

Miri Westreich | **“The Code of Hannah”:
On the Halakhic-Aggadic *Sugya* as a Short Story**

The article offers a new literary perspective on the relationship between halakhah and aggadah in the Babylonian Talmud, through a study of the *sugya* (discursive unit) of the prayer of Hannah, which serves as the source for the establishment of the fixed prayers (*tefillot ha-qeva*; *b. Berakhot* 31a–b). It seeks to characterize the halakhah and aggadah in the *sugya* as a dramatic and independent narrative unit, whose internal plot logic is constructed in the classic short story format.

The proposed analysis deepens our understanding of the complexity and sophistication of the integration of halakhah and aggadah - or, of law and literature - in the Babylonian Talmud. Specifically for this *sugya*, the demarcation and characterization of the literary unit employing the characteristics of the short story, as in the article, are meant to create a new language and innovative correlation between its midrashic and literary aspects, in terms both of the terminology of the discourse and the thematic examination of the *sugya*. This fashioning enables the *sugya* to unify its literary and normative halakhic elements in a manner that draws into sharp focus and deepens the message that its author sought to impart concerning the tension between the fixed and supplicatory forms of prayer.