

FROM MASEKHET BRAKHOT 10a

There were once some highwaymen in the neighborhood of R. Meir who caused him a great deal of trouble.

R. Meir accordingly prayed that they should die.

His wife Beruria said to him:

How do you make out (that such a prayer should be permitted)?

Because it is written "Let *hatta'im* (sins) cease?"

Is it written *hot'im*? (sinners)

[No] It is written *hatta'im*!

Further, look at the end of the verse: *and let the wicked men be no more*. Since the sins will cease, there will be no more wicked men! Rather, pray for them that they should repent, and there will be no more wickedness.

He did pray for them, and they repented .

הנהו בריוני דהו
בשכמותיה דר"מ והו קא מציערו ליה טובא
הוה קא בעי ר' מאיר רחמי עלויהו כי היכי
דלימותו אמרה ל' ברוריא דביתהו מאי דעתך
כי משום דכתיב 'יתמו חטאים מי כתיב חוטאים
חטאים כתיב ועוד שפיל לסיפיה דקרא ורשעים
עוד אינם כיון דיתמו חטאים ורשעים עוד אינם אלא *בעי רחמי עלויהו דלהרו
בתשובה ורשעים עוד אינם בעא רחמי עלויהו והרו בתשובה:

What is this story about?

Who is sinning?

What is the sin?

What is Beruria's role?

What can be learned from drawing an analogy to the history of Catholic-Jewish relations?

Using the analogy:

Who is R. Meir?

Who are the highwaymen?

Who is Beruria?