



their presence, and as Richard Hidary remarks: "This midrash forbids a judge to appoint defense advocates because doing so would bias his judgment" (*Rabbis and Classical Rhetoric*, p. 223). The midrash then cites Exodus 22:8 to support this the exclusion of defenders: "In any case of disputed ownership involving ox, donkey, sheep, clothing, or any other loss, of which one party says, 'This is mine,' the case of both parties shall come before God" (v. 9 in NRSV). In this verse, and various others, the word God (*Elohim*) is interpreted as a reference to judges. The quotation from Exodus 22:8 is used to demonstrate that the Torah instructs litigants to approach judges directly, without professional accusers or defenders. It is important to consider this teaching in the context of Roman legal norms, for its prohibition of *sun?goros* offers an alternative that dominant system. Furthermore, this source suggests that innocents may be convicted in Roman courts.

Keywords in the original language:

- [???](#)
- [????](#)
- [???? ???](#)
- [?????](#)
- [???](#)

Thematic keywords in English:

- [accuser](#)
- [advocates](#)
- [defender](#)
- [evil speech](#)
- [heavenly court](#)
- [Jewish court](#)
- [judge](#)
- [Roman court](#)
- [Roman justice](#)
- [Roman law](#)
- [Roman legal system](#)

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Realized by:

[Yael Wilfand](#)



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