5:6).
- J. Isaac blessed him as follows: “And of the fatness of the earth” (Gen. 27:28).
- K. Correspondingly, the Holy One, blessed be he, blessed him with grain and said, “And he will give the rain for your seed, wherewith you sow the ground, and the bread of the increase of the ground, and it shall be fat and plentiful” (Is. 30:23).
- L. Isaac blessed him as follows: “And plenty of grain and wine” (Gen. 27:28).
- M. Correspondingly, the Holy One, blessed be, he said, “And the Lord answered and said to his people, ‘Behold, I will send you grain and wine and oil’” (Joel 2:19).

Joel supplied language for God’s blessing of Israel, corresponding to Isaac’s blessing,

GENESIS RABBAH LXXXII:VIII.

1. A. “And when she was in her hard labor, [the midwife said to her, ‘Do not fear, for now you will have another son.’ And as her soul was departing, for she died, she called his name, Ben-Oni, but his father called his name Benjamin. So Rachel died and she was buried

on the way to Ephrath, that is, Bethlehem, and Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave; it is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder]" (Gen. 35:17-21):

- B. Two disciples of R. Joshua "changed their cloaks" in the time of the persecution [disguising themselves and not showing their identity].
- C. An apostate, now serving as a Roman officer, said to them, "If you are the children of the Torah, give your lives for it, and if you are not the children of the Torah, why are you going to give your lives for it?"
- D. They said to him, "We are indeed children of the Torah and prepared to give our lives for it."
- E. He said to them, I shall ask you three questions. If you give answers, well and good, and if not, lo, I shall destroy you."
- F. He said to them, "One verse of Scripture says, 'The Lord *stands up* to plead and *stands* to judge the people' (Is. 3:13), and another verse of Scripture says, 'For there *I will sit* to judge all the nations' (Joel 4:12)."
- G. They said to him, "When the Holy One, blessed be he, judges Israel, he judges them standing, cutting the court procedure short and easing the decisions. But when he judges the nations, he judges them sitting, drawing out the court procedure, and giving harsh decisions for every detail."
- H. He said to them, "This is not how your master, Joshua, explained matters. Rather both verses of Scripture are alike in speaking of the nations. For the Holy One, blessed be he, judges the nations seated, paying attention to each detail of the trial and drawing it out, and afterward he stands up and serves as the adversary against them."

Joel's word choice contradicts Isaiah's, but the disciples are able to resolve the conflict.

LEVITICUS RABBAH

LEVITICUS RABBAH III:VI

2. A. "And he shall take from it a handful of fine flour and oil, [with all of its frankincense, and the priest shall burn this as its memorial portion upon the altar, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the Lord. And what is left of the cereal offering shall be for Aaron and his sons]" (Lev. 2:2-3).
- B. ". . . of the fine flour" — and not the whole of the fine flour.
- C. ". . . of the oil" — and not the whole of the oil.
- D. Lo, [there was the case of] one brought his cereal offering from Gaul or Spain or those distant parts, and saw the priest taking [and

offering only] a handful and eating the remainder. He said, "Woe is me for all the trouble I went to, [merely] so that this one should eat."

- E. People made him feel better, telling him, "Now if this [priest], who has gone to the trouble of merely taking two steps, between the hall and the altar [Joel 2:17] gains merit to allow him to eat [the meal offering remnant], you, who went to all this trouble, how much the more so [should you gain merit from this offering of yours]!"

The response alludes to Joel.

LEVITICUS RABBAH V:III

1. A. Another interpretation of "When he is quiet, who can condemn? When he hides his face, who can set him right?" (Job 34:29).
12. A. "Whether it be a nation [or a man]" (Job 34:29) — this refers to Sennacherib, as it is said, "For a nation has come up upon my land" (Joel 1:6).
- B. "... or a man" (Job 34:29) — this refers to Israel: "For you, my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are a man" (Ez. 34:31).

Joel provides philological information.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XII:V

6. A. For in this world, wine is a stumbling block to the world. But in the time to come, the Holy One, blessed be he, will turn it into a source of joy.
- B. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture: "And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord, and water the valley of Shittim" (Joel 3:18).

Joel promises that wine will be the mark of a blessing in the age to come.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XII:VI

1. A. "He who slaughters an ox is like him who kills a man; [he who sacrifices a lamb, like him who breaks a dog's neck; he who presents a cereal offering like him who offers swine's blood; he who makes a memorial offering of frankincense, like him who blesses an idol]" (Is. 66:3).
- B. R. Yohanan and R. Simeon b. Laqish:
- C. R. Yohanan said, "Whoever steals something worth even a penny from his fellow is regarded as if he killed him.
- D. "And numerous verses of Scripture [serve to prove] this [proposition]:

- E. “He who slaughters an ox is like him who kills a man’ [Is. 66:3]
- F. “He learned to seize prey, he ate a man’ [Ez. 19:6].
- G. “So is the way of everyone who is greedy, it is as if he took the life of the owner’ [Prov. 1:19].
- H. “For the robbery of the children of Judah, as they shed innocent blood’ [Joel 4:19].
- I. “And they said to the king, “The man that consumed us [and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel, let seven of his sons be given to us, so that we may hang them up before the Lord at Gibeon on the mountain of the Lord]” [2 Sam. 21:5-6].
- J. “Did [Saul] actually kill [the Gibeonites] or conspire against them? But because he wiped out Nob, the city of the priests, which had provided food for them, Scripture regarded it as if he had killed them.”
- K. R. Simeon b. Laqish transposed the texts: “He who kills a man is like him who slaughters an ox; he who breaks a dog’s neck is like him who sacrifices a lamb; he who offers swine’s blood is like him who presents a cereal offering; he who blesses an idol is like him who makes a memorial offering of frankincense. These have chosen their own ways, [and the soul delights in their abominations]” (Is. 66:3).

Joel proves that stealing from someone is tantamount to shedding blood.

LEVITICUS RABBAH XXIV:IV

- 1. A. Another interpretation: “May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion” (Ps. 20:2).
- B. Said R. Levi, “Whatever goodness, blessing, and consolation that the Holy One, blessed be he, is going to give to Israel will come only from Zion.
- C. “Salvation is from Zion: ‘Oh that the salvation of Israel would come from Zion’ [Ps. 14:7].
- D. “Strength is from Zion: ‘The staff of your power the Lord will send from Zion’ [Ps. 110:2].
- E. “A blessing is from Zion: ‘Blessed is the Lord from Zion’ [Ps. 135:21].
- F. “The ram’s horn [of redemption] is from Zion: ‘Sound the ram’s horn in Zion’ [Joel 2:1].
- G. “Dew, blessing, and life are from Zion: ‘Like the dew of Hermon, that descends on the mountains of Zion’ [Ps. 133:3].
- H. “Torah is from Zion, as it is said, ‘For from Zion will Torah go forth’ [Is. 2:3].
- I. “Help and support are from Zion: ‘May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Zion’ [Ps. 20:2].

Zion is the source of the ram’s horn, so Joel 2:1.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XV:III

1. A. Bar Qappara opened discourse by citing the following verse: "In that day the Lord God of hosts called to weeping and mourning, to baldness and girding with sackcloth; [and behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating meat and drinking wine. 'Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.' The Lord of hosts has revealed himself in my ears: 'Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die,' says the Lord of hosts]" (Is. 15:12-14)
- B. "Said the Holy One, blessed be He, to the ministering angels, 'When a mortal king mourns, what does he do?'"
- C. "They said to him, 'He puts sack over his door.'"
- D. "He said to them, 'I too shall do that. 'I will clothe the heavens with blackness [and make sackcloth for their covering]' (Is. 50:3).'"
- E. "He further asked them, 'When a mortal king mourns, what does he do?'"
- F. "They said to him, 'He extinguishes the torches.'"
- G. "He said to them, 'I too shall do that. 'The sun and moon will become black [and the stars stop shining]'" (Joel 4:15)–

Joel prophesies that the torches will be extinguished in God's mourning for Israel.

PESIQTA DERAB KAHANA XVI:X

1. A. "[Comfort, comfort my people,] will your God say. [Speak tenderly to the heart of Jerusalem and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins]" (Is. 40:1-2):
- B. R. Hanina bar Pappa and R. Simeon:
- C. [Focusing on the future tense of the phrase, "Comfort, comfort my people, will your God say",] R. Hanina bar Papa said, "The Israelites said to Isaiah, 'Our lord, Isaiah, is it possible that you have come to comfort only that generation in the days of which the house of the sanctuary was destroyed?'"
- D. "He said to them, 'It is to all generations that I have come to bring comfort. What is said is not, Your God has said, but rather, Your God will say.'"
- E. Said R. Simon, "The Israelites said to Isaiah, "Our lord, Isaiah, is it possible that all these things that you say you have made up on your own?'"
- F. "He said to them, 'It is to all generations that I have come to bring comfort. What is said is not, Your God has said, but rather, Your God will say.'"

- G. Said R. Hinenah son of R. Abba, "In eight passages [Is. 1:11, 18, 33:10, 40:1, 25, 41:21 (twice), 66:9], it is written, 'Your God will say,' matching the eight prophets who prophesied after the house of the sanctuary [was first destroyed] and these are they: Joel, Amos, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah."

Joel is one of the eight post-exilic prophets.

PESIQTÁ DE RAB KAHANA XVI:VIII

1. A. How will you comfort me through vanity, and as for your answers, there remains only faithlessness (Job 21:34):
 - B. Said R. Abba bar Kahana [on the meaning of the word translated as faithlessness], "Your words [of comfort and consolation, that Job's friends had provided him] require clarification."
 - C. Rabbis say, "Your words contain contradictions." [We shall now have a long series of examples of how God's messages to the prophets contradict themselves.]
2. A. The Holy One said to the prophets, "Go and comfort Jerusalem."
 - B. Hosea went to give comfort. He said to her [the city], "The Holy One, blessed be He, has sent me to you to bring you comfort."
 - C. She said to him, "What do you have in hand."
 - D. He said to her, "I will be as the dew to Israel" (Hos. 14:6).
 - E. She said to him, "Yesterday, you said to me, 'Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit' (Hos. 9:16), and now you say this to me? Which shall we believe, the first statement or the second?"
3. A. Joel went to give comfort. He said to the city, "The Holy One, blessed be He, has sent me to you to bring you comfort."
 - C. She said to him, "What do you have in hand."
 - D. He said to her, "It shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine and the hills shall flow with milk" (Joel 4:18).
 - E. She said to him, "Yesterday, you said to me, 'Awake you drunkards and weep, wail, you who drink wine, because of the sweet wine, for it is cut off from your mouth' (Joel 1:5), and now you say this to me? Which shall we believe, the first statement or the second?"
12. A. The prophets went to the Holy One, blessed be He, saying to him, "Lord of the ages, Jerusalem has not accepted the comfort [that we brought her]."
 - B. Said to them the Holy One, blessed be He, "You and I together shall go and comfort her."
 - C. Thus we say: "Comfort, comfort my people" but read the letters for my people as "with me."
 - D. Let the creatures of the upper world comfort her, let the creatures of the lower world comfort her.
 - E. Let the living comfort her, let the dead comfort her.
 - F. Comfort her in this world, comfort her in the world to come.

- G. Comfort her on account of the Ten Tribes, comfort her on account of the tribe of Judah and Benjamin.
- H. [Thus we must understand the statement, "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to the heart of Jerusalem and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins" (Is. 40:1-2) in this way:] Comfort, comfort my people but read the letters for my people as with me.

Joel is one of the prophets unable to comfort Jerusalem until God intervened.

PESIQTÀ DE RAB KAHANA XXIV:III

1. A. "The Lord thunders before his host, [his is a mighty army, countless are those who do his bidding. Great is the day of the Lord and terrible, who can endure it? And yet, the Lord says, even now turn back to men with your whole heart, fast and weep and beat your breasts, rend your hearts and not your garments, turn back to the Lord your God; for he is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and ever constant, always ready to repent of the threatened evil. It may be he will turn back and repent and leave a blessing behind him]" (Joel 2;11-14):
- B. "The Lord thunders before his host": on the New Year.
- C. "...his is a mighty army": this refers to Israel.
- D. ...countless are those who do his bidding: for he makes abundant the strength of the righteous who have done his will.
- E. "Great is the day of the Lord and terrible:" this refers to the Day of Atonement.
- F. "...who can endure it."
2. A. For said R. Qerispa [Chrispus] in the name of R. Yohanan, "There are three account books, one for the completely righteous, one for the completely wicked, and one for the in-betweens.
- B. "These are for eternal life" (Dan. 12:2): Said Rabbi, "This refers to the completely righteous."
- C. "These are for shame and eternal derision" (Dan. 12:2): This refers to the completely wicked.
- D. "They are blotted out of the book" (Ps. 69:29): These are the wicked.
- E. "...of the living:" these are the righteous.
- F. "...and with the righteous they are not inscribed:" these are the in-betweens.
- G. To these the Holy One, blessed be He, has given the ten days between the New Year and the Day of Atonement. If they repent, they are inscribed with the righteous, and if not, there are inscribed with the wicked.
- J. Therefore Hosea admonishes Israel saying to them, Return O Israel to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your

iniquity. Take with you words and return to the Lord and say to him, Take away all iniquity; accept that which is good, and we will render the fruit of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses; and we will say no more, Our God to the work of our hands. In you the orphan finds mercy (Hosea 14:1-3).

Joel refers to the New Year and the Day of Atonement.

PESIQTÁ DE RAB KAHANA XXIV:XI

1. A. What is written prior to [the base-verse, Hos. 14:2]? It is the following: "Samaria shall bear her guilt [for she has rebelled against her God]" (Hos. 14:1).
- B. And thereafter: "Return O Israel [to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take with you words and return to the Lord and say to him, Take away all iniquity; accept that which is good, and we will render the fruit of our lips. Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses; and we will say no more, Our God to the work of our hands. In you the orphan finds mercy]" (Hosea 14:1-3).
3. A. What is the meaning of "And Cain went away [from the presence of the Lord]?"
- B. R. Yudan in the name of R. Aibu said, "He shouted over the shoulder and went away, as if to deceive the ones above. [Freedman, *Genesis Rabbah*, p. 192, n. 1: He rejected God's reproof, as though murder was a light matter.]"
- C. R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Eleazar b. R. Simeon: "He went away like the [pig] that shows a cloven hoof [pretending to be a valid animal, when it is not,] like one who would deceive the creator."
- D. R. Hunah in the name of R. Hinena bar Isaac said, "He went out rejoicing, in line with this verse: 'He goes forth to meet you and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart' (Ex. 4:14).
- E. "Adam met him and said to him, 'What happened at your trial?'"
- F. "He said to him, I repented and am reconciled."
- G. "Then Adam began to beat on his face: 'So great is the power of repentance, and I never knew it!'"
- I. "He forthwith went and said: 'It is a good thing to confess to the Lord' (Ps. 92:1)."
- J. Said R. Levi, "It was Adam who stated this psalm: 'A Psalm for the Sabbath day' (Ps. 92:1).
- K. "And shall I not accept your repentance?"
6. A. "I accepted the repentance of the men of Nineveh, and shall I not accept your repentance?"
- B. For a harsh decree was issued against them, in line with this verse of Scripture: 'Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey [and he proclaimed and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown"]' (Jonah 3:4).

- C. “And the tidings reached the king of Nineveh and he arose from his throne and laid his robe from him and covered himself with sackcloth and proclaimed through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, [‘Let neither man nor beast...taste anything; let them not feed nor drink water; but let them be covered with sackcloth both man and beast and let them cry mightily to God’]” (Jonah 3:7-8).
- D. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “The men of Nineveh carried out an essentially deceitful repentance.”
- E. What did they do?
- F. R. Huniah in the name of R. Simeon b. Halputa: “They set up calves inside with their mothers outside, and these lowed from inside and the mothers from outside, so these groaned on this side and those on that side. They said, ‘if you do not have mercy on us, we shall not have mercy on them.’”
- G. Said R. Aha, “This is what they do also in Arabia: ‘How are the beasts groaning! the herds of cattle are confused [because they have no pasture]’ (Joel 1:18).”
- H. “...but let them be covered with sackcloth both man and beast and let them cry mightily to God” (Jonah 3:7-8):
- I. What is the meaning of mightily?
- J. Said R. Simeon b. Halputa, “The impudent one conquers even the wicked one, all the more so the One who is the goodness of the world.”
- K. Let them turn every one [from his evil way, from the violence that is in their hands] (Jonah 3:8):
- L. Said R. Yohanan, “What they had in hand they returned, but what they had put away in boxes, arks, and cupboards they did not return.”
- M. “And rend your hearts and not your garments” (Joel 2:13):
- N. Said R. Joshua b. Levi, “If you rend your hearts in repentance, you will not have to render your garments on account of the death of your sons and daughters.
- O. “Why not?”
- P. “Because he is merciful and long-suffering (Joel 2:13).”
- Q. R. Aha and R. Tanhum in the name of R. Hiyya in the name of R. Yohanan, “What is written is not long-suffering [in the singular] but longer-suffering [in the dual], indicating that he is patient with the righteous but also patient with the wicked.
- R. “He is patient with the righteous and collects from them the modicum on account of the bad deeds which they did in this world so as to give them their full and complete reward in the world to come.
- S. “And he accords prosperity to the wicked in this world so as to give them the modicum of the reward for the good deeds that they have done in this world in order to exact from them full and complete penalty in the world to come.”

- T. R. Samuel bar Nahman in the name of R. Yohanan: "What is written is not long-suffering [in the singular] but longer-suffering [in the dual], indicating that he is patient before he comes to collect [exacting punishment], and what he comes to collect, he extends the time [same word as patience] for collecting payment."
- U. Said R. Hanina, "Whoever has said that the All-Merciful is [loose in] forgiving will get loose bowels. But he is indeed patient but then collects what is coming to him."
- V. Said R. Levi, "What is the meaning of long-suffering? He is very far from anger."
- W. "The matter may be compared to the case of a king who had two tough legions. Said the king, 'If the legions stay with me in the town, then when the townsfolk make me angry, they will take off on their own against them and wipe them out. Lo, I shall send them some distance away. If the people make me angry, while I am still sending for them, the people will come and make their peace with me, and I shall accept their appeasement.'
- X. "That is in line with this verse of Scripture: They come from a country far away, from the end of heaven the weapons of his indignation (Is. 13:5)."
- Y. Said R. Isaac, "And not only so, but he locks the gate against [his own legions], in line with this verse of Scripture: The Lord has unlocked his armory and has brought forth the weapons of his indignation (Jer. 50:25).
- Z. "While he is opening up, while he is still occupied, his mercy will be aroused."

Joel is cited in the context of divine forgiveness and is subjected to a close reading.

11

Joel in Esther Rabbah I Ruth Rabbah Song of Songs Rabbah Lamentations Rabbah and The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan

ESTHER RABBAH I

ESTHER RABBAH I VIII:II.1 [=GENESIS RABBAH XLII:III.1-6]

1. A. R. Tanhuma and R. Hiyya the Elder state the following matter, as does R. Berekhiah in the name of R. Eleazar [the Modite], “The following exegetical principle we brought up from the exile.
 - B. “Any passage in which the words, ‘And it came to pass’ appear is a passage that relates misfortune.”
6. A. R. Simeon b. Abba in the name of R. Yohanan: “Any context in which the words, ‘And it came to pass...’ appear serves to signify either misfortune or good fortune. If it is a case of misfortune, it is misfortune without parallel. If it is a case of good fortune, it is good fortune without parallel.”
 - B. R. Samuel b. Nahman came and introduced this distinction: “Any context in which the words, ‘And it came to pass...’ occur signifies misfortune, and any context in which the words, ‘And it shall come to pass...’ are used signifies good fortune.”
 - T. They said to him, “We have given our objections, now you give your proofs about good fortune.”
 - U. He said to them, “‘And it shall come to pass in that day that living waters shall go out of Jerusalem’ (Zech. 14:8). ‘And it shall come to pass in that day that a great horn shall be blown’ (Is. 27:13). ‘And it shall come to pass in that day that a man shall rear a youngling’ (Is. 7:21). ‘And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will set his hand again a second time to recover the remnant

of his people' (Is. 11:11). 'And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine' (Joel 4:18). [All of these represent good fortune without parallel.]"

- V. They said to him, "'And it shall come to pass on the day on which Jerusalem is taken...' (Jer. 38:28)."
- W. He said to them, "This too does not signify misfortune but good fortune [without parallel], for on that day the Israelites received a full pardon for all their sins.
- X. "That is in line with what R. Samuel b. Nahman said, 'The Israelites received a full pardon for all their sins on the day on which the Temple was destroyed. That is in line with the following verse of Scripture, "The punishment of your iniquity is completed, daughter of Zion, and he will no more take you away into exile" (Lam. 4:22).'"

Joel supplies a proof-text.

RUTH RABBAH

**RUTH RABBAH IV:II. 1 = GENESIS RABBAH XLII:III.1-6=LEV. R. XI:VII=
ESTHER RABBAH I VIII:II.1**

As above.

RUTH RABBAH XXVII:I

- 5. A. "...of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz."
- B. As to the wicked, the name is given before Scripture says, "his name:"
- C. "Goliath was his name" (1 Sam. 17:4).
- D. "Nabal was his name" (1 Sam. 25:3).
- E. "Sheba, son of Bichri, was his name" (2 Sam. 20:1).
- F. But as to the righteous, the "his name" introduces the name itself:
- G. "His name was Kish" (1 Sam. 9:1).
- H. "His name was Saul" (1 Sam. 9:2).
- I. "His name was Jesse" (1 Sam. 17:12).
- J. "His name was Mordecai" (Est. 2:5).
- K. "His name was Elkanah" (1 Sam. 1:1).
- L. "His name was Boaz" (Ruth 2:1).
- M. It is because they are like their Creator: "But by my name, the Lord, I did not make myself known to them" (Ex. 6:3).
- N. They objected to this generalization, "And his name was Laban" (Gen. 24:29).
- O. Said R. Isaac, "It is a paradox."
- P. R. Berekhia said, "He was refined in evil" [a play on the word Laban].

- Q. But [the following, who were wicked, present further exceptions:]
 “As for the sons of Samuel, the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of the second, Abijah” (1 Sam. 8:2)?
- R. Rabbis say, “Just as this one was wicked, so that one was wicked.”
- S. R. Judah b. R. Simon said, “They were changed in practice, so as to merit receiving the Holy Spirit: ‘The word of the Lord that came to Joel son of Pethuel’ (Joel 1:1).”

Joel’s name is taken as a significant trait.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH VIII.I

2. A. Said R. Yosé b. R. Jeremiah, “How come the prophets are compared to women?
- B. “It is to tell you, just as a woman is not ashamed to demand what her house needs from her husband,
- C. “so the prophets are not ashamed to demand the needs of the Israelites from their Father who is in heaven.”
3. A. “...follow in the tracks of the flock:”
- B. R. Eliezer, R. Aqiba, and rabbis:
- C. R. Eliezer says, “From the cakes that the Israelites had taken along from Egypt they eat for thirty-one days.”
- D. For said R. Shila, “Sixty-two meals, you may know, the Israelites had from these cakes.”
- E. [Resuming C:] “[From this you may know] what I am going to do for them in the end, at the conclusion.
- F. “That is in line with this verse: ‘There shall be provision of grain in the land’ (Ps. 72:16).” [Simon, p. 64, n. 3: This was the answer to Moses’ doubts about providing for Israel in the desert: since I caused a miracle whereby one cake lasted so long, you may rest assured that I can provide for all their wants – in the wilderness and in the Messianic era.]
- G. R. Aqiba says, “From the way in which I surrounded them with clouds of glory, in line with this verse, ‘And the Lord went before them by day...the pillar of cloud departed not by day’ (Ex. 13:21, 22), you may know what I am going to do for them in the end, at the conclusion.
- H. “That is in line with this verse: ‘And there shall be a pavilion for shade in the daytime’ (Isa. 4:6).”
- I. Rabbis say, “‘From the way in which I fed them in the wilderness [which was through manna,] sweeter than milk and honey, you may know what I am going to do for them in the end, at the conclusion.’
- J. “That is in line with this verse: ‘And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down sweet wine’ (Joel 4:18).”

Joel indicates how things will be in the world to come.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH CXII:III

6. A. [Supply: "Kings of armies flee, they flee" (Ps. 68:13):]
- B. R. Yudan said, "The word 'they fled' means, they cast lots against them: 'And they have cast lots [a word that shares the same consonants] for my people' (Joel 3:3)."

Joel contributes a philological fact.

SONG OF SONGS RABBAH CXV:II

6. A. To four matters the redemption [reading *ge'ulatan* rather than *ge'utan*] of Israel is comparable:
 - B. harvest, vintaging, spices, and a woman in labor.
 - C. To a harvest, for if a field is harvested not at its right season, it does not produce even decent straw, but if it is harvested in its right season, then the entire crop is first class: "Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe" (Joel 3:13).
 - D. It is comparable to vintaging, for if the grapes of a vineyard are not harvested at the right time, they do not produce even good vinegar, but if it harvested at the right time, then even the vinegar is first rate: "Sing you of her, a vineyard of foaming wine" (Isa. 27:2), when it produces foaming wine, then pick the grapes.
 - E. It is comparable to spices, for when spices are picked when they are soft and moist, their fragrance does not give a scent, but when they are picked dry, then their fragrance gives a scent.
 - F. It is comparable to a woman in labor, for when a woman gives birth before term, the foetus cannot live, but when she gives birth at term, the foetus can live: "Therefore he will give them up until the time that she who is in labor has brought forth" (Mic. 5:2).

Joel sets forth a proof of the proposition.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XXXVI:

1. A. "She weeps bitterly in the night, [tears on her cheeks]:"
- B. "weeps" for one calf, "bitterly" for two [the golden calf, the two of Jeroboam].
2. A. Another interpretation of "She weeps bitterly in the night, [tears on her cheeks]:"
- B. "weeping" for Judah, "bitterly" for Zion and Jerusalem.
3. A. Another interpretation of "She weeps bitterly in the night, [tears on her cheeks]:"
- B. "weeping" for the exile of the ten tribes, "bitterly" for Judah and Benjamin.

4. A. Another interpretation of "She weeps bitterly in the night, [tears on her cheeks]."
- B. She weeps and makes others weep too.
- C. She weeps and makes the Holy One, blessed be He, weep too: "And in that day did the Lord, God of Hosts, call to weeping and to lamentation" (Isa. 22:12).
- D. She weeps and makes the ministering angels weep too: "Behold, their valiant ones cry without" (Isa. 33:7).
- G. [Reverting to C:] She weeps and makes the heaven and earth weep too: "The sun and the moon are become black" (Joel 2:10).
- H. She weeps and makes mountains and hills weep too: "I looked at the mountains, and lo, they trembled" (Jer. 4:24).
- I. She weeps and makes weep the seventy nations too.
- J. Said R. Phineas, "The seventy bulls that the Israelites would offer on the Festival of Tabernacles corresponded to the seventy nations, so that the world should not be depopulated on their account."
- K. She weeps and makes the congregation of Israel weep too: "And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried" (Num. 14:1).
- L. Repeated R. Hunia in the name of R. Nehemiah, "What is written is 'lend,' meaning, a bad loan was lent to the generations, as the word occurs in the following: 'When you lend your neighbor' (Dt. 24:10)."

The sun and the moon weep for Israel, so Joel.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH L.I.

5. A. There was the case of the two children of R. Saddoq, high priest, who were taken captive, one a boy, the other a girl, each falling to a different officer.
- B. This one went to a whore and handed over the boy as her fee.
- C. That one went to a storekeeper and handed over the girl as his fee for wine.
- D. This exemplifies the verse of Scripture, "And they have given a boy for a harlot and sold a girl for wine" (Joel 4:3).
- E. After some days the whore went to the storekeeper and said to him, "I have a Jewish boy and he is ready for that girl you have. Let's match them up with one another, and whatever they produce as a child we can divide among us.
- F. They did so. They closed them up in a room, and the girl started crying. The boy asked her, "Why are you crying?"
- G. She said to him, "Woe for this daughter of the high priest who has gone and wed a slave."
- H. He said to her, "Who is your father?"
- I. She said to him, "I am the daughter of Saddoq, the high priest."
- J. He said to her, "Where did you used to live?"
- K. She said to him, "In Jerusalem, in the upper market place."

- L. He said to her, "What was the mark of the house?"
- M. She told him, "Such and so."
- N. He said to her, "Did you have a brother or sister?"
- O. She said to him, "I had a brother, with a mole on his shoulder. When he would come home from school, I would uncover it and kiss it."
- P. He said to her, "If you were to see it, would you recognize it?"
- Q. She said to him, "Yes."
- R. He bared his shoulder, and they recognized one another, embraced, and kissed, until their souls expired.
- S. And the Holy Spirit cried, "For these things I weep."

Joel prophesied concerning the sad fate of Israelite children.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH XXXV:IV.

1. A. Another matter concerning "[How] lonely sits [the city that was full of people]" [now with stress on "sits," in its sense of "sitting in mourning:"]
 - B. Said R. Nahman said Samuel in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi, "The Holy One, blessed be He, asked the ministering angels, 'A mortal king in mourning – what is fitting for him to do?'"
 - C. "They said to him, 'He hangs sacking on his door.'
 - D. "He said to them, 'I too will do so: 'I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering' (Isa. 50:3).
 - E. "'What else does a mortal king do?'"
 - F. "'He turns down the lamps.'
 - G. "'I too will do so: 'The sun and the moon are become black, the stars withdraw their shining' (Joel 4:15).
 - H. "'What else?'"
 - I. "'He turns over the couch.'
 - J. "'I too: 'Until thrones were cast down, and One that was ancient of days did sit' (Dan. 7:9).

Joel prophesied that God would extinguish the sun and the moon in mourning.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH LXXXVIII.I.

1. A. "Let him sit alone in silence when he has laid it on him:"
 - B. Said R. Samuel b. Nahman, "The Holy One, blessed be He, asked the ministering angels, 'A mortal king in mourning – what is fitting for him to do?'"
 - C. "They said to him, 'He hangs sacking on his door.'
 - D. "He said to them, 'I too will do so: 'I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering' (Isa. 50:3).
 - E. "'What else does a mortal king do?'"
 - F. "'He turns down the lamps.'

- G. "I too will do so:' 'The sun and the moon are become black, the stars withdraw their shining' (Joel 4:15).

As above.

LAMENTATIONS RABBAH LX.I. 7 = LAMENTATIONS RABBAH CXI.I.

- A. "in the tent of the daughter of Zion he has poured out his fury like fire:"
- B. There are four acts of pouring meant for good, and four for evil.
- C. Four for good: "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication" (Zech. 12:10); "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 3:1); "And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 3:2); "Nor will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, says the Lord God" (Ezek. 39:29).
- D. Four for evil: "Therefore he poured on him the fury of his anger" (Isa. 42:25); "In your pouring out of your fury upon Jerusalem" (Ezek. 9:8); "The Lord has accomplished his fury, he has poured out his fierce anger" (Lam. 4:11); and "he has poured out his fury like fire."

Joel contributes a case.

THE FATHERS ACCORDING TO RABBI NATHAN

I found nothing relevant.

Joel in the Bavli

BAVLI SHABBAT 2:6 II.

4. A. For the sin of robbery, locusts come up and famine follows, and people eat the flesh of their sons and daughters: “Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are in the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy” (Amos 4:1).
- B. *Said Raba, “For instance, the women of Mahoza, [33A] who eat but don’t work.”*
- C. And it is written, “I have smitten you with blasting and mildew; the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your figs trees and your olive trees has the palmer-worm devoured” (Amos 4:9); and further, “That which the palmer-worm has left has the locust eaten; that which the locust has left the cankerworm has eaten; that which the cankerworm has left the caterpillar has eaten” (Joel 1:4); “And one shall snatch on the right hand and be hungry and he shall eat on the left hand and they shall not be satisfied; they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm” (Isa. 9:19). Don’t read the consonants that yield “the flesh of his own arm” in that way but as though they bore vowels to yield “the flesh of his own seed.”

Joel provides an example of how the sin of robbery causes famine.

BAVLI SUKKAH 5:2 II:

6. A. R. Avira expounded — and some say it was R. Joshua b. Levi, “The evil inclination has seven names.
- B. “The Holy One, blessed be he, called it ‘evil,’ as it is said, ‘For the inclination of man’s heart is evil from his youth’ (Gen. 8:21).
- C. “Moses called it ‘uncircumcised,’ as it is said, “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart’ (Deut. 10:16).
- D. “David called it ‘unclean,’ as it is said, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O Lord’ (Ps. 51:12), *bearing the implication that there is an unclean one.*

- E. "Solomon called it, 'the enemy,' as it is said, 'If your enemy is hungry, give him bread [Torah] to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water [Torah] to drink. For you will heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord will reward you' (Prov. 25:21-22).
- F. "Do not read, 'will reward you' but 'will make him stay at peace with you.'
- G. "Isaiah called it 'stumbling block,' as it is said, 'Cast you up, cast you up, clear the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people' (Is. 57:14).
- H. "Ezekiel called it, 'stone,' as it is said, 'And I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh' (Ez. 36:26).
- I. "Joel called it, 'the hidden,' as it is said, 'But I will remove far away from you the hidden one' (Joel 2:20)."

Joel 2:20 contributes a name of the evil inclination, the hidden.

BAVLI SUKKAH 5:2 II:

- 7. A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- B. "But I will remove far away from you the hidden one" (Joel 2:20) speaks of the impulse to do evil, which is ready and hidden away in a man's heart.
- C. "And I will drive it into a land barren and desolate" (Joel 2:20) speaks of a place in which are found no men against whom it may make an attack.
- D. "With his face toward the eastern sea" (Joel 2:20): For it set its eyes against the first sanctuary and destroyed it and killed the disciples of sages who were there.
- E. "And his hind part toward the western sea" (Joel 2:20): For it set its eyes against the second sanctuary and destroyed it and killed the disciples of sages who were there.
- F. "That its foulness may come up and its ill-savor may come up" (Joel 2:20): For he neglects the nations of the world and attacks only the enemies of Israel.
- 8. A. "For it has done great things" (Joel 2:20): Said Abbayye, "And against disciples of sages more than against all the others."
- B. *[The power of the inclination to do evil over disciples of sages is] illustrated by the case of Abbayye. He heard a man say to a woman, "Come on, let's walk along the path."*
- C. *He said, "I'll go and keep them from violating any prohibitions."*
- D. *He followed them for three parasangs over a meadow.*
- E. *When they were parting from one another, he heard them say to one another, "Our path is long, though our company is sweet."*
- F. *Said Abbayye, "If I ["the one who hates me"] had been there, I should not have been able to overcome myself."*
- G. *He went and leaned on a door post, most distressed. A certain old man came along and repeated to him the following tradition on*

Tannaite authority: “Whoever is greater than his fellow also possesses a greater inclination to do evil.”

Joel 2:20 is expounded clause by clause. Joel speaks of the impulse to do evil. It is responsible for the destruction of the two temples. The inclination to do evil works harder on disciples of sages than on any other class of victim.

BAVLI ROSH HASHANAH 2:4

- [II.5. A] **And said R. Yohanan, “Woe to the idol-worshippers, for they have no remedy [to atone for their sins],**
- [B] “as it is said [Is. 60:17]: ‘Instead of bronze I will bring gold; and instead of iron I will bring silver; instead of wood, bronze; instead of stones, iron.’
- [C] “[But, as for the idol worshippers] instead of R. Aqiba and his associates, what can they bring?
- [D] “And concerning them [that is, the idol worshippers], Scripture says [Joel 4:21]: ‘I shall cleanse [them of other transgressions, but] their blood I shall not cleanse.

Joel validates the claim that idolaters have no means of atoning for sins.

BAVLI TAANIT 1:1 1:2E-H

- [E] **Up to what time do they ask for rain?**
- [F] **R. Judah says, “Until Passover is passed.”**
- [G] **R. Meir says, “Until the end of Nisan,**
- [H] **“since it says, ‘And he causes to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first [month]’” (Joel 2:23).**
- [I.1] [A] [Since the prophet refers to “former rain,” ordinarily identified with the rainfall after the Festival of Sukkot, the aptness of the proof-text is addressed:] Said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, “Does the former rain fall in Nisan? Surely the former rain falls in Marheshvan, *for we have learned in a Tannaite statement, The former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan [T. Taaniyyot 1:1B].*”
- [B] *He said to him, “This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘In the time of the prophet Joel b. Pethuel was fulfilled this verse of Scripture: “What the cutting locust left the swarming locust has eaten, what the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten” (Joel 1:4). In that year, Adar ended without rain; on the first of Nisan [following], the first rain fell. On the first of Nisan the prophet said to Israel, “Go, sow seed.” They said to him, “He who has a qab of wheat seed or two qabs of barley — should he eat them and live, or should he sow them and die?” He said to them, “Nonetheless, go, sow seed.” A miracle was done for them, and to them was revealed what was hidden in the walls and in the ant holes. They went and*

sowed on the second, third, and fourth, and the latter rain fell for them on the fifth of Nisan, and they offered the 'omer-sheaf of first barley on the sixteenth [as required in any normal year]. It turned out that a crop that ordinarily ripens in six months ripened in eleven days. It turned out that the 'omer-sheaf that is ordinarily offered of barley that has grown for six months was offered of barley that had grown for all of eleven days. And concerning that generation, Scripture says, "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy; though he goes on his way weeping, bearing the measure of seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy, bearing his sheaves of grain with him" (Ps. 126:5-6)."

- [C] *What is the meaning of* "Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy; though he goes on his way weeping, bearing the measure of seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy..." (Ps. 126:5-6)"
- [D] Said R. Judah, "When an ox is ploughing, as it goes along it weeps, but when it comes back, it nibbles on the young green in the furrows, and that is the sense of, "shall come home with shouts of joy."
- [E] *And what is the meaning of*, "bearing his sheaves of grain with him"?"
- [F] *Said R. Hisda, and there are those that say that it was taught by a Tannaite authority*, "The stalk was one span, and the ear of grain, two."

Joel 1:4 was realized in the time of Joel b. Pethuel. The prophecy yields a narrative.

BAVLI TAANIT 1:1

- [I.9] [A] *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- [B] The former rain is called *yoreh* because it teaches [*moreh*] people to plaster their roofs, bring in their produce, and do all their needs [before the rainy season hits full-force].
- [C] Another matter: It is called *yoreh* [using the letters RWH] because it saturates the ground [RWH] and penetrates to the depths, as it is said, "Watering her ridges abundantly, settling down the furrows thereof, you make her soft with showers, you bless the growth thereof" (Ps. 65:11).
- [D] Another matter: It is called *yoreh* [using the letters RWH] because it descends gently and does not descend with fury.
- [E] Or perhaps it is called *yoreh* because it makes the fruit fall [referring to the word *yoreh*, to throw] and washes away seed and washes away trees?
- [F] To exclude that interpretation, the word "latter rain" [*malqosh*] is introduced: just as latter rain is for a blessing, so the former rain is only for a blessing.
- [G] But might the word for latter rain [*malqosh*, using the letters LQSH, Amos 7:1, grasshopper] bear the meaning, it knocks over houses and breaks trees and brings up crickets?

- [H] To exclude that interpretation, the word “former rain” is introduced: just as the former rain is only for a blessing, so the latter rain is only for a blessing.
- [I] *But how do we know that the former rain itself is only for a blessing?*
- [J] As it is written, “Be glad then you children of Zion and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he gives you the former rain in just measure and he brings down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, as at the first” (Joel 2:21).

The former rain is always a blessing, so Joel 2:21.

BAVLI TAANIT 1:6-8

- [I.1] [A] **[And they are forbidden [on the fast] to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations:]** *Now there is no difficulty with understanding the prohibition of these other items — bathing, anointing, putting on sandals, sexual relationships — all involve pleasure [to be abstained from]. But as to work, that is a source of stress [and not pleasure, so why forbid it on the specified fast days]?*
- [B] Said R. Hisda said R. Jeremiah bar Abba, “Said Scripture, ‘Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders’ (Joel 1:14) — so it is comparable to a solemn assembly: just as on a solemn assembly it is forbidden to perform acts of labor, so on a fast it is forbidden to perform acts of labor.”
- [C] *What about the following argument: Just as on a solemn assembly, the prohibitions take effect from the preceding evening, so in the case of a fast day the prohibitions take effect from the preceding evening?*
- [D] Said R. Zira, “To me the matter was explained by R. Jeremiah bar Abba, ‘Said Scripture, “gather the elders” (Joel 1:14) — just as a gathering of the elders takes place by day, so the fast also takes place by day.”
- [E] *Might one say further: that it begins at noon?*
- [F] Said R. Shisha b. R. Iddi, “That supports the view of R. Huna who said, ‘The assembly [for the fast day] takes place in the morning.’”

A fast day is comparable to a solemn assembly, so Joel 1:14.

BAVLI MOED QATAN 1:8 1:

10. A. *R. Simeon b. Halapta took his leave of Rabbi. Said Rabbi to his son, “Go to him that he may bless you.”*
- B. *He said to him, “May it please God that you not put anybody to shame nor feel ashamed.”*
- C. *He came back to his father, who said to him, “What did he say to you?”*

- D. *He said to him, "Oh, nothing out of the ordinary."*
- E. *He said to him, "What he gave to you was the blessing that the Holy One, blessed be he, bestowed upon Israel two times: 'And you shall eat in plenty and be satisfied and shall praise the name of the Lord your God...and my people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and there is none else, and my people shall never be ashamed' (Joel 2:26-27)."*

Joel 2:26-27 formulates a blessing for Israel.

BAVLI SOTAH 1:4 I:

4. A. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "What is the meaning of the language 'expression of jealousy'? It refers to something that puts jealousy [or hatred] between the woman and other people."
- B. *Accordingly, he is of the view that a man may express jealousy on the strength of his own testimony. [How so?] Since nobody knows that he has given such a warning of jealousy to her, they will say, "Why does this one remain aloof?"*
- C. *So they will turn out to hate [practice jealousy against] her.*
- D. And R. Yemar bar R. Shelamia in the name of Abbayye said, "[The language refers] to something that puts jealousy between him and her [only, but does not necessarily involve others]."
- E. *Accordingly, he is of the view that one expresses jealousy on the testimony of two witnesses. It will follow that everybody knows that he has expressed jealousy to her, and he is the one who has brought jealousy [hatred] in her regard.*
- F. **[3A]** *It follows that both parties maintain that it is forbidden to express jealousy [just as No. 3 has maintained, since both parties explain the word to invoke the sense of jealousy or hatred].*
- G. *And in the view of one who maintains that it is permitted to express jealousy, what is the meaning to be imputed to the word "express jealousy"?*
- H. Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, "The language 'express jealousy' bears the sole meaning of 'warn.'"
- I. "And so does Scripture say, 'Then the Lord expressed jealousy [by warning] his land' (Joel 2:18)."

Joel supplies philological evidence on the meaning of the indicated usage,

BAVLI KETUBOT 13:11 III.

50. A. Said R. Hiyya bar Ashi said Rab, "All of the barren trees that are located in the Land of Israel are destined to bear fruit: 'For the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine yield their strength' (Joel 2:22)."

Joel prophesies the future prosperity of the land of Israel.

BAVLI GITTIN 1:1-3 I.

26. A. *R. Ebiatar sent word to R. Hisda, "As to writs of divorce that come from there to here, it is not necessary to state, 'Before me it was written and before me it was signed.'"*
- B. *May one therefore propose the theory that the operative consideration behind making that declaration is that [Israelites overseas] are inexpert in the requirement that the writ be prepared for the particular person for whom it is intended, and those who are exempted have mastered the law?*
- C. *Do you really think that that can be the reason at hand, since Rabbah has acknowledged the validity of Raba's consideration? But in point of fact all parties concur that we require a confirmation of the writ of divorce, but the operative factor is that since there are many who go up to the Land of Israel and come down from there, there will be plenty of witnesses.*
- D. *Said R. Joseph, "Who is going to assure us that R. Ebiatar is a reliable authority? And furthermore, he is the one who sent word to R. Judah, 'People who come up from there to here [the Land of Israel] confirm in their own being the verse, "They have given a boy for a harlot and sold a girl for wine and have drunk" (Joel 4:3).' And, as a matter of fact, he wrote out this verse without underlining it, even though R. Isaac said, 'Two words of Scripture may be written without underlining, but not three,' and a Tannaite formulation stated, 'Three they write, not four.'"*
- E. *Said to him Abbaye, "So is anybody who doesn't know what R. Isaac said going to be called unreliable? True enough, if it were a matter of reasoning, well and good. But this is just a matter of knowing a fact of tradition, and he doesn't happen to have heard that particular tradition! And furthermore, R. Ebiatar is an authority whose ruling was confirmed by his [heavenly] Master, for it is written, 'And his concubine played the harlot against him' (Jud. 19:2). R. Ebiatar said, 'He found a fly on her.' R. Jonathan said, 'It was a hair.' Then R. Ebiatar found Elijah. He said to him, 'What is the Holy One, blessed be He, working on these days?' He said to him, 'He's occupied with the passage on the concubine in Gibe'a.' 'And what's he say about it?' He said to him, 'My son Ebiatar – this is what he says, and my son Jonathan – this is what he says.' He said to him, 'God forbid! Is anything subject to doubt before the Heaven?' He said to him, 'Both this position and that represent the words of the living God. He did find a fly, but paid no attention. Then he found a hair, and he paid attention.'"*
- F. *Said R. Judah, "It was a fly in a dish, and a hair on 'that place.' The fly was merely disgusting, but the hair was dangerous."*
- G. *There are those who say, "He found both in the dish. The fly was an accident, but the hair was deliberate."*

Joel 4:3 confirms that coming to the Land of Israel from Babylonia is a mark of ill-repute.

BAVLI BABA QAMMA 10:9 II.

7. A. Said R. Yohanan, "Anyone who steals so much as a penny from someone else is as though he takes away his life, as it is said, 'So are the ways of everyone that is greedy of gain, that takes away the life of the owners thereof' (Prov. 1:19), and also, 'And he shall eat up your harvest and your bread, that your sons and daughters should eat' (Jer. 5:17), and further, 'For the violence against the children of Judah because they have shed innocent blood in their land' (Joel 4:19), and 'It is for Saul and for his bloody house because he slew the Gibeonites' (2 Sam. 21:1)."
- B. *Why the sequence of verses [when one would do]?*
- C. *Should you say he takes away his soul but not that of his sons and daughters, come and take note:* "And he shall eat up your harvest and your bread, that your sons and daughters should eat." *And should you say, that is the case in which there was no transfer of money [the robber stole without paying], but if there was money paid, that is not the case, come and take note:* "For the violence against the children of Judah because they have shed innocent blood in their land" (Joel 4:19). *And should you say, that is the case where the person has done it directly, but in a case in which he merely caused the offense, that would not be so:* "It is for Saul and for his bloody house because he slew the Gibeonites" (2 Sam. 21:1).

Joel 4:19 treats thievery as tantamount to murder.

BAVLI SANHEDRIN 11:1-2 I.

32. L. And said R. Eleazar, "Any house in which words of Torah are not heard by night will be eaten up by fire, as it is said, 'All darkness is hid in his secret places; a fire not blown shall consume him; he grudges him that is left in his tabernacle' (Job 20:26).
- M. "The word for 'grudges' means only a disciple of a sage, as it is written, 'And in those left [using the same root] whom the Lord shall call' (Joel 3:5). [Freedman, p. 616, n. 12: The first part of the verse, 'all darkness is hid ...,' is interpreted as, his secret places are not illumined by the study of the law; the last part, 'he grudges ...,' as, he looks with disfavor upon any student who enters his house for a meal]."
- N. And said R. Eleazar, "Whoever does not give a benefit to disciples of sages from his property will see no blessing ever, as it is said, 'There is none who remains to eat it, therefore shall he not hope for prosperity' (Job 20:21).
- O. "The word for 'remain' refers only to a disciple of a sage, as it is written, 'And in those left whom the Lord shall call' (Joel 3:5)."

Joel contributes philological data.

BAVLI SANHEDRIN 11:1-2 X.

25. A. “And her tears are on her cheeks” (Lam. 1:2):
 B. Said Rabbah said R. Yohanan, “It is like a woman who weeps for the husband of her youth, as it is said, ‘Lamentation like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth’ (Joel 1:8).”

Joel provides a metaphor for explaining the reference of Lam. 1:2.

BAVLI HULLIN 10:3 II.

8. I. *Said Abbaye to R. Dimi, “To what [situation] does scripture obviously refer [in Prov. 25:20]?”*
 J. *He said to him, “[It refers to one] who teaches a student who is not suitable.”*
 K. For said R. Judah, said Rab, “One who teaches a student who is not suitable, descends into Hell. As it says, ‘Utter darkness is laid up for his treasures; a fire not blown upon will devour him; what is left (*sryd*) in his tent will be consumed’ (Job 20:26).”
 L. “What is left (*sryd*)” — this can only refer to a disciple of the sages. As it says, “And among the survivors (*srydym*) shall be those whom the Lord calls” (Joel 2:32 RSV).
 M. Said R. Zira, said Rab, “One who teaches a student who is not suitable, is like one who casts a stone before Mercury [i.e., performs an act of worship to an idol]. As it says, ‘Like one who binds the stone in the sling is he who gives honor to a fool’ (Prov. 26:8). *And it is written*, ‘It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury, much less for a slave to rule over princes’ (Prov. 19:10).”

Joel provides philological data to indicate that “what is left” refers to survivors called by the Lord.

STUDIES IN JUDAISM
TITLES IN THE SERIES
PUBLISHED BY UNIVERSITY PRESS OF AMERICA

Judith Z. Abrams

The Babylonian Talmud: A Topical Guide, 2002.

Roger David Aus

Matthew 1-2 and the Virginal Conception: In Light of Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaic Traditions on the Birth of Israel's First Redeemer, Moses, 2004.

My Name Is "Legion": Palestinian Judaic Traditions in Mark 5:1-20 and Other Gospel Texts, 2003.

Alan L. Berger, Harry James Cargas, and Susan E. Nowak

The Continuing Agony: From the Carmelite Convent to the Crosses at Auschwitz, 2004.

S. Daniel Breslauer

Creating a Judaism without Religion: A Postmodern Jewish Possibility, 2001.

Bruce Chilton

Targumic Approaches to the Gospels: Essays in the Mutual Definition of Judaism and Christianity, 1986.

David Ellenson

Tradition in Transition: Orthodoxy, Halakhah, and the Boundaries of Modern Jewish Identity, 1989.

Paul V. M. Flesher

New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism, Volume 5: Society and Literature in Analysis, 1990.

Marvin Fox

Collected Essays on Philosophy and on Judaism, Volume One: Greek Philosophy, Maimonides, 2003.

*Collected Essays on Philosophy and on Judaism, Volume Two:
Some Philosophers*, 2003.

*Collected Essays on Philosophy and on Judaism, Volume Three:
Ethics, Reflections*, 2003.

Zev Garber

Methodology in the Academic Teaching of Judaism, 1986.

Zev Garber, Alan L. Berger, and Richard Libowitz
Methodology in the Academic Teaching of the Holocaust, 1988.

Abraham Gross

*Spirituality and Law: Courting Martyrdom in Christianity and
Judaism*, 2005.

Harold S. Himmelfarb and Sergio DellaPergola

Jewish Education Worldwide: Cross-Cultural Perspectives, 1989.

William Kluback

*The Idea of Humanity: Hermann Cohen's Legacy to Philosophy
and Theology*, 1987.

Samuel Morell

Studies in the Judicial Methodology of Rabbi David ibn Abi Zimra,
2004.

Jacob Neusner

Amos in Talmud and Midrash, 2006.

*Ancient Israel, Judaism, and Christianity in Contemporary
Perspective*, 2006.

The Aggadic Role in Halakhic Discourses: Volume I, 2001.

The Aggadic Role in Halakhic Discourses: Volume II, 2001.

The Aggadic Role in Halakhic Discourses: Volume III, 2001.

Analysis and Argumentation in Rabbinic Judaism, 2003.

Analytical Templates of the Bavli, 2006.

Ancient Judaism and Modern Category-Formation: "Judaism," "Midrash," "Messianism," and Canon in the Past Quarter Century, 1986.

Canon and Connection: Intertextuality in Judaism, 1987.

Chapters in the Formative History of Judaism. 2006

Dual Discourse, Single Judaism, 2001.

The Emergence of Judaism: Jewish Religion in Response to the Critical Issues of the First Six Centuries, 2000.

First Principles of Systemic Analysis: The Case of Judaism within the History of Religion, 1988.

The Halakhah and the Aggadah, 2001.

Halakhic Hermeneutics, 2003.

Halakhic Theology: A Sourcebook, 2006.

The Hermeneutics of Rabbinic Category Formations, 2001.

Hosea in Talmud and Midrash, 2006.

How Important Was the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Formation of Rabbinic Judaism? 2006.

How Not to Study Judaism, Examples and Counter-Examples, Volume One: Parables, Rabbinic Narratives, Rabbis' Biographies, Rabbis' Disputes, 2004.

How Not to Study Judaism, Examples and Counter-Examples, Volume Two: Ethnicity and Identity versus Culture and

Religion, How Not to Write a Book on Judaism, Point and Counterpoint, 2004.

How the Halakhah Unfolds: Moed Qatan in the Mishnah, Tosefta Yerushalmi and Bavli, 2006.

The Implicit Norms of Rabbinic Judaism. 2006.

Intellectual Templates of the Law of Judaism, 2006.

Is Scripture the Origin of the Halakhah? 2005.

Israel and Iran in Talmudic Times: A Political History, 1986.

Israel's Politics in Sasanian Iran: Self-Government in Talmudic Times, 1986.

Jeremiah in Talmud and Midrash: A Source Book, 2006.

Judaism in Monologue and Dialogue, 2005.

Major Trends in Formative Judaism, Fourth Series, 2002.

Major Trends in Formative Judaism, Fifth Series, 2002.

Messiah in Context: Israel's History and Destiny in Formative Judaism, 1988.

Micah and Joel in Talmud and Midrash, 2006.

The Native Category - Formations of the Aggadah: The Later Midrash-Compilations - Volume I, 2000.

The Native Category - Formations of the Aggadah: The Earlier Midrash-Compilations - Volume II, 2000.

Paradigms in Passage: Patterns of Change in the Contemporary Study of Judaism, 1988.

Parsing the Torah, 2005.

Praxis and Parable: The Divergent Discourses of Rabbinic Judaism, 2006.

Rabbi Jeremiah, 2006.

Reading Scripture with the Rabbis: The Five Books of Moses, 2006.

The Religious Study of Judaism: Description, Analysis and Interpretation, Volume 1, 1986.

The Religious Study of Judaism: Description, Analysis, Interpretation, Volume 2, 1986.

The Religious Study of Judaism: Context, Text, Circumstance, Volume 3, 1987.

The Religious Study of Judaism: Description, Analysis, Interpretation, Volume 4: Ideas of History, Ethics, Ontology, and Religion in Formative Judaism, 1988.

Struggle for the Jewish Mind: Debates and Disputes on Judaism Then and Now, 1988.

The Talmud Law, Theology, Narrative: A Sourcebook, 2005.

Talmud Torah: Ways to God's Presence through Learning: An Exercise in Practical Theology, 2002.

Texts Without Boundaries: Protocols of Non-Documentary Writing in the Rabbinic Canon: Volume I: The Mishnah, Tractate Abot, and the Tosefta, 2002.

Texts Without Boundaries: Protocols of Non-Documentary Writing in the Rabbinic Canon: Volume II: Sifra and Sifré to Numbers, 2002.

- Texts Without Boundaries: Protocols of Non-Documentary Writing in the Rabbinic Canon: Volume III: Sifré to Deuteronomy and Mekhilta Attributed to Rabbi Ishmael*, 2002.
- Texts Without Boundaries: Protocols of Non-Documentary Writing in the Rabbinic Canon: Volume IV: Leviticus Rabbah*, 2002.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume I: Pesiqta deRab Kahana*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume II: Genesis Raba*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume III: Song of Songs Rabbah*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume IV: Leviticus Rabbah*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume V: Lamentations Rabbati*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume VI: Ruth Rabbah and Esther Rabbah*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume VII: Sifra*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume VIII: Sifré to Numbers and Sifré to Deuteronomy*, 2001.
- A Theological Commentary to the Midrash - Volume IX: Mekhilta Attributed to Rabbi Ishmael*, 2001.
- Theological Dictionary of Rabbinic Judaism: Part One: Principal Theological Categories*, 2005.
- Theological Dictionary of Rabbinic Judaism: Part Two: Making Connections and Building Constructions*, 2005.

Theological Dictionary of Rabbinic Judaism: Part Three: Models of Analysis, Explanation, and Anticipation, 2005.

The Theological Foundations of Rabbinic Midrash, 2006.

Theology of Normative Judaism: A Source Book, 2005.

Theology in Action: How the Rabbis of the Talmud Present Theology (Aggadah) in the Medium of the Law (Halakhah). An Anthology, 2006

The Torah and the Halakhah: The Four Relationships, 2003.

The Unity of Rabbinic Discourse: Volume I: Aggadah in the Halakhah, 2001.

The Unity of Rabbinic Discourse: Volume II: Halakhah in the Aggadah, 2001.

The Unity of Rabbinic Discourse: Volume III: Halakhah and Aggadah in Concert, 2001.

The Vitality of Rabbinic Imagination: The Mishnah Against the Bible and Qumran, 2005.

Who, Where and What is "Israel?": Zionist Perspectives on Israeli and American Judaism, 1989.

The Wonder-Working Lawyers of Talmudic Babylonia: The Theory and Practice of Judaism in its Formative Age, 1987.

Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs

New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism, Volume 2: Judaic and Christian Interpretation of Texts: Contents and Contexts, 1987.

New Perspectives on Ancient Judaism, Volume 3: Judaic and Christian Interpretation of Texts: Contents and Contexts, 1987.

Jacob Neusner and James F. Strange
Religious Texts and Material Contexts, 2001.

David Novak and Norbert M. Samuelson
Creation and the End of Days: Judaism and Scientific Cosmology,
1986.
Proceedings of the Academy for Jewish Philosophy, 1990.

Risto Nurmela
*The Mouth of the Lord Has Spoken: Inner-Biblical Allusions in
Second and Third Isaiah*, 2006.

Aaron D. Panken
*The Rhetoric of Innovation: Self-Conscious Legal Change in
Rabbinic Literature*, 2005.

Norbert M. Samuelson
*Studies in Jewish Philosophy: Collected Essays of the Academy for
Jewish Philosophy, 1980-1985*, 1987.

Benjamin Edidin Scolnic
Alcimus, Enemy of the Maccabees, 2004.

*If the Egyptians Drowned in the Red Sea Where are Pharaoh's
Chariots?: Exploring the Historical Dimension of the Bible*,
2005.

Rivka Ulmer
*Pesiqta Rabbati: A Synoptic Edition of Pesiqta Rabbati Based
upon all Extant Manuscripts and the Editio Princeps, Volume
III*, 2002.

Manfred H. Vogel
*A Quest for a Theology of Judaism: The Divine, the Human and
the Ethical Dimensions in the Structure-of-Faith of Judaism
Essays in Constructive*, 1987.

Anita Weiner

Renewal: Reconnecting Soviet Jewry to the Soviet People: A Decade of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC) Activities in the Former Soviet Union 1988-1998, 2003.

Eugene Weiner and Anita Weiner

Israel-A Precarious Sanctuary: War, Death and the Jewish People, 1989.

The Martyr's Conviction: A Sociological Analysis, 2002.

Leslie S. Wilson

The Serpent Symbol in the Ancient Near East: Nahash and Asherah: Death, Life, and Healing, 2001.