



Con/Text: "The Citizen in a Democracy"

Between Romans and Barbarians

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October 28, 2020

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1. Mishnah Kiddushin 1:10

...He who is familiar with Bible, Mishnah, and the ways of the land will not easily sin, as it is said, "And a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:12). **But he who is not familiar with Bible, Mishnah and the ways of the land does not belong to civilization.**

2. Jerusalem Talmud Bava Metzia 2:8a

Shimon ben Shetach traded in cotton. His students said to him: "Master, allow us to buy you a donkey so that you will not have to labor so much!" They went and bought him a donkey from a certain Syriac and found upon it a precious stone. They came and told him: "Now you need not labor ever again." Said he: "Why so?" They replied, "We have bought you a donkey from a certain Syriac and found upon it a precious stone." He asked: "But does the owner know of it?" They replied: "No." He told them, "Go and return it." But did not Rav Huna Bivi b. Gozlon say, quoting Rav, "It was stated in the presence of Rabbi (Judah the Prince), 'Even according to the view that stealing from a heathen is forbidden, is not (appropriating) his lost property permitted?'"

Do you think that Shimon ben Shetach is a barbarian?!

Shimon ben Shetach preferred hearing "Blessed be the God of the Jews" to all the riches of this world.

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