



## **Travelling to Babylon—For Good**

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## 1. Midrash Sifri, Re'eh #80

“And you shall inherit it and dwell in it and observe to do all of these laws”—It happened that R. Judah b. Beteira and R. Mattia b. Heresh... were leaving the Land of Israel and they arrived at Paltom, and they remembered the Land of Israel. They raised their eyes and tears poured forth, and they tore their garments and they recited this scripture: (Dt. 11:31, quoted earlier)... They said, “the settlement of the Land of Israel is equal in weight to all of the other commandments of the Torah.”

## 2. Babylonian Talmud Hullin 51a

א"ל רב ספרא לאביי חזי מר האי צורבא מרבנן דאתא ממערבא ואמר רב עזירא שמני ואמר מעשה ובא לפני רבי מחט שנמצאת בעובי בית הכוסות מצד אחד וטרפה שלח ליה לא אתא לגביה אזל הוא לגביה הוה קאי אאיגרא אמר נחות מר וניתי לא נחית סליק הוא לגביה א"ל אימא לי גופא דעובדא היכי הוה

The Gemara relates that **Rav Safra said to Abaye: Did the Master see a Torah scholar who came from the West, Eretz Yisrael, and said: My name is Rav Avira? He said that there was an incident that came before Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi involving a needle that was found in the thickness of the reticulum protruding from only one side, and he deemed the animal a *tereifa*. Abaye sent a message to Rav Avira calling for him to come and explain the matter, since this contradicts the *baraita* that states that the animal is a *tereifa* only if the needle protrudes from both sides. Rav Avira **did not come before him**, so Abaye **went before Rav Avira**. Rav Avira **was standing on the roof**. Abaye **said to him: Let Master descend and come**, but Rav Avira **did not descend**. Abaye **ascended to him and said to him: Say to me, what were the circumstances of the incident itself?****

אמר ליה מפטיר כנסיות אנא לעילא מרבי רבה והוה רב הונא ציפוראה ורבי יוסי מדאה יושבין לפניו ובאת לפני רבי מחט שנמצאת בעובי בית הכוסות מצד אחד והפכה רבי ומצא עליה קורט דם וטרפה ואמר אם אין שם מכה קורט דם מנין אמר ליה טרח טרייה להווא גברא מתניתין היא המסס ובית הכוסות שניקבו לחוץ

Rav Avira **said to him: I am a director of assemblies** in the study hall. I was standing **above the Great Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, and Rav Huna of Tzipori and Rabbi Yosei of Medea were sitting before him, and a needle came before Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi that was found in the thickness of the reticulum protruding from one side, i.e., the inside, and Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi turned the reticulum over and found a drop of blood on the outside, parallel to the wound on the inside, and he deemed the animal a *tereifa*. And he said: If there is no wound on the outside there as well, from where is this drop of blood?** Abaye **said to Rav Avira: You caused that man trouble needlessly. This is nothing more than the mishna, which states that an animal is a *tereifa* if the omasum or the reticulum was perforated to the outside.**

### 3. Babylonian Talmud Hullin 57a-b

כי סליק ר' אבא אשכחיה לרבי זירא דיתיב וקאמר אמר רב הונא אמר רב שמוטת ירך בעוף טרפה אמר ליה חיי דמר מיומא דסליק מר להכא

The Gemara recounts: **When Rabbi Abba went up** from Babylonia to Eretz Yisrael, **he found Rabbi Zeira sitting and saying: Rav Huna said that Rav said that a dislocated femur in a bird renders it a *tereifa*.** Rabbi Abba said to him: **By Master's life, since the day that Master came up to here, Eretz Yisrael,**

הוה לן פתחון פה קמיה דרב הונא ושאיילניה ואמר לן שמוטת ירך בעוף כשירה

**we had the opportunity to speak with Rav Huna, and we asked him about this matter, and he said to us: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher.**

ואשכחתייה נמי לרבי ירמיה בר אבא דיתיב וקא בדיק בצומת הגידין ואקשי ליה לא סבר לה מר הא דאמר רב הונא אמר רב שמוטת ירך בעוף כשרה א"ל אנא מתניתין ידענא בהמה שנחתכו רגליה מן הארכובה ולמטה כשרה מן הארכובה ולמעלה פסולה וכן שניטל צומת הגידין ואמר רב עלה וכן בעוף

**And I also found Rabbi Yirmeya bar Abba sitting and inspecting birds at the convergence of sinews in the thigh. And I posed a difficulty to him: Doesn't Master maintain in accordance with this statement that Rav Huna says that Rav says: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher?** Rabbi Yirmeya bar Abba said to me: **I know the mishna (76a): With regard to an animal whose hind legs were severed, if they were severed from the leg joint and below, it is kosher; from the leg joint and above, it is a *tereifa* and unfit for consumption. And likewise an animal whose convergence of sinews in the thigh was removed is a *tereifa*. And Rav said about this: And likewise with regard to a bird.**

ואמרי ליה אי הכי קשיא דרב אדרב אישתיק ואקשי ליה ודלמא שני ליה לרב בין שמוטה לחתוכה ואמר לי ואת מפרשת שמעתיה דרב בפירוש אמר רב שמוטה כשרה חתוכה פסולה

**And I said to him: If so, this statement of Rav poses a difficulty for that statement of Rav. Rabbi Yirmeya bar Abba was silent. And I challenged him: But perhaps there is a difference for Rav between a dislocated femur and a severed one. And he said to me: And are you interpreting Rav's *halakha* based on your own reasoning? Rav said explicitly: A dislocated femur is kosher, while a severed femur renders the animal unfit for consumption.**

#### 4. Babylonian Talmud Ketubbot 110b-111a

ר' זירא הוה קמשתמיט מיניה דרב יהודה דבעא למיסק לארץ ישראל דאמר רב יהודה כל  
העולה מבבל לארץ ישראל עובר בעשה שנאמר  
(ירמיהו כז) בבבל יובאו ושמה יהיו עד יום פקדי אותם נאם ה

R. Zeira was avoiding R. Judah, for [the former] wanted to go up to the Land of Israel, while R. Judah said, “*Anyone who goes up from Babylonia to the Land of Israel violates a positive commandment*, for it is said, [111A] ‘They shall be brought to Babylonia and there they shall be until the day that I remember them, says the Lord’ (Jer. 27:22).”

אמר רב ענן כל הקבור בארץ ישראל כאילו קבור תחת המזבח כתיב הכא (שמות כ) מזבח  
אדמה תעשה לי וכתוב התם (דברים לב) וכפר אדמתו עמו

עולא הוה רגיל דהוה סליק לארץ ישראל נח נפשיה בחוץ לארץ אתו אמרו ליה לרבי אלעזר  
אמר אנת עולא (עמוס ז) על אדמה טמאה תמות

אמרו לו ארונו בא

אמר להם אינו דומה קולטתו מחיים לקולטתו לאחר מיתה

Said R. Anan, “Whoever is buried in the Land of Israel is as though he were buried under the altar. Here it is written, ‘An altar of earth you shall make to me’ (Deut. Ex. 20:21), and elsewhere, ‘And his land does make expiation for his people’ (Deut. 32:42).”

Ulla would regularly go up to the Land of Israel. He died outside the Land. They came and told R. Eleazar. He said, “You, Ulla – ‘should you die in an unclean field’ (Amos 7:17)?”

They told him, “His bier is coming.”

He said to them, “Being gathered in [to the Land] when alive is not the same thing as being gathered into the Land after death...”

אמר רב יהודה כל הדר בבבל כאילו דר בארץ ישראל שנאמר (זכריה ב) הוי ציון המלטי  
יושבת בת בבל

Said R. Judah, “*Whoever dwells in Babylonia is as though he dwelt in the Land of Israel*: ‘Ho, Zion, escape, you who dwells with the daughter of Babylonia’ (Zech. 2:11)...”

# The Fertile Crescent

