

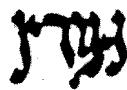
Talmud Ha-Igud

edited by
Shamma Friedman

BT SHABBAT
CHAPTER VII

With Comprehensive Commentary

by
Stephen G. Wald



The Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud

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<http://atranet.co.il/igud/>

Dedicated in honor of our grandmother

Golda Koschitzky

Her humility, wisdom and resourcefulness

over the past century

have been a source of strength

for her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

May she continue to be an inspiration to us all

for many years to come.

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Preface

This volume is the third publication by the Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud. It was preceded by *Five Sugyot*, Jerusalem 2002, whose purpose was to introduce the work of the Society to the community at large, and by *Talmud Ha-Igud*, Berakhot Chapter One, with commentary by Moshe Benovitz, 2006.

Five Sugyot presented a sample from the work of five scholars by presenting commentary on one *sugya* from each of five chapters of the Talmud researched and explicated by these authors, in anticipation of the publication of these works in their entirety by the Society.

The current volume, chapter seven of Shabbat ("Kelal Gadol") with commentary composed by Stephen G. Wald, continues this effort. It is hoped that this first series will be further augmented to include a total of ten volumes, representing the first phase of the Society's work, namely, original commentary on chapters of the Babylonian Talmud devoted to the methodological goals formulated in the introduction to *Five Sugyot*.

Three chapters are currently in advanced stages of copy-editing: Eruvin Chapter Ten ("Ha-motze Tefilin") by Aviad A. Stollman, Pesahim Chapter Four ("Makom Shenahagu") by Aaron Amit, and Gittin Chapter Nine ("Hamegaresh") by the undersigned.

The Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud was founded in 1993 with the goal of composing and publishing Talmudic commentary fulfilling the demands of an historical-philological discipline and at the same time authentically integrated with traditional Talmud studies. This determination was a direct outgrowth of earlier work done by the founders of the Society, and their fervent devotion to an intellectual approach which combines academic textual and literary disciplines with their desire to elucidate halakhic institutions and rabbinic thought according to their simple meaning and historical development. Applying this method to each *sugya* consecutively, we hope to produce the first attempt at a contemporary edition of the Talmud meeting scholarly standards and addressing the intellectual climate in which we function.

The Society's unique format includes separating the chapter into discreet *sugyot* which are numbered and named, and assigning distinguishable type-faces to each of the major formal building blocks of the *sugya*: dicta of Tannaim, Amoraim, and the anonymous editorial voice.

As for the continuing work of the Society, we have already embarked upon the second phase of our activity. As part of this phase, we expect to broaden our horizons to publication of entire tractates. Composition of commentary for the tractate of Shabbat has been undertaken by Wald, Sukkah by Moshe Benovitz and Avraham Schiff, and Bava Qamma soon to be announced.

The Society's website <http://atranet.co.il/igud> presents updates on progress, together with background material associated with present and future volumes.

The creation of the Igud, and the initial realization of its mission, would not have become a reality without the dedicated friendship and support extended by individuals and institutions, whose participation and partnership in this great vision we hold dear. Full expression of our indebtedness and gratitude are beyond what I can express here. None the less, the publication of this significant volume is a most pleasant opportunity to express a small part of our appreciation to the following:

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The Jeselsohn family: "In memory of Shimon (Sigmund) and Lina Jeselsohn ז"ל who lovingly trained us in the heritage of German Jewry, and instilled in us the spiritual values of 'Torah and Derech Eretz'".

It is a distinct pleasure to express my gratitude and admiration to Golda Koschitzky's grandchildren for the way they chose to honor her in dedicating this volume: Sarena and David Koschitzky, Riva and Joel Koschitzky, Tamar and Eric Goldstein, Faye and Hartley Koschitzky, Tamar and Jonathan Koschitzky, Leelah and Joseph Gitler.

May they all enjoy the fruits of our combined labors.

S.F.

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Introduction

The Babylonian Talmud was the crowning literary achievement of the entire period in Jewish history bearing its name – the Talmudic Period. The Bavli contains halakhic and aggadic traditions, sayings and statements of the sages, commentaries on earlier traditions, as well as traditions relating to theological, philosophical, and scientific issues. These traditions were formulated over many generations, from the end of the Second Temple period and up until the period of the Geonim. The *baraitot* in the Bavli as a whole, and those included in the seventh chapter of Shabbat, *kelal gadol*, in particular, correspond to a very large degree to the parallel traditions preserved in the Tosefta and the Halakhic Midrash. The statements of the first generations of amoraim, not only those active primarily in Palestine but also those active primarily in Babylonia, are well documented in the Talmud Yerushalmi and the classic Palestinian *Midrashei Aggadah*. These parallel traditions include not only isolated statements, but also continuous talmudic discussions, *sugyot*. This phenomenon is particularly striking in the case of our chapter, *kelal gadol*, where we find entire series of parallel *sugyot*, one after the other, in the two talmuds. In addition to these early traditions, the Bavli also contains two additional, and presumably later, literary strata which have no parallels in earlier Palestinian Talmudic literature: later amoraic traditions (mostly Babylonian), and an extensive anonymous literary stratum containing mostly commentaries and argumentation – the *stam hatalmud*. It would be fair to say, on the basis of the detailed analyses offered in this work, that the three ancient corpora relating to the Mishna of *kelal gadol* – the Tosefta, the Yerushalmi, and the Bavli – do not represent independent, parallel traditions, but rather reflect successive stages in the development of a single common body of talmudic tradition.

Our commentaries are based on an analysis of the various strata imbedded within the text of the Bavli – interpreting each level by itself and for its own sake. We also regularly carry out a systematic comparison of the Bavli to parallel traditions preserved in Palestinian talmudic literature. This double approach allows us to identify the earlier and more original forms of these traditions, and also to explain the transformations which they have undergone in later Babylonian tradition. The commentaries are divided into several parts. First comes the text of the Talmud itself, carefully checked against all extant manuscripts, early printed editions, and *geniza* fragments. The text is formatted in a manner that highlights the different literary levels contained within it. The earliest tannaitic sources are set in **bold**, the later amoraic traditions in **bold italics**, thereby marking both off from the remaining words of the anonymous “*stam hatalmud*”, set in ordinary type face.. Next comes a section called *masoret hatalmud*, containing references to all parallel traditions, early and late, closer and more remote, that contribute in some significant way to our understanding of the development and evolution of the *sugyot* themselves. Finally comes the commentary, an historical analysis and explanation of each *sugya*, tracing its development from the earliest beginnings in ancient tannaitic tradition, its subsequent development within later tannaitic sources, its expansion and elaboration in the

statements and *sugyot* of the early and later amoraim, achieving its final literary form in the stratum of the *stam hatalmud*.

We should emphasize from the outset that the purpose of our edition and our commentary is not to resolve “outstanding isolated difficulties” (*kushiyot*) which the traditional scholar may encounter when studying the Bavli. Historical analysis of the Talmud often uncovers more or less plausible explanations of how these *kushiyot* may have arisen, and this is one of the tasks of an historical commentary. At the same time, an historical explanation of how a difficulty arose is not quite the same as a resolution (*terutz*) of that difficulty. Moreover our primary purpose here is quite different. We seek to clarify the sense and significance of all the opinions and positions imbedded in the *sugyot* of the Bavli, not only those confirmed and approved by the *stam hatalmud*, or codified by the medieval commentators, but rather all of them – even those which may have been superseded or forgotten in the course of time. In this way we hope to fulfill the words of the ancient midrash (Tosefta Sotah 7:12): “You too should open up the chambers of your mind, and let in the words of Beit Shammai, as well as those of Beit Hillel, the words of those who say ‘impure’, as well as those who say ‘pure’”.