משנה מסכת אבות פרק ב משנה ד

הלל אומר אל תפרוש מן הצבור ואל תאמן בעצמך עד יום מותך ואל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו ואל תאמר דבר שאי אפשר לשמוע שסופו להשמע ואל תאמר לכשאפנה אשנה שמא לא תפנה:

רבינו יונה

ואל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו - גם זה הוא מן הענין שאין לאדם להאמין בעצמו ולא לסמוך בדעתו יותר מדאי וכאשר יראה חברו במעלה גדולה ולא יתנהג ביושרו אל יאמר "אם הייתי ממלא מקומו לא הייתי עושה דבר רע מכל אשר הוא עושה לרעה", לפי שאינך יודע וכמוך כמותו בתאות בני אדם ואולי המעלה ההיא מטה גם אותד אז – כשתגיע למקומו ולמעלתו ותעביר על מדותך יהיה לך רשות להרהר אחר מדותיו.

"רש"ר"

שיבא כמו כן לידך ותנצל ממנו.

וכן מצינו בירבעם – בשעה שבנה שלמה בהמ"ק והשלים אותו הניח מפתחותיו תחת מראשותיו כדי שישכים למחר לקרב תמיד של שחר.בזמנו.

מה עשתה בת פרעה?

הכניסה לו על מטתו כמין רקיע של נחשת, מזלות וכוכבים מצויירות בו, כדי להטעותו בלילה וליהנות מגופו של אותו צדיק ועברו עליו ארבע שעות ביום ולא עמד ולא קרב תמיד של שחר

ועל אותו שעה שנינו בגמרא ירושלמי:

"על תמיד של שחר שקרב בארבע שעות" "יעל תמיד של

?מה עשה ירבעם

קבץ כל שבטו של אפרים והשכים לפתחו של שלמה להרתיעו על זאת.

יצאה בת קול ואמרה לו: "רשע, אתה מחייבו על השוגג?!"

וז"ש הכתוב "כדבר אפרים רתת וגו"" – כשנרתע אפרים והגיד על התמיד ששהה

מצודת דוד הושע פרק יג פסוק א

כדבר אפרים - ירבעם הבא מאפרים כשדבר ברעדה דברים קשים להוכיח את שלמה כמ"ש במ"א עי"ז זכה להתרומם בישראל למלוך עליהם וכאשר חטא בבעל נטרד מן העולם:

Mishnah Avot 2:4

Hillel says: Do not separate yourself from the collective; do not believe in yourself until the day of your death; do not judge your fellow until you reach his place; do not say something that cannot be heard, as it will eventually be heard; do not say "when I am freed up I will learn", lest you never be freed up.

Rabbeinu Yonah to Avot 2:4

"do not judge your fellow until you reach his place" – this continues the theme that a person should not have faith in himself, nor rely on his own judgment overmuch, so that when he sees his fellow of great position not behaving with integrity, he should not say "Were I to fill his place, I would not do any of the wrongs that he is doing", as you don't know, and you share human desires with him, and perhaps that greatness would cause you to stray as well – when you reach his place and greatness, and you nonetheless retain your character, you will have permission to question his character.

Rashi to Avot 2:4

"do not judge your fellow until you reach his place" – that the same challenges face you, and you survive them.

Thus we have found regarding Yorov'om – at the time that Shlomoh completed building the Temple, he left the keys under his head so that he would awake early the next morning to bring the morning sacrifice in its time.

What did the daughter of Pharaoh do?

She introduced over his bed a skyscene of copper, with planets and stars drawn on it, so as to confuse him at night and to benefit from the body of that righteous man, so that the fourth hour of the day came without him arising, and the morning sacrifice was not brought.

About that time we have learned in the Gemara Yerushalmi –

"(Rabbi Yehudah ben Bava testified) that the morning sacrifice was brought in the fourth hour" -

What did Yorov'om do?

He gathered his entire tribe of Efraim and came to the door of Shlomoh to rebuke him for this.

A heavenly voice emerged and said to him: "Wicked man – you hold him liable for an accidental violation1?"

This is the meaning of Scripture (Hoshea 13:1) "When Efraim spoke rebuke . . .

Metzudat David to Hosheia 13:1

"When Efraim spoke rebuke" – Yorov'om, who came from Efraim when he spoke, despite his fear, hard words to rebuke Shlomoh, as the midrash aggada writes, he merited becoming exalted in Israel to rule over them, but when he sinned with Baal, he was driven from the world.

The Vilna Gaon held that Mishnah, like Torah, can be interpreted via midrash as well as pshat. This position is congenial to those who adopt the Rashbam/Averroist understanding that pshat and derash are complementary but utterly incommensurate modes of reading text, but less so to those like me, who see them generally as different presentations of the same mode of reading. Thus when R. Barukh Frankel Teomim translates "Da ma lemaalah mimkha" as "Use yourself a model for understanding what is Above", or alternatively "Use your own incomprehensibility as evidence for the existence of even less comprehensible things", or even "Know that everything Above comes from you", I admire the intellectual ingenuity but find it hard to regard him as offering an interpretation of the text. Nonetheless, what I want to present this week may be an example of a very particular mode of rabbinic midrash on the Mishnah.

Another word of introduction is necessary. A prevalent substantive element of rabbinic midrash is the insertion of an independently sufficient story into the flow of the Biblical text. The work of Professor James Kugel² has convinced me that the exegetical "hooks" that in aggadic Midrash apparently generate and justify these supplemental stories are often (if not always) post facto, meaning that the stories existed before those specific exegetical connections were developed. This leaves open the question of whether a particular expansion was developed in order to interpret the overall story as a whole, and which are simply drawn from the same milieu as the overall story, but didn't make the editorial cut. As Professor Kugel points out, this is a way of saying that they are Torah Sheb'al Peh passed down by masoret. To make the point clear, it is certainly possible that some of these expansions are surviving fragments of works referred to but not incorporated into Tanakh, such as Sefer haYashar.

The story of Yorov'om awakening Shlomoh is in midrashic contexts connected to Hoshea 13a, but it is hard to believe that the narrative was generated by that verse. An alternative version, in which Shlomoh is roused and rebuked by his mother BatSheva rather than by Yorov'om, is read somewhat more convincingly into Mishlei 31, but that still seems post facto. Now some of the motifs in the story - perhaps the seduction that causes the hero to be tardy, and the use of an artificial night sky to fool him - may be found in folktales, but I suspect that the true Jewish locus of this story is Mishnah Eduyot 6:1, in which Rabbi Yehuda ben Bava testifies that the daily morning sacrifice could be brought as late as the fourth hour. Our story – whether featuring BatSheva or Yorov'om – is an explanation of how this issue could ever have come up in practice.

Could it have developed primarily as an exegesis of that Mishnah, on the basis of the connections repeatedly drawn in Melakhim between the houses Shlomoh built for G-d and Bat Par'oh respectively? The clearest parallel case I have is the story of the deposition of Rabban Gamliel on Berakhot 27, which explains how in Mishnah Yadayim 4:4 Rabban Gamliel was overruled on a halakhic issue, when elsewhere he simply imposed his will. That story itself contains a digression about Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah's miraculous aging that seems to be grounded in his self-description in Berakhot 1:5 as "k'ven shiv'im", translated "as if I were 70", although the same phrase is applied to Rabbi Yehoshua in Mekhilta deRabbi Yishmael Masekhet dePischa 16, where it seems to mean "around 70". Each of these are "midrashim" on the Mishnah, but it is not clear

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¹ I was introduced to his position by Dr. Yaakov Elman

² (<u>In Potiphar's House</u>; for a valuable different perspective see Joshua Levinson's article in <u>Creation and Composition</u>, ed. Jeffrey Rubinstein)

to me which if any of them were generated by the texts they are attached to. It seems equally likely that they embody oral traditions that were later attached to, or grew up together with, those texts.

The connection to Avot 2:4, which works only with the Yorov'om version, is certainly post-facto – it is not clear to me whether Rashi himself made the connection, or whether he was quoting an earlier source that did so³. But the story changes meaning as it is connected to different texts. Showing that requires us, at long last, to approach the story itself.

Here's how I understand it, as it appears in Bamidbar Rabbahⁱ and Vayikra Rabbahⁱⁱ. On the very night the Temple was completed, Shlomoh notoriously marries a woman who, whether or not she formally converted, never surrendered her idolatrous practices and beliefs. That woman, on that night, goes to extraordinary lengths to seduce him long enough to prevent him from inaugurating the Temple – she creates an artificial night sky, and under its light she demonstrates for him all the best dances and songs that idolatry – likely fertility cults - has to offer. She almost succeeds – his mother, or alternatively Yorov'om, wakes him at the very last moment, just before G-d decides to destroy the world. But the dream of an Israel whole and at peace – of Shlomoh establishing a kingdom that is shalem and has shalom – is shattered.

At its core, this story is about the dangers of ecstatic spirituality, which is inseparable from the impulses for sexuality and idolatry⁴. It is no coincidence that Shlomoh sins as he completes the Temple. On that theme, the hero is the one who rouses and rebukes him. In Bamidbar Rabbah, where Batsheva wakes him, this seems unambivalently true.

Vayikra Rabbah, however, has Yorov'om as an alternate waker, and Yorov'om is an archvillain, and even condemned as such in the putative prooftext from Hosheia! Accordingly, Vayikra Rabbah adds a coda in which G-d criticizes Yorov'om for judging Shlomoh harshly⁵, and promises to punish him by giving him a taste of monarchy and its temptations, which he will surely fail to withstand. Yorov'om's descent into archvillainy is therefore a consequence of his rebuke of Shlomoh here, which is seen as culpable rather than heroic. It is this version that Rashi connects to our mishnah, for Yorov'om's fault is his willingness to condemn Shlomoh without having shared his experience.

This connection seems forced, however, for two reasons:

- a) it makes Shlomoh the victim rather than the villain, which is a poor fit for the elaborate construction of his sin
- b) it makes Shlomoh's fall the consequence of power, rather than of spirituality, which makes the connection to the Temple irrelevant.

Note that Metzudat David, in his commentary on Hoshea, argues that Yorov'om earned his kingship for rebuking Shlomoh, but then lost it for later sins. In other words, he removes the connection to our Mishnah, and the coda found in Vayikra Rabbah, and simply inserts Yorov'om as hero in place of BatSheva. In his hands, the story becomes a justification for Yorov'om's rise, rather than seeing that rise as only a means toward his poetically just punishment.

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³ (I didn't have access to Rashi on Avot, but the diffusion pattern of this connection suggests to me that here the Meyuchas leRashi correctly reports him.)

^{4 (}See as a parallel my shiur and sourcesheet "Why is Cupid Blind?" and this sourcesheet.)

f (for a parallel, see Rav Ashi's dream about Menasheh on Sanhedrin 102b)

But moving the story around does not merely change its focus - it actually reverses its meaning along at least one axis. In what I see as the original version in Bamidbar Rabbah about BatSheva, which is adapted whole by Metzudat David about Yorov'om, willingness to critique the powerful is an important virtue. But the version in Vayikra Rabbah, especially when cited in the context of our Mishnah, sees it as a vice, which reflects an unjustified sense of spiritual superiority. As Rabbeinu Yonah comments, one should recognize that the temptations of power are legion, and that you would likely do worse in the same position.

One can split the difference, and argue that critique is legitimate so long as it is made with humility. One can also argue that this challenge is at the core of Hillel's dictum regardless – the claim that one cannot judge someone else in the absence of shared experience necessarily limits critique. But I would prefer to leave this story as it is in Bamidbar Rabbah, or read it as Metzudat David does, rather than make the experience of power an effective insulator against the rebukes of the powerless.

במדבר רבה (וילנא) פרשה י:ד

הה"ד (משלי לא) "דברי למואל מלך" - למה נקרא שלמה למואל? א"ר ישמעאל:

באותו הלילה שהשלים שלמה מלאכת בית המקדש נשא בתיה בת פרעה, והיה שם צהלת שמחת ביהמ"ק וצהלת בת פרעה, ועלתה צהלת שמחת בת פרעה יותר מצהלת בית המקדש –

- "מתלא כולא מחנפים למלכא"

ולכך נקרא למואל, שהשליך עול מלכות שמים מעלי, כלומר "למה לו א-ל".

- ובאותו שעה עלתה במחשבה לפני הקב"ה להחריב את ירושלים

הה"ד (ירמיה לב) "כי על אפי ועל חמתי וגו"".

:רבנן אמרי

אלף מיני זמר הכניסה לו בת פרעה, והיה מצוה לזמר לפניו באותו לילה, והיתה אומרת לו "כך מזמרין לפני עבודת כוכבים פלונית". מה עשתה בת פרעה? כמין פרס שטחה לו עבודת כוכבים פלונית, וכך מזמרין לפני עבודת כוכבים פלונית". מה עשתה בת פרעה? כמין פרס שטחה למעלה ממנו, וקבעה בו כל מיני אבנים טובות ומרגליות שהיו מבהיקות כעין כוכבים ומזלות, וכל זמן שהיה שלמה רוצה לעמוד, היה רואה אותן הכוכבים והמזלות, והיה ישן לו עד ארבע שעות.

א"ר לוי: אותו היום נתקרב תמיד בארבע שעות.

ועל אותה שעה שנינו:

מעשה היה ונתקרב תמיד של שחר בארבע שעות, והיו ישראל עצבים, שהיה יום חנוכת בית המקדש ולא היו יכולין לעשות מפני שהיה ישן שלמה, והיו מתיראים להקיצו מפני אימת המלכות. הלכו והודיעו לבת שבע אמו, והלכה היא והקיצתו והוכיחתו –

הה"ד (משלי לא) "משא אשר יסרתו אמו" -

א"ר יוחנן: - מלמד שכפפתו אמו על העמוד ואמרה לו (שם): "מה ברי?!" הכל יודעין שאביך ירא שמים היה - עכשיו יאמרו כן "בת שבע היא אמו גרמה לו";

- (שם) "ומה בר בטני?!" כל נשים של בית אביך, כיון שמתעברות שוב אין רואות פני המלך, ואני דחקתי ונכנסתי כדי שיהא הבן מלובן ומזורז.
- (שם) "ומה בר נדרי?!" כל נשים של בית אביך, כיון שמתעברות היו נודרות ואומרות יהיה לנו בן הגון למלכות, ואני נדרתי ואמרתי יהיה לי בן זרוז ומלומד בתורה והגון לנביאות,
 - (שם) "אל תתן לנשים חילך" שתהא רודף אחר זמה, שהם מטלטלין דעתו של אדם . . .

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יב:ה פרשה יב:ה (וילנא) פרשה יב:ה
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נ"ר יודו:

כל אותן שבע שנים שבנה שלמה בית המקדש, לא שתה בהן יין; כיון שבנאו ונשא בתיה בת פרעה, אותו הלילה שתה יין, והיו שם ב' בלוזמאות, אחת שמחה לבנין ב"ה ואחת שמחה לבת פרעה –

אמר הקב"ה: "של מי אקבל? של אלו, או של אלו?"

– באותה שעה עלה על דעתו להחריב את ירושלים

הה"ד (ירמיה לב) "כי על אפי ועל חמתי היתה לי העיר הזאת וגו"" -

א"ר הילל בר הילני: "כזה שהוא עובר במקום המטונף ועקם חוטמו".

:אמר רבי חוניא

פ' מיני ריקודין רקדה בת פרעה באותה הלילה, והיה שלמה ישן עד ד' שעות ביום ובמפתחות של בית המקדש נתונות תחת ראשו –

."על תמיד של שחר שקרב בארבע שעות.".

נכנסה אמו והוכיחתו.

וי"א: ירבעם בן נבט נכנס והוכיחו.

ויכול היה?!

רבי חגי בשם רבי יצחק: עמד וכנס אלף מתוך שבטו, ונכנס והוכיחו

הה"ד (הושע יג) "כדבר אפרים רתת" - כדבר ירבעם ריתותו של שלמה.

אמר לו הקב"ה: "למה אתה מוכיחו?! נשיא הוא בישראל! חייך שאני מטעימך משררותו, ואין אתה יכול לעמוד רה!"

כיון שנכנס למלכות, מיד (שם) "ויאשם בבעל וימות".