

Title: Paternal imprinting in rabbinic texts - בני שפירי כוותי

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I. Introduction & Definition

Let us start with a short quote: “*Logic dictates that what people see before, during, and even after conception shapes the visible appearance of the fetus and eventual offspring*”¹. This is the definition that Rachel Neis gives to the phenomenon called Maternal Impression or Paternal imprinting. Although this may not be our logic today, for certain it was the logic for many cultures for at least the past 3000 years.

“*A surprisingly large number of people, in different cultures over many centuries, have believed that a woman who imagines or sees someone other than her sexual partner at the moment of conception may imprint that image upon her child, thus predetermining its appearance, aspects of its character, or both.*”² This other quote may serve as a guide to the present paper. Many diverse cultures³, from Asia to America and from Europe to Africa, believed in this phenomenon even until the beginning of the twentieth century..

The modern medical and scientific literature gave a couple of different names to this spread theory. Mainly two: maternal Impression and paternal imprinting. The most usual name is *maternal impression*, because, as we will see throughout the paper, most cultures ascribe this power to the mother and not to the father. According to the most widespread tradition of this theory, it was the mother the only one that, by seeing something at the time of the conception, was able to shape the form and in some cases the spirit of her offspring. The other term to describe this phenomenon is *parental imprinting*. This terminology is based on the belief that both father and mother have the ability to have an influence on the appearance of their offspring. However, in rabbinic literature, as we will try to prove, the most recurrent theory is that the mother is the one who has the power to imprint her image on his/her son/daughter. In this paper we have decided to use the more general concept of paternal imprinting, because at least one source of the Talmud claims that the father’s sight could also influence on the future baby.

The main goal of this paper is to investigate how rabbinic literature deals with paternal imprinting. Our time frame of work and investigation is the second century CE until the sixth century. This was the time that most of the rabbinic literature was written or edited. Our main focus will be the Babylonian Talmud and the Midrashic literature developed in that period. We will try to answer some of the following questions: Did the rabbis believe in this theory? If so, did the vast majority of rabbinic society believe in paternal imprinting or was it just a few? Where did the rabbis get this theory from? Was it their own cultural creation or was it a

¹ Rachel Neis, The Sense of Sight in Rabbinic Culture, P. 134

² Science in Culture, 2001, P 98

³ The belief in maternal impressions is of great antiquity; it has been traced to ancient India and China, as well as to early African and Asian folklore, to the old Japanese, and to the Eskimos. (Jan Bondeson, A Cabinet of Medical Curiosities, 145)

cultural loan from some surrounding society? In which context does this theory appear in rabbinic literature? Did the rabbis believe that one could also shape the character of the future offspring or just the outer physical characteristics?

We will begin this paper in a chronological way. In the first chapter, we will try to trace this theory back to the Bible. In the second chapter, we will evaluate literature of cultures who could have influenced the rabbis and evaluate how they described and explained the phenomenon of paternal imprinting. The next chapter will be the central part of this paper. There we will discuss in depth five sources and *aggadot* of rabbinic literature that apparently discusses this phenomenon. Afterwards we will make a quick evaluation of how this theory was received and transformed by the medieval Jewish society and its influence on Halakha. At the end we will try to draw some conclusions after evaluating all sources cited above.

II. Paternal Imprinting in the Bible

The main story that is used as a base for many stories in rabbinic texts as an explanation of the phenomenon of maternal imprinting comes from the Bible itself. The “asmakhta” and the text proof, as we will see later on in our study, is a famous story found in the Book of Genesis (30:37-43). We will now present the main plot of the story and then we will focus on how this text became the archetype of maternal impression in rabbinic thought and how medieval and modern bible scholars understood this.

37 And Jacob took for him rods of fresh poplar, and of the almond and of the plane-tree; and peeled white streaks in them, making the white appear which was in the rods. 38 And he set the rods which he had peeled over against the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs where the flocks came to drink; and they conceived when they came to drink. 39 And the flocks conceived at the sight of the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. 40 And Jacob separated the lambs--he also set the faces of the flocks toward the streaked and all the dark in the flock of Laban-- and put his own droves apart, and put them not unto Laban's flock. 41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger of the flock did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods; 42 but when the flock were feeble, he put them not in; so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. 43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, and maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses.⁴

(לז) וַיִּקַּח-לוֹ יַעֲקֹב מִקֵּל לְבָנָה לַח וְלוֹז וְעֶרְמוֹן וַיַּפְצֵל בָּהֶן פְּצִלוֹת לְבָנוֹת מִחֹשֶׁף הַלָּבָן אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַמִּקְלוֹת: (לח) וַיִּצַּג אֶת-הַמִּקְלוֹת אֲשֶׁר פָּצַל בְּהֶהְטִים בְּשִׁקְתוֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר תִּבְאֵן הַצֹּאן לְשִׁתּוֹת לְנֹכַח הַצֹּאן וַיַּחֲמֹנָה בְּבֹאֵן לְשִׁתּוֹת: (לט) וַיַּחֲמוּ הַצֹּאן אֶל-הַמִּקְלוֹת וַתֵּלֶדְן הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים נָקָדִים וּטְלָאִים: (מ) וְהַפְּשָׁבִים הִפְרִיד יַעֲקֹב וַיִּתֵּן פָּנֵי הַצֹּאן אֶל-עֹקֶד וְכָל-חֹם בְּצֹאן לָבָן וַיִּשְׁתַּלּוּ עֲדָרֵים לְבָדוֹ וְלֹא שָׁתָם עַל-צֹאן לָבָן: (מא) וְהָיָה בְּכָל-יָחַם הַצֹּאן הַמִּקְשָׁרוֹת וְשָׁם יַעֲקֹב אֶת-הַמִּקְלוֹת לְעֵינֵי הַצֹּאן בְּהֶהְטִים לִיַּחֲמֹנָה בַּמִּקְלוֹת: (מב) וּבְהֶעֱטִיף הַצֹּאן לֹא יִשִּׁים וְהָיָה הָעֲטִיפִים לְלָבָן וְהַקְשָׁרִים לְיַעֲקֹב: (מג) וַיִּפְרֹץ הָאִישׁ מְאֹד מְאֹד וַיְהִי-לוֹ צֹאן רַבּוֹת וּשְׁפָחוֹת וְעֹבְדִים וּגְמָלִים וְחֹמְרִים:

After Rachel gave birth to Joseph (30:25), Jacob decided that it was time to start his own family away from his father-in-law. After more than 20 years working for Laban, he asked for his wages so that he could start his new life. After a conversation about what the exact payment for many years of prosperous work with the cattle should be, they decided that Jacob would take all the *spotted sheep, every dark-colored lamb and every spotted or speckled goat* (30:32). Even though Laban agrees with this payment, he tricks Jacob once again (as he had done with the marriages of his daughters many years ago), giving all that type of cattle to his sons. But this time

⁴ JPS Electronic Edition, based on the 1917 JPS translation

Jacob was not fooled after all by his father-in-law; instead, he “played” with him and finally received his wages.

How did Jacob handle to transform the white and plane cattle into a dark colored skin and spotted sheeps and goats? The plain reading of the story, as is also shown by medieval and modern commentators, both Jewish and Christian, is that Jacob was “aware” of this phenomenon called “Maternal Impression”. John Skinner, commenting on this passage, says the following: *“The physiological law involved is said to be well established and was acted on by ancient cattle breeders... The full representation seems to be that the ewes saw the reflection of the rams in the water, blended with the image of parti-coloured rods, and were deceived into thinking they were coupled with parti-coloured males”*⁵. He pointed out that this “physiological law” was very popular and well established back then, so the Bible just used this technique without further explanation, because the reader (or listener) in the times of the First Temple would be aware and understand this phenomenon, something that could sound quite strange to the modern reader.

Gordon Wenham, when commenting on this same theme, states as follows: *“[...] two principles are clear. First, the coloring of lambs and kids is determined by what their parents see during intercourse. If they look at multicolored posts when they mate, their young will be multicolored. If this seems an odd belief in the light of modern genetics, the second principle is not, namely, that strong animals are liable to produce sturdy offspring and vice versa.”*⁶ We are interested here in the first principle: paternal imprinting. As we have shown, modern critical Bible commentators understand this episode as a clear example of the maternal impression “psychological law” in the ancient Israel.

Many of the classical Jewish Biblical commentators have the same approach, understanding this story as the modern scholars. For the best of my knowledge, the first medieval Jewish commentator that acknowledged the theory of paternal imprinting in the story of Jacob was RaDaK, rabbi Rabbi David Kimhi (Provence, 1160-1235); he states as follows:

“ותלדן הצאן, the sheep would give birth to young with the skin patterns Yaakov desired, as their imagination had been fired at a time when they were more than usually impressionable.”⁷

The power of imagination of the sheep would cause the effect desired by Jacob. As far as I am concerned, RaDaK was the only traditional commenter commentator until the XV fifteenth century that ascribed this

⁵ Skinner John. The international critical commentary: Genesis, 1910. P. 393

⁶ Wenham Gordon. World Biblical Commentary, 2 Genesis. P. 256

⁷ Radak to Genesis 30:49. Rabbi E. Munk's translation in: HaChut HaMeshulash (Jerusalem – New York, 2003)

story to the popular theory of maternal impression. The other traditional exegetes like Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Nachmanides or RaShbaM do not address this issue. Maybe the most emphatic and explicit attribution of this story to the so-called phenomenon of maternal impression could be attributed to that of Sforzo (Italy, 1475-1550), who in the middle of the Renaissance of Italy states the following:

*לנכח הצאן, he positioned the staves before the line of vision of the sheep in order to make them look when this work was performed, and this experience would be anchored in their imagination at the time they conceived and were pregnant. Visual impressions formed during such periods are of lasting value and usually produce some effect in the young animals born as a result of that pregnancy.*⁸

His explanation of the actions of Jacob is like a text-book on the definition of maternal impression. Following in his footsteps, another Italian rabbi, in the middle of the nineteenth century, offers a very long piece of commentary on the phenomenon of maternal impression, bringing proof from the general wisdom of his day. SHaDaL (1800-1865) states as follows:

ויחמו הצאן אל המקלות וגו' By the power of imagination. Like it is well known that the imagination works over women and makes them conceive children in the way they had imagined [...]

"By the power of the imagination" – this is the simple explanation that SHaDaL offers for this phenomenon. The imagination generates an image in the female, which is then printed in the fetus. At the beginning, he brings evidence for this phenomenon from the well-known German psychologist Karl Friedrich Burdach. Afterwards he also brings a theory from Blondel who refutes the argument of maternal impression. But at the end, he states that after reading a lot about the subject, he “went back” to the old beliefs, that is to say, he believed again in the power of maternal impression like it is stated in the ancient beliefs of the Talmud and the medieval rabbis.

While this paper focuses on the reception, understanding and re-elaboration of paternal impression in rabbinic texts, from the 1st – 6th century, it is important to state that for this particular phenomenon the rabbis in the Talmud and the Midrash could use a very Jewish and well-known paradigm that appears in the Bible. Even though we can argue that many of the stories and understanding of this phenomenon by the rabbis was influenced by the Greeks -as we will try to show in the next analyses- it was important for them, I argue here, that they had something to lean on, a biblical source attesting to their theory of conception. As we have stated

⁸ Sforzo to Genesis 30:38. Rabbi E. Munk's translation in: HaChut HaMeshulash (Jerusalem – New York, 2003)

before: *“The biblical episode of the rods of Jacob became a paradigm often cited by later authors; by the process of proof-texting, and with the unsurpassed authority of Scripture, “the rods of Jacob” became a shorthand notion for the idea of maternal impression.”*⁹ With this story in mind we can now go and explore how this phenomenon was explained in other cultures in the ancient world.

⁹ Science in Culture, 2001. Page: 99.

III. Paternal Imprinting in other cultures

The phenomenon of Paternal Imprinting, as we have stated at the beginning of this article, was a common and very popular birth conception in the ancient and medieval world: *“These range from the Bible, to Mesopotamian omens, and from Greco-Roman medical tracts to the writings of the church fathers and Palestinian rabbis and extended into Indian texts.”*¹⁰ In this particular paper -because of the close connection and influence of the Greco-Roman literature and culture on the rabbinic world- we will focus only on their own approach to this theory. But also because it was in the Greek-Latin world where this theory reached the highest sophistication and influence: *“The ancient Greeks and Romans seem to have firmly believed in maternal impressions”*¹¹, Bondeson argues.

As it has been proven in the last 150 years, especially by Professor Saul Libermann’s tremendous work, Greek knowledge and their worldview had a huge impact on rabbinic thought and literature. Hundreds of words, stories and theories were imported from Greek lore by the rabbis, which were then transformed under the Jewish canons. In this section, we will bring many popular stories of the Greek-Latin culture that preceded and coexisted with rabbinic scholars on the subject of maternal impression. Let us start with the figure who future generations ascribed the first definition of parental impression, Empedocles.

Empedocles (490-430 BC) was one of the most important pre-Socratic philosophers in ancient Greece. An apocryphal text attributed to him, and quoted by Aetius (2nd century BC), states: *“How do offspring come to resemble others rather than their parents? [Empedocles says that] fetuses are shaped by the imagination of the woman around the time of conception. For often women have fallen in love with statues of men and with images and have produced offspring which resemble them.”*¹² Even though this is an apocryphal text, it is a very old and clear definition of maternal impression and its meaning and motives.

At least in Greek culture, the Maternal Impression theory sought to explain this strange phenomenon that only occurs in the human race that many times the offspring does not resemble to neither of their parents. How is this possible? In the animal world, one can easily see that the children are almost an exact copy of their progenitors. Why is this not the case in many human births? Empedocles, or at least a tradition attributed to him, says that the answer is the power of imagination that the woman has around the time of conception, when they see something (in this case a statue or an image), they produce offspring that resemble them. For the sake of comparing this tradition with the rabbinic one, it is important to remark that in this case the power of imagination and the ability to print that image on their children only depends on the mother and

¹⁰ Rachel Neis. The Sense of Sight in Rabbinic Culture, 134

¹¹ Jan Bondeson, A Cabinet of Medical Curiosities, 145

¹² Science in Culture, 2001, 100.

not the father. While, as discussed below, this is so in most of the stories of the Midrash and Talmud, we will also see an example where it is the father who, through the power of his gaze, can mold the shape of his seed.

- **Soranus, Gynaecology I.47**

The next source that we will analyse is from Soranus. Soranus of Ephesus was a Greek physician from the 1st – 2nd century AD. In one of his many works that still survive, Gynaecology (I.47), he describes once again this phenomenon in his own words:

Some women, seeing monkeys during intercourse, have borne children resembling monkeys. The tyrant of the Cyprians, who was misshapen, compelled his wife to look at beautiful statues during intercourse and became the father of well-shaped children; and horse-breeders, during covering, place noble horses in front of the mares. Thus, in order that the offspring may not be rendered misshapen, women must be sober during coitus because in drunkenness the soul becomes the victim of strange fantasies; this is furthermore, because the offspring bears some resemblance to the mother as well, not only in body but in soul. Therefore it is good that the offspring be made to resemble the soul when it is stable and not deranged by drunkenness.¹³

His amazing clarity and detail allows us to understand a little more in-depth this phenomenon in the ancient world. On the one hand, he insists time and again that this "genetic experiment" aims to create a beautiful seed. The male parents are even those who insist that their women look at beautiful paintings at the time of conception for their children to be beautiful as those works of art rather than ugly as themselves. While the reason for the fine seed is present in rabbinic literature, we will see that the idea that husbands are the ones who encourage their wives to imagine another man during sex is a crime and prohibited by rabbinic law.

Moreover, as we will see in a Talmudic example, the phenomenon of maternal impression does not only occur in human beings but also in the animal world. Their owners often manipulate what the mothers see at the time of conception in order to have good and better offspring (this is the main topic of the story of Jacob and Laban's cattle). The other point that I would like to underscore on is that Soranus is one of the few that determines that the power of imagination not only shapes the external body but also the soul. In the story of

¹³ English Translation from: Science in Culture, 2001. Page: 101.

Rabbi Yochanan, which we will analyse in depth, is the only story in rabbinic literature that hints that maternal impression could also shape the internal character and traits of their offspring.¹⁴

- **Heliodorus, Aethiopica 4.8**

Heliodorus of Emesa was a Greek writer from the 3rd or 4th century AD. He is well known for his romance called *Aethiopica* (The Ethiopian story). And in this novel, he brings a magnificent “example” of maternal impression. Heliodorus brings a folklore story that appears in many cultures of the ancient world. The theme of two parents having a white boy (or, in the Middle Ages, the opposite, two white nobles having a black offspring) appears in many cultures throughout Europe and the Middle East. And as we will show in this essay, this same story, with certainly a couple of differences, also appears twice in rabbinic literature. In this story, the mother, who abandoned her son because he was white and she was black, explains in simple words the phenomenon of maternal impression.

Our line descends from the Sun and Dionysus among gods and from Perseus and Andromeda and from Memnon among heroes. Those who in the course of time came to build the royal palace... made use of the romance of Perseus and Andromeda to adorn the bedchambers. It was there one day that your father and I happened to be taking a siesta in a drowsy heat of summer... Your father made love to me, swearing that he was commanded to do so in a dream, and I knew instantly that the act of love had made me pregnant. But you, the child I bore, had a skin gleaming white, something quite foreign to Ethiopians. I knew the reason: during your father's intimacy with me the painting had presented me with the image of Andromeda, who was depicted stark naked, for Perseus was in the very act of releasing her from the rocks, and had unfortunately shaped the embryo to her exact likeness. I was convinced that your color would lead to my being accused of adultery, for what had happened was so fantastic that no one would believe my explanation.¹⁵

Andromeda, in ancient art, was painted as white. The wife in the time of conception was looking at that painting, and that resulted in the shaping of the “embryo to her exact likeness”. Once again this is a case of maternal impression and not paternal impression. The power to shape the outside figure of the future offspring is entirely of the mother's; the father does not play any role in the story. The other detail that I would like to remark is that she abandons her kid because she “convinced that your color would lead to my being accused of adultery”. This is an important detail, because, as we will see

¹⁴ But even this can be challenged due to the different versions of the story in the manuscripts. We will focus on this issue when we bring the story in length.

¹⁵ Science in Culture, 2001. Page: 103.

when we analyse the different *aggadot* of the rabbis, in one instance, this same story of two black people having a white son is brought on the occasion of a woman suspected of adultery. Not only does the story match the one found in Chazal but also the context itself.

- **Jerome, Hebrew Questions on Genesis**

Saint Jerome (347-420), one of the most important theologians and commentators of the early Church, also known for his translation of the Bible into Latin (known as the Vulgata), in his gloss to the story of Jacob and the rods of Laban, he uses a legal fiction (or hypothetical case) of Quintilian that has been lost to us. In his gloss he re-enact the story of Quintilian and says:

Now it is not astonishing that this is the nature of female creatures in the act of conception: the offspring they produce are of such a kind as the things they observe or perceive in their minds in the most intense heat of sexual pleasure... Quintilian, in that lawsuit in which a married woman was accused of having given birth to an Ethiopian, brought as evidence in her defense that what we have been describing above is a natural process in the conception of offspring.¹⁶

At this point, this story and physiological theory is well known to us, but what this source from Jerome adds to our study of maternal impression in rabbinic literature is that he also, as is in the case of Chazal, glosses the story of Jacob and Laban's cattle with a story of two white parents, in this case, having a black child. As we said before, this popular story in Heliodorus, and its specific topic related to adultery, finds its exact reference in Chazal; the same applies in Jerome's case. Twice, as we will show in the next pages, this same story appears in Chazal. In one instance, as we said, in the case of a woman suspected of adultery, and in the other, as a commentary on the story of Jacob. We can guess that Jerome, like many fathers of the Church, took this story and its connection with Jacob from a very well-known and spread aggadic story of the rabbis.

¹⁶ Science in Culture, 2001. Page: 105.

IV. Parental imprinting in rabbinic texts

This is the main section of this paper. In this chapter, we will try to prove that rabbinic tradition had a vast knowledge and acceptance of the physiological phenomenon of “Paternal imprinting”. We shall try to show through some *Aggadot* and an Halakhic discussion that the rabbis were aware of the power of the sight in the forming of the babies or, as Rachel Neis calls it, the theory of “Visual Eugenics”¹⁷. At the beginning, we will bring the most explicit story of this theory that appears twice in the Talmud, which is about Rabbi Yochanan who used to encourage women to see him before having intercourse with their husbands. Afterwards we will analyze the popular story of “Black kings” having “a white son” in the two parallel sources that this story appears in the Midrash Rabbah. In subsection C, we will approach a very little known *midrash* about the Bnei Elohim and their interaction with the “earthly” women, and the rabbis’ clever solution for this troubling issue. In subsection D, we will evaluate the only halakhic discussion that we found: “Visual Eugenics” in the Talmud. In the last subsection, we will present a short quote about Paternal Imprinting in the animal world, for the case of the red heifer.

Before we go further into the text itself, it is useful to bring some important ideas from the general rabbinic literature about external influences on a fetus. As Julius Preuss says - in the most authoritative book about medicine in biblical and Talmudic thought- concerning this phenomenon: *“Individual conceptualizations which a man or a woman has ipso facto, or external impressions which influence them, can play a role in the outward appearance of the offspring.”*¹⁸ In rabbinic times, it was a common ground that different acts of the parents during sex or during pregnancy could somehow influence the physical or internal characteristics of the fetus. Let us now turn to the specific sources:

A. Babylonian Talmud, Baba Metzia 84a and parallels: The story of Rabbi Yochanan and the women after the Mikveh.

R. Johanan said: I am the only one remaining of Jerusalem's men of outstanding beauty. He who desires to see R. Johanan's beauty, let him take a silver goblet as it emerges from the crucible, fill it with the seeds of red pomegranate, encircle its brim with a chaplet of red roses, and set it between the sun and the shade: its lustrous glow is akin to R.	אמר רבי יוחנן: אנא אשתיירי משפירי ירושלים. האי מאן דבעי מחזי שופריה דרבי יוחנן, נייתי כסא דכספא מבי סלקי, ונמלייה פרצידיאדרומנא סומקא, ונהדר ליה כלילא דוורדא סומקא לפומיה ונותביה בין שמשא לטולא, ההוא זהרורי מעין
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¹⁷ Rachel Neis. The Sense of Sight in Rabbinic Culture, 134

¹⁸ Preuss Julius, Biblical and Talmudic Medicine. Translation: Fred Rosner, 1978. Sanhedrin Press. Page 391.

<p>Johanan's beauty.</p> <p>But that is not so; for did not a Master say: R. Kahana's beauty is a reflection of R. Abbahu's; R. Abbahu's is a reflection of our Father Jacob's; our Father Jacob's was a reflection of Adam's; whereas R. Johanan is omitted! — R. Johanan is different, because he lacked a beard.</p> <p>R. Johanan used to go and sit at the gates of the mikveh. 'When the daughters of Israel ascend from the bath', said he, 'let them look upon me, that they may bear sons as beautiful and as learned as I.'[...]¹⁹</p>	<p>שופריה דרבי יוחנן. איני? והאמרמר: שופריה דרב כהנא מעין שופריה דרבי אבהו, שופריה דרבי אבהו מעין שופריה דיעקב אבינו, שופריה דיעקב אבינו מעין שופריה דאדם הראשון. ואילו רבי יוחנן לא קא חשיב ליה! שאני רבי יוחנן, דהדרת פנים לא הויא ליה.</p> <p>רבי יוחנן הוה אזיל ויתיב אשערי טבילה, אמר: כיסלקן בנות ישראל מטבילת מצוה לפגעו בי, כי היכי דלהווי להו בני שפירי כוותי, גמירי אורייתא כוותי[...]</p>
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This is for sure the most important source in all rabbinic texts that assert the belief of paternal imprinting in the rabbis' worldview, or at least in some of them. In this case, Rabbi Yochanan, also known as Yochanan bar Nafcha (the son of the blacksmith), was one of the most important *amoraim* of the second generation in the third century C.E. in the Land of Israel. First of all, we should pay attention to the fact that the theme where this story is brought is one about beauty. The Talmud describes in extreme detail the extreme beauty of Rabbi Yochanan. Even though the rabbis' interest in beauty is not out of the picture, in the majority of rabbinic writings, it is the women –and not the men, especially the rabbis –the ones who are described as beautiful. Some scholars already pointed out that the description of Rabbi Yochanan's beauty with the analogy of a silver goblet resembles one that appears in the Odyssey of Homer.²⁰ And the context of beauty for developing the theory of paternal imprinting is not random. As we have shown, the great emphasis on Greco-Latin culture is to try to use the "power of sight" to ensure a beautiful offspring and not as "ugly" as their biological fathers. The same theme and goal are found in this story of Rabbi Yochanan.

Now that the Talmud had settled that Rabbi Yochanan is the most beautiful sage -without beard- of those who remain after the destruction of the Temple, the *Stam Gemara* comes and teaches us a story about this particular sage and his self-awareness of his extreme beauty. "*Rabbi Johanan used to go and sit at the gates of the Mikveh. 'When the daughters of Israel ascend from the bath', said he, 'let them look upon me, that they may bear sons as beautiful and as learned as I.'[...]*". After the period of impurification, as a consequence of the menstrual period, women, according to the sages, should go and immerse in the mikveh. After that, they can re-establish their sexual encounters with their husbands. And it was customary in the times of the Talmud that right after the

¹⁹ Soncino translation.

²⁰ אגדות האמוראים. א.א. הלוי. דביר תל אביב. תשל"ז

mikveh, that same night, sexual relationships were resumed after a period of abstinence of around two weeks. Knowing this, and also believing in the power of sight and in the paradigm of maternal impression, Rabbi Yochanan used to sit at the exit of the Mikveh, so that before heading home to have sex with their husbands, women would see the beauty of Rabbi Yochanan and then imprint, so to speak, his beauty on their offspring, if sex resulted in conception²¹. Daniel Boyarin himself identifies this story about Rabbi Yochanan as a “topos of folk literature that an embryo is affected by appearances that the mother has seen either during pregnancy or at the time of conception.”²²

From this story we can assume that the concept of maternal impression was well established in at least some part of the Jewish society of those days, because it was not only Rabbi Yochanan who believed in this, but also the women who looked at him after their immersion, and also the editor of this section of the Talmud, who brought this story without questioning its validity²³.

Rabbi Yochanan wants to assure that after the destruction of the Temple and the massacre of Jews that occurred there, the future offspring of the people of Israel will be “*beautiful and as learned as*” he was. The maternal impression theory will assure bright and beautiful offspring. In the words of Daniel Boyarin, the sages wanted to duplicate themselves, in future generations, in beauty and in knowledge.²⁴ But if we take a closer look at the manuscripts of this section of the Talmud, we can assume that the main issue here, like in the whole Sugya up until now, is not to generate learned boys, but beautiful ones. After comparing seven manuscripts, we found out that in all of them, Rabbi Yochanan is quoted as saying that he desires that their offspring will be as beautiful as him. But in at least three of them, we did not find the second part of the clause; he is not quoted as saying that he desires that the offspring will be as learned as him. This clause is missing from the manuscripts of Florence, Hamburg and Oxford²⁵.

What can we learn from this? Humbly, I must say I do not know. But I can venture to slide some hypotheses. First I would tend to believe that the original version lacks the phrase “wise like me” (or its equivalent). The general context of the story is not about the wisdom of Rabbi Yochanan, but about his beauty. His first encounter with Reish Lakish, which is the story that follows in the Talmud, is again based on the “feminine”

²¹ “On the basis of the doctrine of maternal impression, he believed that the sight of his physical beauty would cause them to conceive handsome children.” (Yechiel Michael Barilan Jewish Bioethics: Rabbinic Law and Theology in their Social and Historical, 45)

²² Boyarin, Daniel. Carnal Israel (1993, University of California Press). Page: 213

²³ The only difficulty that is raised to this story in the Talmud is about the evil eye, not the validity of this theory. Said the Rabbis to him: 'Do you not fear an evil eye?' — 'I am of the seed of Joseph', he replied, 'against whom an evil eye is powerless.' (Baba Metzia 84a, the very next continuation of our Sugya). This also proves that also the anonymous rabbis believed in this theory because they do not contradict its bases.

²⁴ Boyarin, Daniel. Carnal Israel (1993, University of California Press). Page: 214

²⁵ In the appendix you may find a comparative chart of the different manuscripts in relation with this clause.

beauty Rabbi Yochanan and not on his wisdom. Perhaps the editors and medieval copyists added the phrase "wise like me," because it was closer to their philosophy and worldview than only talking about outer beauty. Beyond this point as to which is the correct version of our Talmudic story, the absence or presence of this phrase poses another question: Could paternal imprinting also set the inner character and spirit of the baby or just the outer appearance? As we have seen in most of the Greco-Latin sources, maternal impression only forms the outer part of the future offspring. The addition of "and wise like me" can also be understood as a Hidush or as a rabbinical adaptation of the general concept of parental imprinting.

It seems that this story was popular and well known in the time of the edition of the Talmud, because we find a parallel version of this story in the tractate of Berachot (20a)²⁶. In this parallel version of this story, but in this case focusing much more on the issue of the evil eye than in the beauty or the power of imagination, it is told that also another rabbi (Rab Gidel) used to go, but for other reasons, to the exit point of the Mikveh. And once again, after the story of Rab Gidel, the Talmud takes us back to the story of Rabbi Yochanan going to the mikveh, so that women may look at him and then copy his beauty into the "DNA" of their offspring. What is interesting about this parallel, and for sure the original source of this story later on inserted in Baba Metzia, is that even in the standard version of the Vilna edition of the Talmud, Rabbi Yochanan is quoted as saying that he wishes that their offspring will be as beautiful as him, but not as learned²⁷. The same is true for all of the available manuscripts (Florence, Munich, Oxford, Paris). From this we may learn that the original source is presented in the tractate of Brakhot, and originally both sources, in Berakhot and in Baba Metzia, only focus on the beauty of Rabbi Yochanan and not on his wisdom. Later copyists or editors did not feel comfortable with a rabbi wanting the future offspring of women to be just "as beautiful as he was", so they amended the text by adding the phrase "and wise as me". As regards our main topic, this proves that originally Chazal, as most of the cultures, believed mainly that paternal imprinting only shape the external part of the body and not the internal characteristics of the future offspring.

As we had shown, this is one of the clearest examples of the deep belief in maternal impression throughout the rabbinic world. And this is also how this story had been understood by many *rishonim*. And while there is no explicit connection of this Aggadah with the story of Jacob and Laban's cattle, the Maharsha (Poland, 1555

²⁶ רב גידל הוה רגיל דהוה קא אזיל ויתיב אשערי דטבילה, אמר להו: הכי טבילו והכי טבילו. אמרי ליה רבנן: לא קא מסתפי מר מיצר הרע? אמר להו: דמיין באפאי כי קאקי חיורי. רבי יוחנן הוה רגיל דהוה קא אזיל ויתיב אשערי דטבילה, אמר: כי סלקן בנות ישראל ואתיין מטבילה מסתכלן בי, ונהוי להו זרעא דשפירי כוותי.
²⁷ מסתכלן בי, ונהוי להו זרעא דשפירי כוותי.

– 1631) already connects this story with the biblical story of Jacob, citing this story as the biblical text-proof for the actual possibility of maternal impression.²⁸

B. Midrashei Rabbah (Bereshit Vaietze 73:10 and Bemidbar Naso 9): Stories about black people having white children.

The other famous Midrash that proves Chazal's strong belief in maternal impression appears twice in the aggadic compilations of the Rabbah²⁹. The first one is found in Genesis Rabbah in relation to the story of Jacob and Laban's cattle. The other, with some variants, is found in Numbers Rabbah, in the context of the laws regarding a woman suspected of adultery. Both, as we will see, are the same story with some variants, but in each case they are brought by the rabbis to solve or interpret some problematic issues in each of the stories. After analysing both stories, we will try to elucidate which of them is the "original" story and which is the "copy". Let us now analyse the first appearance of this story and its context.

● **Genesis Rabbah Vaietze (Vilna edition) 73:10**

<p>"And Jacob took for him rods of fresh poplar, and of the almond and of the plane-tree" (Genesis 30:37)...</p> <p>This is what the patriarch Jacob did: He set the rods in the watering-troughs. When an animal came to drink, it saw the rod and started back, and the male copulated with it, after which it bore [young marked] like the rod.</p> <p>R. Hoshaya said: The water turned into semen within them, so that they merely required the image of the young.</p> <p>It once happened that a Kushite [Ethiopian] married a Kushite, begot a white-skinned son by her. Thereupon the father took the child and went to Rabbi, asking him, "Perhaps this is not my son" "Did you have any pictures in your house?, he asked. "Yes," he replied. "Black or white?" "White", he</p>	<p>י [ל, לז לט] ויקח לו יעקב מקל לבנה לח ולז וערמון, חוטר חיור דלז ודדליף, כך היה אבינו יעקב נותן את המקלות בשקותה מים והיתה בהמה באה לשתות ורואה את המקלות ונרתעת לאחוריה והזכר רובעה והיתה יולדת כיוצא בו.</p> <p>א"ר הושעיה נעשו המים זרע בתוך מעיהם ולא היו חסירות אלא צורת הולד בלבד.</p> <p>מעשה בכושי אחד שנשא לכושית אחת והוליד ממנה בן לבן, תפס האב לבן ובא לו אצל ר' א"ל שמא אינו בני א"ל היה לך מראות בתוך ביתך א"ל הן א"ל שחורה או</p>
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²⁸ מסתכלין בי וניהוי להו זרעא דשפירין כו' ביאורו כענין המקלות אשר פצל יעקב לפי שהטבע מוליד בהזדקקם לפי הציור בדמיונם בעת הריון כדאיתא במדרשות ור"י אזיל לשיטתיה בפרק המפלת דאין אשה מתעברת אלא סמוך לטבילה וק"ל (מהרש"א חידושי אגדות מסכת בבא מציעא דף פד עמוד א)

²⁹ Although modern scholars have shown there is no such thing as the collection of "Midrash Rabbah" and each Rabbah should be analysed in their own terms, we bring the stories together in the same subchapter because they are basically the same story.

answered. “This accounts for your white-skinned son”, he said. ³⁰	לבנה א"ל לבנה, א"ל מיכן שהיה לך בן לבן.
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As it emerges with just a first reading, this amazing story about the two kushim (black people) having a white son is another clear example of the strong belief of the rabbis in the myth of maternal impression. Before analysing the story with some detail, it is important to point out the context where this story is found. The purpose of this story is to explain with some analogies and more details the phenomenon that takes place in the Bible in the story of Jacob and Laban's sheep. This may be taken into consideration when we analyse where the rabbis “took” the idea of maternal impression from. We can surmise that the rabbis did not “import” this idea directly from the Greek literature and wisdom, but from the Bible itself. Before this theory developed in the Greek world, the Bible had a very clear story about this belief in ancient Israel. We could guess that the rabbis –and the position of this story may be a proof of that –took the concept of maternal impression not from the Greek world but from the Bible itself, and they just “adjusted” this belief with the stories that came from the Greek environment. Greek wisdom was a reinforcement of this belief but not its source. Let us go now and analyse the story in depth.

The story starts with the opening word, very common in midrashic literature, “Maaseh” (“A story”). “Maasim” are usually brought in rabbinic literature to prove a point of the law, a particular case of some halakha or as a related story about something that the rabbis spoke earlier. In this case, this story is brought as a “case example” of the phenomenon that occurs in the Bible. It is a more understandable analogy of the complicated story that occurs in the book of Genesis.

“It so happened that a Kushite [Ethiopian] married a Kushite woman who bore him a white son.” The Kushim are the main players of this story. Stories of the Kushim are very frequent in rabbinic literature and their most characteristic quality is the color of their skin. They are black. So it is logical that from two black parents comes out a black child. But this is not the case. That union resulted in a white boy. This must have been a very strange situation. How can we explain that phenomenon? Until recently, with the DNA test, being a father was never something certain but a possibility. So in this case, *“The father seized the son and went to the Rabbi. He said to him, “Consider whether he is my son or not”*. The Kushite had obvious doubts if that offspring was his. So he went to consult with the anonymous rabbi (as we will see in the parallel version of this story, the rabbi has a name). The rabbi does not seem surprised by this apparently strange case. He asks immediately: *“Are there any pictures in your house?”* The anonymous rabbi knew the well-known psychological theory of “Paternal Imprinting”. That is why he is not surprised; this may be a not so rare story in the end.

³⁰ [Translation with some variants] Midrash Rabbah, Genesis II, Soncino edition. Page:674

The Kushite answers that in fact he did have pictures in his house, which were white. And the story ends with the solution to the puzzle: “Because of this, you have a white son.” The rabbi is saying that there is a logical explanation to why two black parents could have a white son. The story does not say, however, that it was the wife the one that saw the white poster during sex; it could have been her husband. If this is the case, we will have further rabbinical evidence for paternal impression and not maternal impression. But we will guess that this is not the case. We believe that the Midrash just takes as common ground of the listener that it was the wife who looked at the pictures and not her husband. As we had seen in the Greco-Latin sources, this is always the case. Let us turn now to the parallel version of this story.

● **Numbers Rabbah (Vilna Edition) Naso 9:34**

<p>Our rabbis said: When a woman is with her husband and is engaged in intercourse with him, and at the same time her heart is with another man whom she has seen on the road, there is no greater adultery than this; for it is said: “<i>The wife commits adultery, taking strangers while under her husband</i>” (Ezekiel 16:32). Can there be a woman who commits adultery under her husband? It is in this one, who has met another man and set her eyes upon him, and while she continues her intercourse with her husband, her heart is with him.</p> <p>The King of the Arabs posed this question to Rabbi Akiba: “I am black and my wife is black, yet she gave birth to a white son. Shall I kill her for having played the harlot while lying with me? Said the other: “Are there any black or white figures painted in your house? “White”, he said. The other assured him, “When you had intercourse with her, she fixed her eyes upon the white figures and bore a child like them. If you are surprised at such a possibility, study the case of our father Jacob’s flock, which were influenced in their conception by the rods; as it says: “And the flocks conceived at the sight of the rods (Genesis 30:39). The King of the Arabs acknowledged the justice of Rabbi Akiba’s argument.</p> <p>In our case too, Moses hinted in the Torah at a similar situation by</p>	<p>אמרו רבותינו בזמן שהאשה מיוחדת עם בעלה והיא משמשת עמו ולבה לאיש אחר שראתה בדרך אין לך ניאוף גדול מזה שנא ('יחזקאל טז) האשה המנאפת תחת אישה תקח את זרים וכי יש אשה שמנאפת תחת אישה אלא זו היא שפגעה באיש אחר ונתנה עיניה בו והיא משמשת עם בעלה ולבה עליו.</p> <p>שאל מלך ערביים את רבי עקיבא אני כושי ואשתי כושית וילדה בן לבן אהרגנה שזינתה תחתי אמר לוצורות ביתך שחורות או לבנות אמר לו לבנות אמר לו כשהיית מתעסק עמה נתנה עיניה בצורות הלבנות וילדה כיוצא בהן ואם תמה אתה בדבר למוד מצאנו של יעקב אבינו שמן המקלות היו מתיחמות שנאמר (בראשית ל) ויחמו הצאן אל אל המקלות והודה מלך ערביים לרבי עקיבא.</p>
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<p>saying: “[If you have gone astray, though you are] under your husband, and if you be defiled, and some man has lain with you besides your husband...” (Numbers 5:20)³¹</p>	<p>אף כאן רמז משה בתורה תחת אישך וכי נטמאה ויתן איש בכ את שכבתו מבלעדי אישך לא על זו אנו משביעין אותך בלבד אלא מהשסטית מבלעדי אישך</p>
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In the last collection of the Rabbah, in Numbers Rabbah, we find, for the second time, (or first time, as we will discuss this topic afterwards) the story about two black people having a white baby. While the story is the same as previously cited in Genesis Rabbah, with some minor variations, the context in which the rabbis inserted it is different. In Numbers Rabbah, the context in which the story arises revolves around a woman suspected of adultery: *"When a woman is with her husband and is engaged in intercourse with him, and at the same time her heart is with another man whom she has seen on the road, there is no greater adultery than this"*. The sages interpret a verse from the prophet Ezekiel to show that even adultery "in thought" should be condemned. Apparently, the story is based on the prohibition at the end of the Tannaitic period that *"One may not drink from one goblet and think of another."*³² Yet again we can see how this principle is in flagrant opposition to the Midrash of Rabbi Yochanan and the women in the Mikveh. There he encourages them to think about him during their sexual encounters with their partners.

As we read the story, we see that it is a parallel, more complete version of the story found in Genesis Rabbah. In this story the main characters are also two Kushim (Ethiopians) with the addition that they were not some regular kushim, but “the King of the Arabs” himself. The other small variation is that the rabbi receives a name; he is not an anonymous voice, but the great Rabbi Akiva himself. In this version the father does not bring his son as evidence for what he was saying in front of Rabbi Akiva. We may conjecture that this was because he was the king, and the king does not have to bring evidence –he is supposed to be believed. The question that he asks is different to the question in the previous story. *"Shall I kill her for having played the harlot while lying with me?"* The question is different because the context is different. He does not want to know how this strange thing happened. He wants to know if he should kill his wife for “mental adultery”. As we can see from this version, the Arab King is aware of the phenomenon of maternal impression. He knows that if a woman thinks about another man while sleeping with him, his son will have the characteristics of this other person. And Rabbi Akiva is also aware of this psychological “law”, but he understands that the cause of having a white son is not because of mental adultery but just because she saw a white picture that was in their room. This is a clear instance of “maternal impression”, as Rabbi Akiva says: *"When you had intercourse with her, she fixed her eyes upon the white figures and bore a child like them"*. And in this instance the text-proof of Rabbi Akiva

³¹ [Translation] Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting, 107.

³² Babylonian Talmud, Nedarim 20b. We will discuss this particular phrase and topic below.

comes from the story of Genesis 30. The Torah, says Rabbi Akiva to the King of the Arabs, already stated this possibility, so you should not be that surprised. Finally, the story has a “happy ending” and the King acknowledges the truth of Akiva's statement.

Why did the rabbis bring this story in this context? I believe that the reason behind it is to challenge the Halakha that they are discussing. This *aggadah* comes to discuss the halakhic consequences of the previous statement in Numbers Rabbah: “*When a woman is with her husband and is engaged in intercourse with him, and at the same time her heart is with another man whom she has seen on the road, there is no greater adultery than this*”. The punishment for adultery in the Bible is death. So the rabbis, inserting this folkloric story under the previous statements, wanted to say that not always adultery is the reason why a parent has a child who does not resemble him, but just a case of maternal impression.

As Admiel Kosman rightly points out and explains, this is a case where *Aggadah* comes to challenge *Halakha*: “*The spiritual world of the sages of the Mishnah and Talmud contained two intrinsically opposing elements, that were forced to coexist in the Talmudic corpus, in a tense relationship not without outright clashes. The law, that is a very 'male' creation, is by its very nature conformist, and tends to create a uniform and unyielding, hierarchical, and institutionalized structure. On the other hand, the 'feminine' aggadah (the nonlegal portions of the Talmud and midrashim) characteristically lacks a rigid and obligatory core. While the aggadah might seem like mere window dressing for the profound halakhic discussions in the Talmud, it strikes home when it presents the weaknesses of the establishment and the entire inflexible legal orientation.*”³³

- **Tracing the original version**

As we have seen, these two are the most popular stories with some variants. In most of the cases, it will be easy to argue that the one in Genesis Rabbah is the original and the one in Numbers Rabbah is a later copy of the story. This is because Genesis Rabbah is the first compilation of Aggadic literature, written sometime around the 5th century, whereas Numbers Rabbah was the last compilation to be edited of the so-called “Midrashei Rabbah” (though this is not a collection per se). According to most authorities, Numbers Rabbah was written between the 11th and 12th centuries C.E. ³⁴ But this is a strange case, because this story appears in the printed version of Genesis Rabbah, but does not do in the manuscripts. In Theodore Albeck’s academic edition of Genesis Rabbah (Berlin, 1903), there is a long explanation in his commentaries about the insertion of this story. They claim that in the printed edition there is “an addition of the story of a Kushite”³⁵. And they claim that the same story also appears in Midrash Tanchuma (Naso 13) as well as in our version of Numbers

³³ Admiel Kosman. R. SIMEON BEN ELEAZAR AND THE OFFENDED MAN: THE UGLINESS OF THE HAUGHTY SCHOLAR, *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Autumn 2007), pp.106

³⁴ One of the first rabbis to quote this compilation was Nahmanides (1194-1270) but for example it is said that Rashi (1045-1105) did not know this collection.

³⁵ Page 854.

Rabbah. It is likewise true that a version of this story is also brought by Jerome in the 4th century in his commentary on Genesis, and the same theme of black parents having white offspring is also present in Heliodorus' novel.

So which is the original version? “It would be hard to hazard a guess as to who (Quintilian, Jerome, Heliodorus, or the rabbis) got the story from whom (one from another, or all from another source)”³⁶ One possibility, we may guess, is that the rabbis found the story of Quintilian so appropriate for the episode of Jacob and the cattle that they inserted it in their commentary. But the question is still open.

C. Genesis Rabbah 26:7 (Theodor-Albeck 254): The women and the Bnei Elohim.

<p>“And also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of Men.” (Genesis 6:4) Rab Berekiah said: A woman would go out into the marketplace, see a young man, and conceive a passion for him, whereupon she would go, cohabit [with her husband], and give birth to a young man like him.³⁷</p>	<p>וגם אחרי כן אשר יבאו בני האלהים אל בנות האדם: אמר ר' ברכיה היתה אשה יוצאה לשוק ורואה בחור מתאוה לו היתה הולכת ומשמשת מטתה והיתה מעמדת בחור כיוצא בו.</p>
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The full verse where this Midrash appears says the following:

הנפלים היו בארץ בימים ההם וגם אחרי־כן אשר יבאו בני האלהים אל־בנות האדם וילדו להם
המה הגברים אשר מעולם אנשי השם:

The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.³⁸

Just before the great Flood of Genesis, humankind becomes corrupt. One of the “transgressions” that preceded the Flood was that the “Sons of God”, the Bnei Elohim, “came unto the daughters of men”. The plain meaning of the text is that the Bnei Elohim, this semi-divine creatures, had intercourse with the daughters of men. This is the normal understanding of the Bible of the verb “And X comes to Y”. But the Midrash in Genesis Rabbah tries to diminish the gravity of this sin or, as Mirkin states in his commentary ad.loc³⁹, “*The sages argued with the Greek legends of the great men who were born by this type of relationships*”. In other

³⁶ Science in Culture, 2001. Page: 106.

³⁷ [Translation with some variants] Midrash Rabbah, Genesis II, Soncino edition. Page: 218

³⁸ [JPS Translation] Genesis 6:4

³⁹ Bereshit Rabbah I, Mirkin Edition, Tel Aviv. Page:199

words, the rabbinic sages are not willing to say that the “Giborim” (men of renown) were the result of a sexual relationship of semi-divine creatures and human beings.

In this context, the general knowledge of maternal impression will be used by Rabbi Berkiah –a 4th-century Amora of the Land of Israel⁴⁰ –to state that they did not have sexual relationships at all with the Bnei Elohim. This is just like the case of a woman that goes to the market, sees a young-looking man, and then, after sleeping with her husband (while setting her mind on this young boy), she impresses the image of this young man on the fetus. The same occurred with the Bnei Elohim; the women thought about them, and when they had sex with their husbands, they begot children with the form of these semi-divine presences, known in the Bible as “Nephilim” (the fallen).

In a parallel version of this story (Midrash Tanchuma, Buber, 1:40⁴¹), Rabbi Berekiah brings the textual bases of this interpretation: “It is not said, *and they bore children from them* (Veialdu Mehem), but *and they bore children to them* (Vaialdu Lahem)”. As we can see once again, like in the cases of the Ethiopians having a white-skinned son, the *amoraim* used the maternal impression theory to solve some kind of problem. In the previous case, it was used to save the life of the woman suspected of adultery; in this case, it is used to confront the Greek legends and mythos of the sexual encounters between divine figures and human beings. But, as it is found in the parallel version of this Midrash in Tanchuma, this solution brings up a new problem that they are not able to solve. They argue that what the woman of the market does is against the way the rabbis understand what the prophet Ezekiel says: “*The wife commits adultery, taking strangers while under her husband*” (Ezekiel 16:32). For this Midrash, the rabbis do not approve of “using” maternal impression, even though it is useful for their solution to the biblical story in which they condemn the act.

D. Talmud Babli, Nedarim 20a-b: Different recommendations to avoid ugly offspring.

<p>R. Johanan b. Dahabai⁴² said: The Ministering Angels told me four things:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) People are born lame because they [sc. their parents] overturned their table [i.e., practised unnatural cohabitation]; 2) dumb, because they kiss 'that place'; 	<p>אמר רבי יוחנן בן דהבאי, ד' דברים סחו לי מלאכי השרת: חיגרין מפני מה הויין? מפני שהופכים את שולחנם, אילמים מפני מה הויין? מפני שמגשקים על אותו מקום, חרשים מפני מה הויין? מפני</p>
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⁴⁰ תולדות תנאים ואמוראים חלק א הימן, אהרן בן מרדכי, 296

⁴¹ וגם אחרי כן וגו' וילדו להם (שם /בראשית ו' ד'), אמר ר' ברכיה אין כתיב וילדו מהם, אלא וילדו להם, אלא מלמד שהיתה אשה רואה אחד מהם, ומיד מתייחמת כנגדו וילדת, כיוצא בו אמר יחזקאל האשה המנאפת וגו' (יחזקאל טז לב).

⁴² 4th Generation of the Tanaim.

<p>3) deaf, because they converse during cohabitation; 4) blind, because they look at 'that place'.</p> <p>But this contradicts the following: Imma Shalom⁴³ was asked: Why are thy children so exceedingly beautiful? She replied: [Because] he [my husband] 'converses' with me neither at the beginning nor at the end of the night, but [only] at midnight; and when he 'converses', he uncovers a handbreadth and covers a hand breadth, and it is as though he were compelled by a demon. And when I asked him, "What is the reason for this [for choosing midnight]", he replied, "So that I may not think of another woman, lest my children be as bastards" —</p> <p>There is no difficulty: this refers to conjugal matters; the other refers to other matters. [...]</p> <p>And that ye seek not after your own heart (Numbers: 15:39). [Deducing] from this Rabbi⁴⁴, it was taught: "One may not drink from one goblet and think of another." Rabina said: "This is necessary only when both are his wives."⁴⁵</p>	<p>שמספרים בשעת תשיש, סומין מפני מה הויין? מפני שמסתכלים באותו מקום.</p> <p>ורמינהו, שאלו את אימא שלום: מפני מה בניך יפיפין ביותר? אמרה להן: אינו מספר עמי לא בתחלת הלילה ולא בסוף הלילה אלא בחצות הלילה, וכשהוא מספר מגלה טפה ומכסה טפה, ודומה עליו כמי שכפאו שד; ואמרת לו: מה טעם? ואמר לי: כדי שלא אתן את עיני באשה אחרת, ונמצאו בניו באין לידי ממזרות! לא קשיא: הא במילי דתשיש, הא במילי אחרנייתא...</p> <p>אולא תתורו אחרי לבבכם מכאן אמר רבי: אל ישתה אדם בכוס זה ויתן עינו בכוס אחר. אמר רבינא: לא נצרכא אלא דאפילו ב' נשיו.</p>
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The first three stories that we brought from rabbinic literature are part of what is commonly known in the Jewish world as "Agaddah", the nonhalakhic (nonlegal) discourse of rabbinic texts. Now, in the tractate of Nedarim, we are going to analyse a text that is mainly halakhic, though it contains some stories, and with a close reading of it, we will discover behind the discussion important points of connection with the Paternal impression theory.

At the beginning of our Sugya, Rabbi Johanan ben Dahabai, a not so famous *tanna* of the end of the 2nd century C.E., states that the angels told him the reason for various diseases or deformities in men. All these diseases, deafness, blindness, are caused because the parents had sex in non-common or well-accepted sexual positions. One of the prohibitions is to speak during intercourse. But the Talmud raises an apparent contradiction with another tannaitic source that holds that Eliezer ben Hyrkanos, when having intercourse

⁴³ The wife of R. Eliezer b. Hyrkanos, sister of Gamaliel II.

⁴⁴ 5th Generation of Tanaim. Redactor of the Mishnah and head of the Sanhedrin.

⁴⁵ Soncino Translation of the Talmud.

with his wife –Imma Shalom– "talks" to her at midnight. On one occasion, Imma Shalom asked her husband about his "strange" behaviour, and he replied that everything he did was to avoid thinking about another woman during sex, since he holds that thinking about another woman during sex is a form of adultery and the consequence would be having a child who would be a bastard.

This story adds something to the study of paternal impression. On the one hand, we can see a case where it is the man, not the woman, who through his thoughts (and the image formed in his mind) can determine some quality of his unborn child. At midnight and in the middle of absolute darkness, where he cannot see anything that might disturb his thoughts, is when Eliezer ben Hyrkanos has intercourse with his wife. By doing this, he ensures that their children will be beautiful and not bastards.

Apparently, some generations later, Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrkanos actions became a concept in the world of halakhic sages. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, the compiler of the Mishnah, basing himself on the famous Biblical dictum of Numbers, said: "*And that ye seek not after your own heart*" that "One may not drink from one goblet and think of another"⁴⁶. This means that a man cannot have sex with his wife while thinking of another woman. Somehow this halacha is restricting the concept and possibility of Parental impression. According to the opinion of Rabbi, a man cannot, even if he wanted to have a wise and beautiful son, think of a beautiful and wise woman while sleeping with her illiterate and ugly woman.

According to this halakhic position, avoiding adultery (even in thought) is more important than the beauty of the seed. What is interesting, however, is that according to the Talmudic text, the outcome is the same. For avoiding thinking about another woman, Hyrkanos ben Eliezer and Imma Shalom are worthy of having beautiful children.

As we will outline below, this puritanical sexuality proposal will be dominant throughout the medieval Jewish halachic thinking up to this day. But we would argue that this sugya contradicts a later story (from the fourth century) that we already studied: the story of Rabbi Yochanan and the women in the mikveh.⁴⁷ If, according to Rabbi, it was forbidden to think of another woman while having sex with your partner, how can Rabbi Yochanan encourage women to think of him during sex? According to Rabbi Yochanan, in order to have beautiful and smart children, women should think of his beauty while having sex. According to Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrkanos, the opposite is true. Neither one of the couple should think of another person while having

⁴⁶ A similar phrase is found in the halakhic midrash of the Tannaim, in the Mekhilta deRabbi Shimon bar Yohai, Exodus 20:13: מנין האוכל בקערו ורואה את עצמו כאלו אוכל בקערה שלחבירו והיה שותה בכוסו ורואה את עצמו כאלו הוא שותה [ב]כוסו [שלח]בירו הרי זה מותרת"ל לא תנאף

⁴⁷ Daniel Boyarin point out that the dominant theory and practice in the rabbinic period is the one that is presented here in Nedarim and the story of Rabbi Yochanan is a strange case, an exception to the rule.

sex. If they avoid that sinful thought, they will merit beautiful offspring. We may conclude this contradiction in the following way: In both stories the theory of Paternal Impression is well known to the rabbis. In the story of Rabbi Yochanan, there is a unique positive approach and legitimization of this folkloric and cultural knowledge, while in the story of Nedarim, there is a condemnation and criticism of using this “visual eugenic” technique. But both stories assume that what a couple thinks and sees during intercourse affects the fetus. And in both stories, by action or omission, the outcome of this popular theory is the same: beautiful offspring.

E. Talmud Babli, Avodah Zarah 24a: The case of the red heifer

<p>The Master said: 'It was watched by Israelites from the time it was first formed.' How did they know? Said R. Kahana: A red cup is being passed before [the mother] when the male is mating with her.⁴⁸</p>	<p>אמר מר: ישראל היו משמרין אותה משעה שנוצרה. מנא ידעינן? אמר רב כהנא: כוס אדום מעבירין לפניו בשעה שעולה עליה זכר.</p>
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Up until now, we have analysed different rabbinic *aggadot* on Paternal Imprinting only in humans. Even though most of the antique and medieval writings about this theory surround human births, different cultures have stated since ancient times that the same is true for animals. The first case that we can recall is the biblical story about Jacob and Laban's cattle, but many stories and theories in the Greek and Latin worlds also acknowledge this possibility.

For the end, we have left this laconic quote from the Talmud that also shows that the same theory applies to animals. In this case, the discussion in the Talmud revolves around the "red heifer". According to biblical law, if someone became impure by contact with a dead body, the only way to purify that person was to spread a combination of blood from a red heifer and other elements of nature on the impure body. But this heifer could not be just any cow but a red one without any yoke and totally perfect. In this context, the Stam HaTalmud wonders how the scholars could be sure that a certain cow from a non-Jew would give birth to a red heifer. Rab Kahana himself gives the answer, saying: "*A red cup is being passed before [the mother] when the male is mating with her*". As we can notice, the theory is the same: while the cows are mating, a rabbi passed a red cup before her (and once again the power of visual eugenics rests on the woman), so that she could see that color and imprint the image on the offspring.

⁴⁸ [Translation] Soncino English edition of the Talmud .

V. Paternal impression in medieval Jewish society

The powerful theory of maternal impression did not have its end in the Jewish society with the work of the early rabbis. Once the Babylonian Talmud was finished in the 6th century, this theory, through the Midrashim, built and expanded by the rabbis, find their way into many Jewish authors and thinkers, from the most rational (like Maimonides) to the most esoteric (like the writer of *Iggeret Hakodesh*). And as we shall also see in the next chapter, it also had its repercussions in Halakha until, in many chasidic sects, our own days, the 21st century. Let us analyse a couple of examples just to grasp a feeling of the powerful influence of this theory through the midrashim of the rabbis in medieval Jewry.

- **Maimonides:**

I heard from the ancient physicians that he who wishes to give rise to a handsome son should request a very famous painter to prepare a portrait having the likeness of a beautiful child. He should then request of his wife that, during intercourse, she look at the portrait without winking and not move her eyes right or left. And so it happened that she gave birth to a beautiful child who resembled the portrait of the painter and did not resemble his father at all.⁴⁹

The great sage Maimonides (Egypt, 1135-1205), citing the teachings of Claudius Galenus, brings the theory of Maternal Impression once again into the Jewish world. However, I would like to mark some clear differences with classical rabbinic literature. In this case, it is the husband who gives the picture to his own wife. There are, however, no stories or Midrashim to reflect this position in classical rabbinic literature. However, this phenomenon often occurs in Greek and Latin writings, such as those by Soran or Oppian, to name but a few. The other thing that strikes us is that in this case Maimonides does not use as textual support the story of Jacob with Laban's cattle or any of the classic stories of aggadic literature, such as the story of Rabbi Yochanan or the one about black parents with a white child. What is the reason? We cannot know, yet the question remains open. Perhaps we can rule out the hypothesis that Maimonides did not know the classic stories of Maternal Impression that we bring in this article. If so, why not bring support to this theory from the stories of his own tradition (Talmud and Midrash) and preferring to base it solely on the teachings of Galenus?

- **Eleazar of Worms, Sefer HaRokeach 317**

⁴⁹ Maimonides, The Medical Aphorisms of Moses Maimonides, trans. Fred Rosner, 1989. Page 388.

Eleazar of Worms (1176–1238), was a leading Talmudist and mystic, and the last major member of *Hasidei Ashkenaz*, a pious group of German Jews of the 12th century. In his book *HaRokeach* (“The perfumer”), which served as halakhic guide for ordinary people, in his entry 317 (out of 497), in the Hilchot Nidah section, he states the following:

“She encounters”. Every woman who immerses in the Mikveh and then encounters a dog and has sex with her husband, her offspring will be ugly and their face will resemble the face of a dog. If she encounters a donkey, they will be as stupid as the donkey. If she encounters an ignorant person (Am Haaretz), her children will be ignorant. For this reason Rabbi Yochanan sat at the entrance of the Mikveh in the third chapter of tractate Berakhot...

Basing himself on the story of Rabbi Yochanan, the author of *Sefer HaRokeach* relates what would happen to a woman who sees a dog or a donkey, two of the most despicable animals in rabbinic literature, after going out of the Mikveh and just before having sex with her husband. This is a classic exemplification of the maternal impression theory. If she sees a dog, her children will be ugly. If she sees a donkey, her children will be stupid. That is why in his halakhic work he tries to prevent women from seeing anything between the moment they leave the Mikveh and the moment they resume their sexual relationships with their husbands. It is interesting to note that, according to his interpretation of maternal impression, visual eugenics could influence not only the outer signs of the fetus (the case of the dog), but also the inner characteristics of the future child (the case of the donkey or the Am Haaretz).

- **Iggeret HaKodesh**

Iggeret HaKodesh is a kabbalistic erotic work written in the second half of the 12th century. This work was traditionally attributed to Nahmanides, but now this theory is being questioned by modern scholars.⁵⁰ Regardless of who is the author of this letter, we could find a really interesting inverted-parallel of the story about the two Kushites that have a white son, which appears for the first time in Jewish literature in Genesis Rabbah.

“A queen had a black baby though the king and she were white and extremely comely. The King wanted to kill her until a wise man came and said: “Perhaps you thought of a black

⁵⁰ For more information and data visit: Biti Roi, *Iggeret HaKodesh* <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/iggeret-ha-kodesh>

man at the time of intercourse”. They examined the matter and found black designs on the drapes in their conjugal room. She said that she had looked at these black figures during intercourse and thought of them. This is just like the sticks of Jacob.”⁵¹

The black parents are now white and noble. The child is black; however, the story is the same. We can assume, though, that in the white-European atmosphere where the author of *Iggeret HaKodesh* lived, it was more fitting to invert the colors. And as usual, as in the case of *Genesis Rabbah*, the text proof for this phenomenon is the story of the *sticks of Jacob*. Doniger and Spinner, while commenting on the many references of *Iggeret HaKodesh* to the theory of Maternal impression, state the following: “According to this text, the wife fantasizes about her husband, who contemplates the archetypal *sefirot* as a cognitive template to stamp the child with *imago dei*. ... Thus the paternity is twofold: the wife focuses her mind on her husband, so that the child physically resembles his biological father, while her husband focuses his thoughts on the supernal form, so that the child metaphysically resembles his Father in heaven.”⁵²

It is an interesting reference of how a mid-twelfth century esoteric-kabbalistic environment receives the writings of the Midrash about maternal impression. Not only the mother is the one who has the power to set the outward form of her seed, but the father also has the ability to shape their inner spirit. In a more puritan atmosphere, a woman cannot think or see another man, but must set her eyes on her husband during sex, so that the child has the "beauty" of his father. The "newness" in this reading is that it is the father who should be thinking about God during sex, so that the child acquires this divine resemblance. There is a rotation from outer beauty to inner wisdom. But the theory of maternal impression remains.

- **The Zohar, 1.154**

On the night when Jacob had intercourse with Leah he was thinking of Rachel. He lay with Leah but thought of Rachel, and his semen followed his thought, but it was not intentional, for he did not know... And because the Holy One, blessed be He, knew that it was not intentional and that Jacob had truthful thought during his desire, [Reuben] was not disqualified from being counted among the holy tribes. Otherwise he would have been disqualified.⁵³

⁵¹ Seymour J. Cohen, *The holy letter: A study in Jewish Sexual Morality*. Pages: 142-144.

⁵² *Science in Culture*, 2001. Page: 110.

⁵³ Tishby Ishaiah, *The wisdom of the Zohar*, 3.1402-3. (Zohar, 1.154)

In this instance, we can also trace the idea of paternal impression to the Zohar itself. While commenting on the story of Jacob with both of his wives, the Zohar states that while sleeping with Leah, he was really thinking about Rachel. In most of the cases, as the Talmudic law states, this will cause the offspring to be “mamzerim veeinam maamzerim”, bastards that are not really bastards. According to the Talmud⁵⁴, there are nine categories of children who might be considered bastards because of a sexual offense of their parents in their conception, but they are not really considered bastards according to Jewish law. One of these children is called “Bnei Temurah” (children of substitution). If the father, while having sexual relationships with his wife, was thinking of another woman, his son is considered a *mamzer veein mamzer*, a type of bastard.

Having this law in mind, the Zohar defended the honor of both Jacob and Reuben. If Reuben was born after the first sexual encounter with Leah, in the wedding night, he may be considered “Ben Tmurah”, because until the following morning, according to the biblical story, Jacob was certain that he was lying with Rachel. But the Zohar says that God “knew that it was not intentional and that Jacob had truthful thought during his desire”. Because Laban deceived Jacob and he slept with Leah without bad intentions, Reuben was not disqualified. In this short commentary, the Zohar develops once again the theory of Paternal Impression. And once again, like the story in *Nedarim* that we analyzed, it is a rare story of paternal and not maternal impression. Who may have changed the inner status of Reuben was not Leah but Jacob.

⁵⁴ Babylonian Talmud, Nedarim 20b.

VI. Conclusion

As we have proven, since biblical times and up to these days, the ancient theory of paternal imprinting has had a great impact on Jewish thought. The first ever-recorded Jewish voice of this phenomenon comes from the Bible itself, from the well-known story of Jacob and Laban's sheep, as it has been emphasized by modern and traditional biblical scholars. But after comparing the literature and general knowledge, especially Greek and Latin, which surrounded and preceded the rabbis, we can assume that most of their knowledge about this particular theory did not come from the Bible itself but from the surrounding cultures and folkloric literature and beliefs. In any case, the story of Jacob was a perfect *post-factum* proof-text, which the rabbis could rely on to give biblical support to their beliefs.

After reviewing the main halakhic and aggadic materials of the rabbis, it is quite clear that by the time the main sets of Midrashim and the Talmud itself were written, the beliefs of paternal impression were very attached to rabbinic culture. It is important to point out that all rabbinic sources on maternal impression come from the amoraic period, and we do not have a single mention of this belief before the 4th century C.E.

The main story that supports this theory is the famous story of Rabbi Yochanan at the entrance of the Mikveh. Even though this story is "an exception to the rule", as Daniel Boyarin and Julius Preuss have emphasized⁵⁵, it is presented as common knowledge and belief. Rabbi Yochanan, the women and the Talmudic editor believed in the power of visual eugenics. This is -however- the only story in rabbinic literature that has a positive view on maternal impression. Rabbi Yochanan wants to duplicate his beauty [and in some versions his wisdom] and he has no problem using his body to this end. But in most of the Midrashic and Halakhic discussion of this issue, even though we can prove that the rabbis strongly believed in this theory, it was also strongly condemned and rejected.

That story, together with those about the Kushites having white babies and the Midrash about the women in the market, are the most vivid proof of the rabbis' common belief in this theory. And like in almost all the surrounding cultures, they reflect cases of maternal -and not paternal- impression. The main power of visual eugenics relies on the mother, because she is the one carrying the offspring. These two stories also open up the question of whether the rabbis really believed in the power of imagination of women and the impact on a fetus' formation, or whether they use this "common belief" to save the life of a woman being accused of adultery, or in the case of the Bnei Elohim and the women, whether they just used this theory to reject the well-known Greek legends. In any case, the rabbis knew and used this theory.

⁵⁵ "Human experiments of this sort are unknown in the Talmud. Nevertheless, it is related that rabbi Yochanan used to sit at the gates of the ritual bathhouse..." Preuss Julius, Biblical and Talmudic Medicine. Page 391.

The case of the halakhic-aggadic section of Nedarim is a strange example of the “negative paternal impression”. As the father -and this case is the only case of paternal rather than maternal impression found in rabbinic texts- avoids looking or thinking about other women, they are granted beautiful sons. Together with the rabbinic concept of *"One may not drink from one goblet and think of another"*, these are the strongest rabbinical opposition to the “regular use” of maternal impression, as found in Greek and Latin literature, where the “ugly” husbands were the ones who encouraged their wives to think about another beautiful figure while engaging in sex with them. While the rabbis believed in the power of visual eugenics, they refrain from using it and, like in this case, they condemn it, as a sort of adultery that results in a child being considered a kind of mamzer-bastard in a figurative sense. We have also demonstrated that in the rabbis’ view, the same law applied to animals too, as it is reflected in the case of the red heifer or the classical interpretations of the story of Jacob and Laban’s cattle.

After the classical rabbinic period, the theory of maternal impression continued and spread throughout the Jewish world like in the general population until our days. As we have proven, early rabbinical commentators like Radak, continuing with Sforno and Shadal, explained the story of Laban’s cattle as a mere example of this well-known theory. In the Middle Ages too, we have seen a development of this concept in a variety of epochs and sources, from the Rokeach to Maimonides, and from Iggeret HaKodesh to the Zohar. The same idea that appeared in the Rokeach also appears in the most authoritative canon of Jewish Law, the Shulchan Aruch⁵⁶, in one of the glosses of the Ramah, who recommends that women should avoid seeing impure things or illiterate people on their way out from the Mikveh before they have sex with their husbands, and he adds that if they do so, they should go back and immerse once again in the Mikveh. And even in our own days, the maternal impression theory has found advocates in Jewish life, especially around Hasidic courts. In many Chasidic mikvaot, there is a picture of the Rebbe, and after immersing in the Mikveh, women are encouraged to see that photograph in order to have the “merit of having wise and pious offspring”.

⁵⁶ Shulchan Aruch, Ioreh Deah, 188:48: ויש לנשים ליוהר כשיוצאות מן הטבילה שיפגע בה חברתה, שלא יפגע בה תחילה דבר טמא או גוי; סא ואם פגעו בה (כט) דברים אלו, אם היא יראת שמים תחזור ותטבול

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VIII. Appendix

- Differences in the manuscripts: All have “בני שפירי כוותי” but not all have “גמירי אורייתא כוותי” or a similar clause.

גמירי אורייתא כוותי	בני שפירי כוותי
<p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Escorial G-I-3</p> <p>ר' יוחנן הוה אזיל ויתיב אשערי טבילה אמ' כי סלקן בנות ישראל מטבילת מצוה לפגען בי כי היכי דליהו להו בני שפירי כותי ואגמרו תורה...</p> <p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Munich 95</p> <p>ר' יוחנן סליק ויתיב אשערי טביל' א' סלקן בנו' ישר' מטבילו' מצו' ליפגען בי כי היכי דליהו להו בני שפירי כוותי ואגמרי אורית' כותי'</p> <p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Vatican 115</p> <p>ר' יוחנ' הוה אזיל ויתיב אשערי טביל' א' כי סלקן בנות ישר' מטבילת מצוה ליפגען בי וליסתכלו בו כי היכי דליהו להו בני שפירי כותאי ואגמרי אורייתא כותאי</p> <p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Vatican 117</p> <p>ר' יוחנן הוה אזיל אשערי טבילה אמר כי סלקו בנות ישראל מטבילת מצוה ליפגען בי כי היכי דליהו ליה בנין שפירי כוותי ואגמרי א(ג)[ו]ריתא כוותי</p> <p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Vilna</p> <p>רבי יוחנן הוה אזיל ויתיב אשערי טבילה אמר כי סלקן בנות ישראל מטבילת מצוה לפגעו בי כי היכי דלהו להו בני שפירי כוותי גמירי אורייתא כוותי</p>	<p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Florence II-I-8</p> <p>ר' יוח' אזיל הוה יתיב אשערי טבילה אמ' כי סל(כ)[ק]ן בנות ישר' ליסתכלו בי (והו) וליהו להי זרעא דשפירא כוותי</p> <p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Hamburg 165</p> <p>ר' יוחנן הוה אזיל ויתיב אשערי טבילה אמ' כי סלקן ואתיאן בנות ישראל מטבילת מצוה מסתכלן בי כי היכי דליהו להי בני שפירי כותי</p> <p>BAVA MEZIA 84a Oxford – Bodl. heb. c. 17 (2661) 69-78</p> <p>הוה אזי יתיב אשערי טבילה אמ' כי סלקן בנות ישראל מטבילת מצוה ניפגען בי כי היכי דניהו להו בני שפירי</p>

- Comparison of the two Midrashim

Numbers Rabbah (9:34)	Genesis Rabbah (73:10)
<p>1. שאל מלך ערביים את רבי עקיבא אני כושי ואשתי כושית וילדה בן לבן אהרגנה שזינתה תחתי?</p> <p>2. [Missing]</p> <p>3. אמר לו צורות ביתך שחורות או לבנות אמר לו לבנות.</p> <p>4. אמר לו כשהיית מתעסק עמה נתנה עיניה בצורות הלבנות וילדה כיוצא בהן.</p> <p>5. ואם תמה אתה בדבר למוד מצאנו של יעקב אבינו שמן המקלות היו מתיחמות שנאמר (בראשית ל) ויחמו הצאן אל אל המקלות והודה מלך ערביים לרבי עקיבא.</p>	<p>1. מעשה בכושי אחד שנשא לכושית אחת והוליד ממנה בן לבן, תפס האב לבן ובא לו אצל ר' א"ל שמא אינו בני</p> <p>2. א"ל היה לך מראות בתוך ביתך א"ל הן</p> <p>3. א"ל שחורה או לבנה א"ל לבנה,</p> <p>4. א"ל מיכן שהיה לך בן לבן.</p> <p>5. [The text proof is missing here but appears at the beginning of this section]</p>