



A TALMUDIC AND CULINARY EXPLORATION OF WOMEN IN JUDAISM

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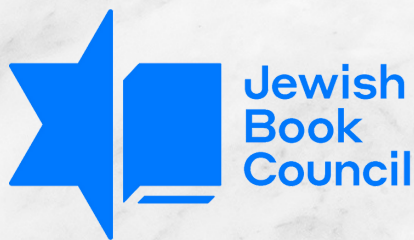
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Presented by



Feeding Women of the Talmud, Feeding Ourselves is a community cookbook co-created with 129 Jewish women from around the world. 60 Rabbis, Rabbinical students, Jewish teachers, and emerging thought leaders contributed to the Talmudic narratives, and 60 female professional chefs and passionate homecooks contributed to the recipes. The addition of this female-focused point of view to these women's Talmudic stories—which were recorded and edited by men—is a bright and encouraging testament to a modern generation of women engaging in Jewish learning.

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Bathsheba / בתשבע

I. Read and discuss the story and context

- a) Take turns reading the story and context aloud.
- b) Then, take turns sharing details that stand out to each of you.
 - I notice...
 - I wonder...
 - I think...
 - What do you think?
- c) Finally, what do you think the story is about? What does it mean to you?

Story and Context

Bathsheba was a wife of King David and the mother of King Solomon. A story about King Solomon and his mother falls in a chapter about rebellious children at the end of a discussion of the negative effects of wine and alcoholism. The Rabbis explore the relationship between King Solomon and his mother by expanding a tale about King Lemuel and his mother in the book of Proverbs (31:1-4). The Rabbis often identify lesser known biblical characters with more central characters. In this case, the Rabbis assume that Lemuel is another name for Solomon. The Rabbis say that the story from the Proverbs teaches us that Bathsheba sees King Solomon engaged in excessive drinking and takes action to change his behavior.¹ She ties him to a pole and delivers a speech designed to turn him away from his foolish course to follow a path of righteousness.

¹ In other Rabbinic sources (eg. Midrash.Leviticus.Rabbah.12.5), Solomon has stayed up late drinking with his new wife, an Egyptian princess, on the eve of the Temple dedication. Seeing that the priests need the key to the Temple which is safely lodged under the king's pillow, his mother wakes him up and strikes him with her shoe before reciting a speech about the negative effects of women and wine. This context is lacking in the Talmud.

Talmud b. Sanhedrin 70b	סנהדרין ע:
<i>"The words of Lemuel, king of Massa, with which his mother admonished him"</i> (Proverbs 31:1): Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: This teaches that his mother tied him to a pillar and said to him: <i>"No, my son! No, O son of my womb! No, O son of my vows!"</i> (Proverbs 31:2) <i>"No, my son:"</i> Everyone knows that your father feared heaven, so now they will say that his mother caused him [to drink]. <i>"And no, O son of my womb:"</i> All the women of your father's house never see the king after they conceive, but I forced myself in and entered [the king's chamber] so that I would have a son who was vigorous and fair-skinned. <i>"And no, O son of my vow:"</i> All the women in your father's house would vow: "Let me have a son who is ready for kingship" but I vowed and said: "Let me have a son who is vigorous and filled with Torah and ready for prophecy." Rabbi Yitzḥak said: From where can it be learned that Solomon repented and conceded to his mother? As it is written: <i>"For I am more foolish than a man, and have not the understanding of a man"</i> (Proverbs 30:2).	"דברי למואל מלך משא אשר יסרתו אמו" אמר ר' יוחנן משום ר"ש בן יוחי מלמד שכפאתו אמו על העמוד ואמרה לו "מה ברי ומה בר בטני ומה בר נדרי" "מה ברי" הכל יודעים שאביך ירא שמים הוה --עכשיו יאמרו אמו גרמה לו "ומה בר בטני" כל הנשים של בית אביך כיון שמתעברות שוב אינן רואות פני המלך ואני דחקתי ונכנסתי כדי שיהא לי בן מזורז ומלובן "ומה בר נדרי" כל נשים של בית אביך היו נודרות יהא לי בן הגון למלכות ואני נדרתי ואמרתי יהא לי בן זריז וממולא בתורה והגון לנביאות אמר ר' יצחק מניין שחזר שלמה והודה לאמו דכתיב (משלי ל, ב) כי בער אנכי מאיש ולא בינת אדם לי

II. Read and discuss the Aggadah (time-permitting)

- Read the aggadah section individually.
- Share with your havruta what you notice about what the story means to the author.

Aggadah

One of the most emotionally challenging parts of parenting is that we cannot control our children. As we raise young children, this fact is inconvenient. We want them to eat certain foods, go to sleep at a certain time, and learn some basic life skills - but we have no actual

control over whether or not they do. When our children emerge into adulthood, this challenge becomes existential. What if our child adopts values which feel alien or abhorrent to us? What if they make choices which are harmful to their health and wellbeing? We come face to face with how much our identity is tied up with our children's conduct. It feels like if they are good, we have done good. If they do ill in society, then we have failed.

Before Solomon's birth, Bathsheba is disempowered. Desired by a king who uses treachery to deprive her of her husband, she has no control of her fate. Motherhood has crystalized a thread of power for her. From the moment of pregnancy, she behaves with determined perseverance. Confronted by a son who has turned to alcohol, she now fears that her maternal labor was for naught. As modern readers, we chafe at and disagree with Bathsheba's use of physical force but we empathize with the sense of desperation that led her there.

Bathsheba is ultimately successful in convincing her wayward son to repent. She uses her personal, maternal power to turn the most powerful man in the land from a path of apathetic drunkenness to a path of righteousness. She achieves her ultimate goal of applying all her resources to bring her son to a better version of himself: for her own benefit, for his benefit, and for the benefit of Israel. Her story reminds us that the parent-child relationship continues into adulthood and that even the most powerful of kings still has a mother.

III. Bringing it Home (3-5 min)

- [optional] Choose one prompt below to discuss with your havruta.
- Record one insight you have gleaned from your study on a sticky note. Put it on the poster with your Talmudic woman's name on it.

When you are done learning together, thank your havruta!

Prompts

- The Rabbis stress that a child's debauchery reflects poorly on their parents. Solomon's mother fears she, rather than his father, will be blamed for his bad behavior. Does society hold parents responsible for their children's behavior, even when they are adults? Are mothers and fathers praised or blamed disproportionately for their parenting?
- Solomon's mother expresses the wish that her son be "vigorous and fair-skinned." Today we read this as prejudice on the basis of skin color. How can adults relate to children in ways which dismantle entrenched colorism and racism?

Contributed by Rabbi Miriam-Simma Walfish

he ate it. Mar Zutra said: The ruling does not follow any of these statements. Rather, it is like this one, as it was stated: Mustard that was prepared before Shabbat may be softened the next day by hand or by utensil, and one may place honey in it. And one may not beat it forcefully but may mix it gently.

אָמַר מַר זוּטְרָא: לִית הַלְכָתָא כְּכָל
הֵי שְׁמַעְתָּתָא, אֲלֵא כִּי הָא דְאַתְמַר:
חֲרָדֵל שְׁלִישׁ מְעַרְב שַׁבָּת, לְמַחֲר
מִמְחוּ בֵּין בֵּיד בֵּין בְּכָלִי וְנוֹתֵן לְתוֹכוֹ
דְּבִשׁ. וְלֹא יִטְרוֹף, אֲלֵא מְעַרְב.

Context

Rabbi Ze'eira's name, written זְעִירָא in Babylonian Jewish Aramaic, literally means “seed.” This passage is about mustard - not the yellow deli sauce we think of today, but a condiment made by crushing brown or white mustard seeds and dissolving them in vinegar, wine, or water. The reference to mustard here in the Tractate Shabbat, is a legal debate on the effect of the process and timing of the preparation on the permissibility of consumption.

The discussion leading up to this passage states a series of opinions about mustard preparation, including that on Shabbat one may prepare mustard by dissolving seeds in a jar of liquid, but not by crushing the seeds; as well as the opposite opinion, that crushing is permitted, but dissolving is prohibited. Since many Shabbat prohibitions are more lenient when it comes to food preparation, it is sensible that Rabbi Zei'ira's wife would be perplexed by the dismissal of her spicy sauce. However, the Talmud nevertheless is subtly critical of her failure to consider their methods of preparation. Inherent in this story is that the women are preparing food for the household and not spending their days discussing the laws of Shabbat, therefore they are less knowledgeable of the Shabbat laws than the Rabbis who are refusing their dressing.

II. Read and discuss the Aggadah (time-permitting)

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Aggadah

Rabbi Ze'eira's wife spent all week planning the dish she would bring to the community Shabbat lunch: a rainbow of chopped and lightly sauteed vegetables, supplemented with the fresh herbs she dried last August. As usual, she designed it dairy-free and nut-free, anticipating that these choices would lead to the largest number of people being able to enjoy it.

What brought these freshly harvested vegetables together was her homemade dressing. All of her neighbors and friends could agree: Rabbi Ze'eira's wife's unique dressings could make any person fall in love with any vegetable. Never trying to upstage any one ingredient over another,

she always seemed to know the right combination of oil, vinegar, and spices to unite leaves, fruits, roots, and seeds.

Just as she was whipping up yet another ephemeral concoction, a small paper bag at the back of her pantry caught her eye. Pausing her blender, she reached back and opened the folded corners, barely able to recognize the tiny brownish black specks at the bottom of the bag. These were wild garlic mustard seeds, harvested from dried out stalks while hiking in late fall. They would be the perfect addition to this summer salad medley. With her usual eyeballing technique, she tossed the entire bag of seeds into the blender.

As Rabbi Ze'eira's wife tried to fall asleep on Erev Shabbat her offering was already sitting in her refrigerator, ready to be carried down the block in a sustainably sourced mahogany bowl with matching serving utensils.

It was almost the summer solstice and everyone was excited to enjoy the community Shabbat lunch in the courtyard. Rabbi Ze'eira's wife placed her mahogany bowl on the buffet table alongside processed foods, packaged hummus, a few casseroles, a bowl containing mostly iceberg lettuce, and fizzy bottled sodas.

As soon as *Kiddush* and *Motzi* were recited, one by one people began to fill their plates.

By the time she made it to the front of the buffet line, there were no bagels in sight and barely any side dishes on the buffet. Except... there was her mahogany bowl - still full, both utensils cemented in their original position. No one was sampling her dish. It was as if it was invisible! Each person skipping over the myriad of color and flavor, and instead choosing pale tuna, egg salad and cola. What could be causing this oversight of her skill and effort?

Feeling humiliated, she wanted to interrogate each diner - what was drawing them away from her dish, but towards the others?

She decided to ask Rabbi Zahav, because she knew she would tell her the truth.

"Your dish," said Rabbi Zahav, taking an extra breath, "appears to be covered with tiny insects!" "Oh!" gasped Rabbi Ze'eira's wife. "Those aren't insects, they are seeds from wild garlic mustard!"

“How about we try this,” said Rabbi Zahav. “I’m going to give it a toss - that should integrate the seeds into the dish. Would you mind if I used these garlic stalks instead of your mahogany serving spoons?”

She placed a large portion of salad on her plate, making a point to show it off to everyone and eat it in plain sight.

Almost instantly, the buffet was swarming with folks, eager to dig into Rabbi Ze’eira’s wife’s dish.

III. Bringing it Home (3-5 min)

- [optional] Choose one prompt below to discuss with your havruta.
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Prompts

- Consider the relationship between your values and your ego. How do you balance living your truth and inspiring others with coming through as authentic and open minded? Is a dish you cook ever “yours”? Even if you’ve designed the recipe or grown the ingredients?
- When someone else prepares food for you that you either know or fear doesn’t meet your values, what are some ways you naturally respond or react?
- What are your priorities: sourcing of ingredients, method and location of preparation, food miles? How can modern Jews, with varying levels of Shabbat and kosher observance, balance the value of sharing food in the community with their personal preferences?

Contributed by Sarah Chandler



Rav Hisda's Daughter / בת רב חסדא

I. Discuss the Story and Context

- a) Take turns reading the story (and context if you choose) aloud.
- b) Then, take turns sharing details that stand out to each of you.
 - I notice...
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- c) Finally, what do you think the story is about? What does it mean to you?

Story

Rav Hisda, a well-known Rabbi of priestly and impoverished lineage, lived in Kafri, in southern Babylonia, in the second half of the third century and the first decades of the fourth century. Together with his wife, the daughter of Hanan bar Raba, he raised many children, among them a daughter who married Rami bar Hama and, after her first husband's death, married Rava. This woman is known in the Talmud as "Rav Hisda's daughter."

Talmud b. Chagigah 5a	חגיגה ה.
To what [does the following verse refer]? "God will bring every deed to judgment, whether good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:14)? (<i>The Rabbis understand this verse as indicating that God judges people harshly even for the good deeds they perform.</i>) Rava said: This refers to one who sends his wife meat that is not sliced, (i.e., that has not yet had the prohibited sciatic nerve removed)	מאי "אם טוב ואם רע"? ... רבא אמר: זה המשיגר לאשתו בשר שאינו מחותך בערבי שבתות.

on Shabbat eve. (<i>Since she is in a hurry she might not notice and will perhaps cook the prohibited meat.</i>) The Talmud exclaims: But Rava himself would send this type of meat to his wife on Shabbat eve! The Talmud answers: The daughter of Rav Hisda (<i>Rava's wife</i>) is different, as he was certain about her that she was an expert.	וְהָאֵלֶּיךָ רַבָּא מְשַׁגְרֵי! שְׂאֵנִי בֵּית רַב חֲסִידָא, דְּקִימִים לִיה בְּגִיּוּהָ דְּבִקְיָאָה.
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Context

Rav Hisda's daughter appears numerous times in Rabbinic sources, and in each case she is presented as an exceptional person.² In one passage, she appears as a precocious young girl sitting on her father's lap, correctly prophesying the future. Another passage depicts her as the devoted daughter of an important Rabbi, concerned about her father's health and sleeping habits. Elsewhere, she is depicted as the wife of the head of the yeshiva, going to extraordinary lengths to protect her husband from demons, especially those found in the bathroom. Other tractates describe her successfully advocating on behalf of women who came to her husband's court, or explicating the details of Rabbinic law with her husband, on behalf of other women. In Ketubbot 39b, her husband cites her in a halachic discussion with his colleague Abaye, and in Talmud b. Yevamot 34b Rava warns her that his colleagues are gossiping about her. In a particularly dramatic story, she jealously drives a rival rabbi's wife out of town when she fears that the woman might seduce her own husband.

The narrative of her death is quite shocking. The text describes that, within thirty days of delivering a baby, she immersed in a ritual bath without her husband present, caught cold, and died, her bier trailing her husband to the Babylonian city of Pumpedita.

In each Talmudic reference, the text presents Rav Hisda's daughter as a woman with close familial relationships to powerful Rabbinic figures, not least her father Rav Hisda and her second husband Rava, and, moreover, as a halachic authority in her own right, someone with integrity, charm, devotion, and smarts. Someone who ought to be trusted and respected. Especially in the court and the kitchen.

² See also, Talmud b. Bava Batra 12b, Talmud b. Eruvin 65a, Talmud b. Berakhot 62a, Talmud b. Ketubbot 85a, Talmud b. Chullin 44b, Ketubbot 39b, Talmud b. Yevamot 34b, Talmud b. Ketubbot 65a, Talmud b. Shabbat 129a, as well as Berakhot 56a, in which Rav Hisda's daughter's death also becomes a plot point.

II. Discuss the Aggadah (time-permitting)

- Read the aggadah section individually.
- Share with your havruta what you notice about what the story means to the author.

Aggadah

Rav Hisda's daughter was the daughter of an important Rabbi. As a member of a Rabbinic family, she learned Rabbinic traditions from her male relatives and had direct access to them, thereby able to insert her knowledge and opinions into the halachic process in ways that women from non-Rabbinic households or those of lower social class might not have had access to. This context helps us understand the significance of the stories about Rav Hisda's daughter in which she displays halachic knowledge about meat consumption, and also intervenes in conversations with her husband that relate to his work as a communal figure in the courthouse. ...

Rabbis' daughters represent a special class of women in Rabbinic texts...Wendy Zierler writes, in an article about depictions of rabbis' daughters in nineteenth-century Jewish literature, that "throughout Jewish history, the rabbi's daughter has occupied a 'borderland' between traditional Jewish gender divisions... As a borderland figure, the rabbi's daughter enjoys a privileged exposure to the world of Jewish scholarship and ritual leadership, presenting an alternative to the traditional binary divisions of Jewish gender roles."³

Studying depictions of Rabbis' daughters specifically in the Talmud, Dvora Weisberg notes that such women are often depicted as knowledgeable women, but they are also sometimes regarded with suspicion because of their power to wield knowledge of Torah and Rabbinic halachah in ways that undermine the Rabbis.⁴ In certain instances, their status as insiders is celebrated, and in others it is feared or marked as being especially dangerous. Their close proximity to Rabbinic figures might also have impacted their opinions about Rabbinic culture - though in complicated and perhaps counterintuitive ways. Their characters are sometimes evoked in Rabbinic sources to lend authority to a particular Rabbinic precept, and at other times to undermine or nuance it.⁵

³ Wendy Zierler, "The Rabbi's Daughter In and Out of the Kitchen: Feminist Literary Negotiations," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues* 5 (2002), 83-104, quote on 84.

⁴ Dvora Weisberg, "Desirable But Dangerous: Rabbis' Daughters in the Babylonian Talmud," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 75 (2004): 121-161.

⁵ Rav Hisda's daughter has also captured the imagination of academics, memorists and fiction writers, mentioned for example in Ilana Kurshan's *If All the Seas Were Ink: A Memoir* (St. Martin's Press, 2017); appears in Ruth Calderon's *A Bride for One Night: Talmudic Tales* (Jewish Publication Society, 2014); and features as the protagonist in Maggie Anton's work of historical fiction, *Rav Hisda's Daughter* (Penguin, 2012).

Rav Hisda's daughter does not only weigh in on matters of Rabbinic practice or law, however. She also exerts agency over her personal life. In Talmud b. Bava Batra 12b, when her father asks her whom she would like to marry, she answers unexpectedly, that she wishes to marry both of the men offered to her. And, decades later, when she is told that she won't be able to bear children with her second husband because more than ten years have passed since the death of her first husband, she again answers assertively that she intended to remarry for the entirety of her widowhood, and therefore such a rabbinic precept does not apply to her - she even speaks up to assure the men in the room that her womb hasn't closed up (Talmud b. Yevamot 34b).

...

What was Rav Hisda's daughter's name? We don't know, because the Talmud didn't think that was essential information to preserve. But what's in a name anyways? In the sources, she is remembered not by name but in relation to others, usually her father and husband - but she is not always defined by these relationships. Even without a known name, she exerts some degree of power and agency over her own choices, and also on behalf of others. When reading Talmudic passages about her or other Rabbinic women like her, we can ask: why did the text choose to include this story in its corpus, how and to what ends is it employing her character, and what values do the narratives about her promote?

Bringing it Home (3-5 min)

- [optional] Choose one prompt below to discuss with your havruta.
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Prompts

- What does your name mean, and how is it significant to you?
- Have you ever been in a position to give someone else a name? If so, how did it feel to make such an important decision on behalf of someone else?
- If you were asked to call yourself in relation to someone else, rather than using your personal name, how would you hope to be called? (e.g. "Daughter of..." or "Friend of..." of "Advocate for..." and so on)
- What are spaces and places in which you are most "in your comfort zone," and which make you uncomfortable or less confident - and what does that say about you?

Contributed by Sarit Kattan Gribetz



יהודית / Yehudit

I. Discuss the Story and Context

- a) Take turns reading the story (and context if you choose) aloud.
- b) Then, take turns sharing details that stand out to each of you.
 - I notice...
 - I wonder...
 - I think...
 - What do you think?
- c) Finally, what do you think the story is about? What does it mean to you?

Story

Yehudit's husband, Rabbi Ḥiyya, was considered the greatest scholar in Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi's Academy and was known for his religious dedication and scholarship. It is recounted that "all of his prayers were answered."⁶ Yehudit was the mother of two sets of twins: twin girls, Pazi and Tavi, followed by twin boys, Yehuda and Hizkiya.

יבמות ס"ה:	Talmud b. Yevamot 65b
יהודה וחזקיה תאומים היו, אחד נגמרה צורתו לסוף תשעה, ואחד נגמרה צורתו לתחלת שבועה. יהודית, דביתהו דרב' חייא, הוה לה צער לידה. שנאי מנה, ואתאי	Yehuda and Hizkiyya, were twins. One of them was fully developed after nine months of pregnancy, while the other one was fully developed at the beginning of the seventh month (so they were born two months apart). Yehudit, the wife of Rabbi Ḥiyya, had birthing pain from these unusual deliveries. She changed her clothes (to prevent Rabbi Ḥiyya from recognizing her) and came before Rabbi Ḥiyya (to ask

⁶ Sefaria, Resources "Rabbi Chiyya"

him a halakhic question). She said: Is a woman commanded to be fruitful and multiply? He said to her: No. She went and drank an infertility potion. Eventually the matter was revealed. Rabbi Ḥiyya said to her: If only you had given birth to one more belly for me! As the Master said: Yehuda and Ḥizkiyya were twin brothers (and became prominent Torah scholars), and Pazi and Tavi, Rabbi Ḥiyya's daughters, were twin sisters, (and became the matriarchs of families of distinguished Torah scholars).	לְקַמִּיָּה דְּרַבִּי חִיָּיא, אָמְרָה: אֵתְנָא מִפְקָדָא אֶפְרִיָּה וְרַבִּיָּה? אָמַר לָהּ: לֹא. אֲזָלָא אֲשֵׁתֵיא סָמָא דְּעֻקְרִנָּא. לְסוּף אִיגְלֵא מִלֵּתָא. אָמַר לָהּ: אִיכּוּ יִלְדֵתְ לִי חֲדָא כְּרָסָא אַחֲרִיתָא, דְּאָמַר מֶר: יְהוּדָה וְחִזְקִיָּה אַחֵי, פָּזִי וְטָוִי אַחֻוּתָא.
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Context

Yehudit's story is shared right after a story of another woman who came before Rabbi Ami and requested divorce due to her husband's inability to father children⁷. The Rabbi tells the woman she is not obligated to be fruitful and multiply and therefore has no legal right to demand a divorce. She counters that she wants to have children so that she will have someone to care for her when she is old to which Rabbi Ami says that in her situation, the Rabbis can force the husband to grant her divorce.

This is followed by the story of Yehudit, a married woman with four children who wishes to prevent further pregnancies. The Rabbis support *both* women, whether they need intervention in order to reproduce, or to stop. There is a seeming paradox at play: men are obligated to reproduce, and cannot do so without women; meanwhile, women are *not* obligated to have children at all.

Yehudit drinks some sort of root-based medicinal drink. In the Talmud, there are several discussions of this “cup of roots”: a form of orally consumed medicinal birth control. On the issue of birth control, the Talmud also shares a key statement that has been called, “The *Baraita* of the Three Women” about specific women and the circumstances in which they are permitted to use birth control.⁸

From the position of Yehudit's story in the Talmud, it seems that the Sages are sharing stories about how deeply fertility impacts women (i.e. Yehudit), men (i.e. Rabbi Ḥiyya) and marriage relationships. Yehudit's story also points to a larger question of when Jewish law allows women (and men) to use birth control. This issue of contraception and Jewish law is an ongoing discussion.

⁷ Talmud b. Yevamot 65b:17

⁸ Talmud b. Yevamot 12b

II. Discuss the Aggadah (time-permitting)

- Read the aggadah section individually.
- Share with your havruta what you notice about what the story means to the author.

Aggadah

The status of women in any society is connected to their control over their fertility.

The story of Yehudit demonstrates the tension around female fertility: for women themselves, for their partners, and in religious and civil law.

By including Yehudit's story, the Gemara gives her female experience legitimacy. She faced unexpected health consequences in childbirth, namely extreme pain. This suffering impacted her so deeply that directly following the birth of her fourth child, Yehudit wanted to prevent further pregnancies. She disguised herself as "another woman" before her husband, a religious authority, for a legal ruling on *their* case.⁹

The Gemara points to the tension at play for this couple by also giving space to her husband's experience. Rabbi Hiyya is able to be objective in relaying the law to his wife precisely because the reality of his personal implication is obscured by her disguise. Perhaps lacking confidence in her husband's capacity to support her decision, or knowing he wanted more children, Yehudit took the decision alone. Despite the fact that Yehudit's final choice was legally allowed, her decision making process excluded her husband. When Rabbi Hiyya finds out that she took a fertility potion, he finally shares his feelings of regret and his wish that he had had more children.

Today, there is still on-going debate in many countries and religions regarding if and how women may control their own fertility: under which circumstances is it permissible and what methods are allowed.

Yehudit's story shows an enduring truth: it is essential that women have the religious and civil legal right to access safe methods of birth control. These rights can only be secured when women's lived experiences exert a fundamental influence on laws governing their bodies - this requires women to be consulted and to participate as lawmakers.

⁹ Similar to the story of Tamar in the Hebrew Bible, Yehudit disguises herself in order to obtain rightful control over her own fertility. Genesis 38:13-30.

Bringing it Home (3-5 min)

- [optional] Choose one prompt below to discuss with your havruta.
- Record one insight you have gleaned from your study on a sticky note. Put it on the poster with your Talmudic woman's name on it.

When you are done learning together, thank your havruta!

Prompts

- The commandment to "to be fruitful and multiply" applies to men and not women. What do you think this means today?
- Yehudit was able to make her own decisions because she understood the law. To you, what are the most important issues or aspects of fertility law today?
- What factors affect negotiation and decision making about fertility in relationships today?

Contributed by Kenden Alfond