חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִׁ"י · PARSHAS HASHAVUA

חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִׁ"י · חֻקַּת־בָּלָק · רְבִיעִי

Complete Word-for-Word Interlinear · Navy & Gold Edition

CHUKAS-BALAK · 4TH ALIYAH

📖 CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this aliyah, we learn of the incredible nissim Hashem performed for Klal Yisrael as they neared the Promised Land. After peacefully requesting passage through the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and promising to stick strictly to the highway, the Bnei Yisrael are met with outright war. With the help of Hashem, Klal Yisrael defeats Sihon, conquers his lands, and goes on to vanquish the mighty giant Og, king of Bashan, taking possession of his entire territory before encamping in the plains of Moab.

Seeing these miraculous victories, Balak, the king of Moab, is filled with dread and a deep fear of the Jewish people. Realizing he cannot defeat them through natural warfare, he partners with the elders of Midian and sends messengers to the notorious rasha Balaam, hoping to use the power of curses to destroy Klal Yisrael. However, Hashem intervenes immediately, warning Balaam in a dream not to go with them.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פָּסוּק א

Pasuk 1

וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְאָכִים אֶל סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי לֵאמֹר׃

saying the Emori king of Sichon to messengers Yisrael And sent

רַשִׁ"י

וישלח ישראל מלאכים. וּבְמָקוֹם אַחֵר תּוֹלֶה הַשִּׁלּוּחוֹת בְּמֹשֶׁה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וָאֶשְׁלַח

"And I sent as it is said to Moshe the mission it attributes another and in a place messengers Yisrael And sent

מַלְאָכִים מִמִּדְבַּר קְדֵמוֹת" דברים ב' , וְכֵן "וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה מַלְאָכִים מִקָּדֵשׁ

from Kadesh messengers Moshe "And sent and so too chapter 2 Devarim Kedemoth" from the wilderness of messengers

אֶל מֶלֶךְ אֱדוֹם" במדבר כ' , וּבְיִפְתָּח הוּא אוֹמֵר שופטים י"א "וַיִּשְׁלַח

"And sent chapter 11 Shoftim says it and regarding Yiftach chapter 20 Bamidbar Edom" the king of to

יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְאָכִים אֶל מֶלֶךְ אֱדוֹם" וְגוֹ', הַכְּתוּבִים הַלָּלוּ צְרִיכִין זֶה לָזֶה, זֶה

this one that one this one need these the verses etcetera Edom" the king of to messengers Yisrael

נוֹעֵל וְזֶה פּוֹתֵחַ, שֶׁמֹּשֶׁה הוּא יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם מֹשֶׁה, לוֹמַר לְךָ שֶׁנְּשִׂיא

that the prince of to you to say Moshe are and Yisrael Yisrael is that Moshe opens and that one locks

הַדּוֹר הוּא כְּכָל הַדּוֹר, כִּי הַנָּשִׂיא הוּא הַכֹּל תנחומא :

Tanchuma the whole is the prince because the generation like all of is the generation

פָּסוּק ב

Pasuk 2

אֶעְבְּרָה בְאַרְצֶךָ לֹא נִטֶּה בְשָׂדֶה וּבְכֶרֶם לֹא נִשְׁתֶּה מֵי בְאֵר

a well water of drink we will not or into vineyard into field turn aside we will not through your land Let me pass

בְּדֶרֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ נֵלֵךְ עַד אֲשֶׁר נַעֲבֹר גְּבֻלֶךָ׃

by the road of the king we will go until that we have passed your border

רַשִׁ"י

אעברה בארצך. אַע"פ שֶׁלֹּא נִצְטַוּוּ לְפִתֹּחַ לָהֶם בְּשָׁלוֹם בִּקְּשׁוּ מֵהֶם

Let me pass through your land Even though that not they were commanded to open to them with peace they sought from them

שָׁלוֹם שם׃

peace there

פָּסוּק ג

Pasuk 3

וְלֹא נָתַן סִיחֹן אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבֹר בִּגְבֻלוֹ וַיֶּאֱסֹף סִיחֹן אֶת כָּל עַמּוֹ

and not did allow Sichon — Yisrael to pass through his border and gathered Sichon his people all of

וַיֵּצֵא לִקְרַאת יִשְׂרָאֵל הַמִּדְבָּרָה וַיָּבֹא יָהְצָה וַיִּלָּחֶם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל׃

and he went out towards Yisrael to the wilderness and he came to Yahatz and he fought against Yisrael

רַשִׁ"י

ולא נתן סיחן וגו'. לְפִי שֶׁכָּל מַלְכֵי כְנַעַן הָיוּ מַעֲלִין לוֹ מַס, שֶׁהָיָה

And not did suffer Sichon etc. Because that all kings of Kenaan were paying to him tribute because he was

שׁוֹמְרָם שֶׁלֹּא יַעַבְרוּ עֲלֵיהֶם גְּיָסוֹת, כֵּיוָן שֶׁאָמְרוּ לוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶעְבְּרָה

protecting them so that not should pass against them hostile forces As soon as that said to him Yisrael Let me pass

בְּאַרְצֶךָ, אָ"לְ, כָּל עַצְמִי אֵינִי יוֹשֵׁב כָּאן אֶלָּא לְשָׁמְרָם מִפְּנֵיכֶם,

through your land he said to them the whole purpose of myself Iam not dwelling here except to protect them from before you

וְאַתֶּם אוֹמְרִים כָּךְ תנחומא׃

and you say thus Tanchuma

רַשִׁ"י

ויצא לקראת ישראל. אִלּוּ הָיְתָה חֶשְׁבּוֹן מְלֵאָה יַתּוּשִׁין אֵין כָּל בְּרִיָּה יְכוֹלָה

And he went out against Yisrael if had been Cheshbon full of gnats there is no any creature able

לְכָבְשָׁהּ, וְאִם הָיָה סִיחוֹן בִּכְפָר חַלָּשׁ אֵין כָּל אָדָם יָכוֹל לְכָבְשׁוֹ, וְכָל שֶׁכֵּן

to conquer her and if had been Sichon in a village weak there is no any man able to conquer him and all the more so

שֶׁהָיָה בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן; אָמַר הַקָּבָ"ה מָה אֲנִי מַטְרִיחַ עַל בָּנַי כָּל זֹאת לָצוּר עַל כָּל

that he was in Cheshbon said the Holy One why should I trouble · my children all this to besiege · every

עִיר וָעִיר? נָתַן בְּלֵב כָּל אַנְשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה לָצֵאת מִן הָעֲיָרוֹת, וְנִתְקַבְּצוּ כֻלָּם

city and city He put in the heart of all the men of the war to go out from the cities and they assembled all of them

לְמָקוֹם אֶחָד וְשָׁם נָפְלוּ, וּמִשָּׁם הָלְכוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל הֶעָרִים וְאֵין עוֹמֵד

to a place one and there they fell and from there went Yisrael to the cities and there was none standing

לְנֶגְדָּם, כִּי אֵין שָׁם אֶלָּא נָשִׁים וָטָף שם׃

against them for there were none there but women and children there

פָּסוּק ד

Pasuk 4

וַיַּכֻּהוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפִי חָרֶב וַיִּירַשׁ אֶת אַרְצוֹ מֵאַרְנֹן עַד יַבֹּק עַד

And smote him Yisrael by the edge of the sword and possessed — his land from Arnon until Yabbok until

בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן כִּי עַז גְּבוּל בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן׃

Ammon the children of the boundary of strong was for Ammon the children of

רַשִׁ"י

כי עז. ומַהוּ חָזְקוֹ? הַתְרָאָתוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּבָ"ה שֶׁאָמַר לָהֶם אַל תְּצָרֵם וְגוֹ'

for strong and what is its strength the warning of · the Holy One blessed be He Who said to them do not distress them etc.

דברים ב' :

Devarim 2

פָּסוּק ה

Pasuk 5

וַיִּקַּח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת כָּל הֶעָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל עָרֵי הָאֱמֹרִי

the Emori the cities of in all Yisrael and settled these the cities all — Yisrael And took

בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן וּבְכָל בְּנֹתֶיהָ׃

its suburbs and in all in Cheshbon

רַשִׁ"י

בנתיה. כְּפָרִים הַסְּמוּכִים לָהּ׃

to it that are adjacent villages its daughters

פָּסוּק ו

Pasuk 6

כִּי חֶשְׁבּוֹן עִיר סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי הִוא וְהוּא נִלְחַם בְּמֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב

Moav against the king of had fought and he it was the Emori king of Sichon the city of Cheshbon For

הָרִאשׁוֹן וַיִּקַּח אֶת כָּל אַרְצוֹ מִיָּדוֹ עַד אַרְנֹן׃

Arnon until from his hand his land all of — and he took the first

רַשִׁ"י

והוא נלחם. לָמָּה הֻצְרַךְ לִכָּתֵב? לְפִי שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר שָׁם "אַל תָּצַר אֶת מוֹאָב", וְחֶשְׁבּוֹן

and Heshbon Moab — harass do not there that it is said because to be written was it necessary why had fought And he

מֹשֶׁל מוֹאָב הָיְתָה, כָּתַב לָנוּ שֶׁסִּיחוֹן לְקָחָהּ מֵהֶם וְעַל יָדוֹ טָהֲרָה

it became permitted his hand and through from them took it that Sihon for us it wrote it was Moab from that of

לְיִשְׂרָאֵל חולין ס'; גיטין ל"ח :

to Israel Chullin 60 Gittin 38

רַשִׁ"י

מידו. מֵרְשׁוּתוֹ בבא מציעא נ"ו :

From his hand from his possession Bava Metzia 56

פָּסוּק ז

Pasuk 7

עַל כֵּן יֹאמְרוּ הַמֹּשְׁלִים בֹּאוּ חֶשְׁבּוֹן תִּבָּנֶה וְתִכּוֹנֵן עִיר סִיחוֹן׃

Sichon the city of and established it shall be built Cheshbon Come to the bards say · Therefore

רַשִׁ"י

עַל כֵּן. עַל אוֹתָהּ מִלְחָמָה שֶׁנִּלְחַם סִיחוֹן בְּמוֹאָב:

Therefore · about that war which fought Sichon against Moav

רַשִׁ"י

יֹאמְרוּ הַמֹּשְׁלִים. בִּלְעָם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בּוֹ "וַיִּשָּׂא מְשָׁלוֹ" בְּמִדְבַּר כ"ג:

They say who speak parables Bilaam as it is said regarding him "And he took up his parable" Bamidbar 23

רַשִׁ"י

הַמֹּשְׁלִים. בִּלְעָם וּבְעוֹר, וְהֵם אָמְרוּ:

They who speak in parables Bilaam and Beor and they said

רַשִׁ"י

בֹּאוּ חֶשְׁבּוֹן. שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה סִיחוֹן יָכוֹל לְכָבְשָׁהּ וְהָלַךְ וְשָׂכַר אֶת בִּלְעָם לְקַלְלוֹ

Come to Cheshbon for not was Sichon able to conquer her and he went and he hired — Bilaam to curse him

תנחומא ; וְזֶהוּ שֶׁאָמַר לוֹ בָּלָק "כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר תְּבָרֵךְ מְבֹרָךְ" וְגוֹ' בְּמִדְבַּר כ"ב :

Tanchuma and this is that which said to him Balak "For I know — whom you bless is blessed" etc. Bamidbar 22

רַשִׁ"י

תִּבָּנֶה וְתִכּוֹנֵן. חֶשְׁבּוֹן בְּשֵׁם סִיחוֹן לִהְיוֹת עִירוֹ:

It will be built and established Cheshbon under the name of Sichon to be his city

פָּסוּק ח

Pasuk 8

כִּי אֵשׁ יָצְאָה מֵחֶשְׁבּוֹן לֶהָבָה מִקִּרְיַת סִיחֹן אָכְלָה עָר מוֹאָב בַּעֲלֵי

For fire went forth from Cheshbon a flame from the city of Sichon it consumed Ar of Moav the masters of

בָּמוֹת אַרְנֹן:

the high places of Arnon

רַשִׁ"י

כִּי אֵשׁ יָצְאָה מֵחֶשְׁבּוֹן. מִשֶּׁכִּבְשָׁהּ סִיחוֹן:

For a fire went forth from Cheshbon after he conquered it Sichon

רַשִׁ"י

אָכְלָה עָר מוֹאָב. שֵׁם אוֹתָהּ הַמְּדִינָה קָרוּי עָר בִּלְשׁוֹן עִבְרִי וּלְחַיַּת

It consumed Ar of Moav The name of that province was called Ar in the language Hebrew and Lechayath

בִּלְשׁוֹן אֲרַמִּי:

in the language Aramaic

רַשִׁ"י

עָר מוֹאָב. עָר שֶׁל מוֹאָב:

Ar of Moab Ar of Moab

פָּסוּק ט

Pasuk 9

אוֹי לְךָ מוֹאָב אָבַדְתָּ עַם כְּמוֹשׁ נָתַן בָּנָיו פְּלֵיטִם וּבְנֹתָיו
Woe to you Moav you are lost O people of Kemosh he has delivered his sons as fugitives and his daughters

בַּשְׁבִית לְמֶלֶךְ אֱמֹרִי סִיחוֹן׃
into captivity to the king of the Emori Sichon

רַשִׁ"י

אוי לך מואב. שֶׁקִּלְלוּ אֶת מוֹאָב שֶׁיִּמָּסְרוּ בְיָדוֹ תנחומא׃
Woe to you Moab for they cursed — Moab that they be delivered into his hand Tanchuma

רַשִׁ"י

כמוש. שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי מוֹאָב׃
Chemosh the name of the god of Moav

רַשִׁ"י

נתן. הַנּוֹתֵן אֶת בָּנָיו שֶׁל מוֹאָב׃
He gave the One Who gives his sons — of Moav

רַשִׁ"י

פליטם — נָסִים וּפְלֵטִים מֵחֶרֶב וְאֶת בְּנוֹתָיו בַּשְׁבִית וְגוֹ׳׃
their fugitives fleeing and escaping from the sword and — his daughters into captivity etcetera

פָּסוּק י

Pasuk 10

וַנְּיָרֶם אָבַד חֶשְׁבּוֹן עַד דִּיבוֹן וַנַּשִּׁים עַד נֹפַח אֲשֶׁר עַד
and we cast them down perished Cheshbon until Divon and we laid waste until Nofach which is until

מֵידְבָא׃
Meidva

רַשִׁ"י

ונירם אבד. מַלְכוּת שֶׁלָּהֶם׃
And their sovereignty is lost the kingdom of theirs

רַשִׁ"י

אבד חשבון עד דיבן — מַלְכוּת וְעֹל שֶׁהָיָה לְמוֹאָב בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן אָבַד מִשָּׁם, וְכֵן
Is destroyed Cheshbon until Divon — sovereignty and yoke that was to Moav in Cheshbon is destroyed from there and so

עַד דִּיבֹן; תַּרְגּוּם שֶׁל סָר "עַד", כְּלוֹמַר סָר נִיר מִדִּיבֹן; נִיר לְשׁוֹן
until Divon the translation of departed is ad meaning to say departed dominion from Divon Nir is an expression of

מַלְכוּת וְעֹל מֶמְשֶׁלֶת אִישׁ, כְּמוֹ "לְמַעַן הֱיוֹת נִיר לְדָוִד עַבְדִּי" מ"א י"א׃
sovereignty and yoke of the rule of a man like so that there being dominion for Dovid My servant Melachim I chapter 11

רַשִׁ"י

ונשים. שי"ן דְּגוּשָׁה, לְשׁוֹן שְׁמָמָה, כָּךְ יֹאמְרוּ הַמּוֹשְׁלִים, "וַנַּשִּׁים"

And we laid waste the letter Shin has a Dagesh an expression of desolation so say those who speak parables and we laid waste

אוֹתָם עַד נֹפַח" — הֲשְׁמוֹנוּם עַד נֹפַח:

them until Nophah — we desolated them until Nophah

פָּסוּק יא

Pasuk 11

וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ הָאֱמֹרִי:

And settled Yisrael in the land of the Emori

פָּסוּק יב

Pasuk 12

וַיִּשְׁלַח מֹשֶׁה לְרַגֵּל אֶת יַעְזֵר וַיִּלְכְּדוּ בְּנֹתֶיהָ וַיִּירַשׁ וַיּוֹרֶשׁ אֶת

And sent to spy out Moshe Yazer — and they captured its suburbs and he drove out and he dispossessed —

הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר שָׁם:

the Amorite who was there

רַשִׁ"י

וישלח משה לרגל את יעזר. הַמְרַגְּלִים לְכָדוּהָ, אָמְרוּ לֹא נַעֲשֶׂה כָּרִאשׁוֹנִים, בְּטוּחִים

And he sent Moshe to spy out — Yazer the spies captured it they said not will we do like the first ones confident

אָנוּ בְּכֹחַ תְּפִלָּתוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה לְהִלָּחֵם תנחומא :

are we in the power of his prayer of Moshe to fight Tanchuma

פָּסוּק יג

Pasuk 13

וַיִּפְנוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ דֶּרֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן וַיֵּצֵא עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן לִקְרָאתָם הוּא

And they turned and they went up the way of the Bashan and went out the Bashan king of Og to meet them he

וְכָל עַמּוֹ לַמִּלְחָמָה אֶדְרֶעִי:

and all his people to the battle at Edrei

פָּסוּק יד

Pasuk 14

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה אַל תִּירָא אֹתוֹ כִּי בְיָדְךָ נָתַתִּי אֹתוֹ וְאֶת כָּל

And said Hashem to Moshe do not fear him for into your hand I have given him and — all of

עַמּוֹ וְאֶת אַרְצוֹ וְעָשִׂיתָ לּוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ לְסִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר

his people and — his land and you shall do to him just as you did to Sichon king of the Emori who

יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן:

dwelt in Cheshbon

רַשִׁ"י

אל תירא אתו. שֶׁהָיָה מֹשֶׁה יָרֵא לְהִלָּחֵם, שֶׁמָּא תַּעֲמֹד לוֹ זְכוּתוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם,

Do not fear him for was Moshe afraid to wage battle lest will stand for him the merit of Avraham

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וַיָּבֹא הַפָּלִיט" בראשית י"ד — הוּא עוֹג שֶׁפָּלַט מִן הָרְפָאִים שֶׁהִכּוּ
whom smote the Rephaim from who escaped Og he 14 Bereishis the fugitive" "And came as it is said

כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר וַחֲבֵרָיו בְּעַשְׁתְּרוֹת קַרְנַיִם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דברים ג' "רַק עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן נִשְׁאַר
was left the Bashan king of Og "For only 3 Devarim as it is said Karnaim in Ashteroth and his allies Khedorlaomer

מִיֶּתֶר הָרְפָאִים" נדה ס"א :
61a Niddah the Rephaim" from the remnant of

פָּסוּק טו

Pasuk 15

וַיַּכּוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת בָּנָיו וְאֶת כָּל עַמּוֹ עַד בִּלְתִּי הִשְׁאִיר לוֹ שָׂרִיד
a survivor to him left there was not until his people all and — his sons and — him And they smote

וַיִּירְשׁוּ אֶת אַרְצוֹ:
his land — and they possessed

רַ"שִׁ"י

ויכו אתו. מֹשֶׁה הֲרָגוֹ, כְּדְאִיתָא בִּבְרָכוֹת בְּהָרוֹאֶה ברכות דף נ"ד , עָקַר טוֹרָא
a mountain he uprooted , 54 page Berakhot in HaRoeh in Berakhot as it is slew him Moshe him And they smote

בַּר תְּלָתָא פַּרְסֵי וְכוּ':
etcetera parsangs three of

פָּסוּק טז

Pasuk 16

וַיִּסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּעַרְבוֹת מוֹאָב מֵעֵבֶר לְיַרְדֵּן
the Yarden of from across Moav in the plains of and they encamped Yisrael the children of And they journeyed

יְרֵחוֹ:
Yerecho

פָּסוּק יז

Pasuk 17

וַיַּרְא בָּלָק בֶּן צִפּוֹר אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יִשְׂרָאֵל לָאֱמֹרִי:
to the Amorite Yisrael had done that all — Zippor son of Balak And he saw

רַ"שִׁ"י

וירא בלק בן צפור את כל אשר עשה ישראל לאמרי. אָמַר, אֵלּוּ שְׁנֵי מְלָכִים
kings two these He said to the Emori Yisrael had done that all — Tzippor son of Balak And Balak saw

שֶׁהָיִינוּ בְטוּחִים עֲלֵיהֶם לֹא עָמְדוּ בִּפְנֵיהֶם, אָנוּ עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה, לְפִיכָךְ
therefore and how much how much one by we before them stand did not upon them relying whom we were

"וַיָּגָר מוֹאָב" תנחומא :
Tanchuma Moav and was afraid

פָּסוּק יח

Pasuk 18

וַיָּגָר מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי הָעָם מְאֹד כִּי רַב הוּא וַיָּקָץ מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי
And was afraid Moav because of the people very much for numerous it was and was disgusted Moav because of

בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃
the children of Yisrael

רַשִׁ"י

ויגר. לְשׁוֹן מוֹרָא, כְּמוֹ "גּוּרוּ לָכֶם" איוב י"ט׃
And he feared is an expression of fear like "fear for yourselves" Iyov 19

רַשִׁ"י

ויקץ מואב. קָצוּ בְּחַיֵּיהֶם׃
And was disgusted Moav they loathed their lives

פָּסוּק יט

Pasuk 19

וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹאָב אֶל זִקְנֵי מִדְיָן עַתָּה יְלַחֲכוּ הַקָּהָל אֶת כָּל סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ
And said Moav to the elders of Midian now will lick up the congregation — all of our surroundings

כִּלְחֹךְ הַשּׁוֹר אֵת יֶרֶק הַשָּׂדֶה וּבָלָק בֶּן צִפּוֹר מֶלֶךְ לְמוֹאָב בָּעֵת
as the licking of the ox — the greenness of the field and Balak son of Tzippor was king of Moav at the time

הַהִוא׃
that

רַשִׁ"י

אל זקני מדין. וַהֲלֹא מֵעוֹלָם הָיוּ שׂוֹנְאִים זֶה אֶת זֶה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "הַמַּכֶּה אֶת — who smote as it is said this one — this one hating they were always but did not Midian the elders of To

מִדְיָן בְּשָׂדֵה מוֹאָב" בראשית ל"ו , שֶׁבָּאוּ מִדְיָן עַל מוֹאָב לַמִּלְחָמָה? אֶלָּא
but for war Moab against Midian for they came 36 Bereishis Moab in the field of Midian

מִיִּרְאָתָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשׂוּ שָׁלוֹם בֵּינֵיהֶם: וּמָה רָאָה מוֹאָב לִטֹּל עֵצָה
counsel to take Moab saw And what between themselves peace they made Yisrael of out of their fear

מִמִּדְיָן? כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאוּ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל נוֹצְחִים שֶׁלֹּא כְּמִנְהַג הָעוֹלָם, אָמְרוּ
they said the world according to the custom of not victorious Yisrael — that they saw Since from Midian

מַנְהִיגָם שֶׁל אֵלּוּ בְּמִדְיָן נִתְגַּדֵּל, נִשְׁאַל מֵהֶם מַה מִּדָּתוֹ, אָמְרוּ לָהֶם אֵין
there is not to them they said is his characteristic what of them let us ask grew up in Midian these of their leader

כֹּחוֹ אֶלָּא בְּפִיו, אָמְרוּ, אַף אָנוּ נָבֹא עֲלֵיהֶם בְּאָדָם שֶׁכֹּחוֹ בְּפִיו תנחומא
Tanchuma in his mouth whose power is with a man against them will come we Even they said in his mouth except his power

:

רַשִׁ"י

כלחך השור. כָּל מַה שֶּׁהַשּׁוֹר מְלַחֵךְ אֵין בּוֹ בְּרָכָה שם :
there blessing in it there is no licks which the ox that all the ox as the licking of

רַשִׁ"י

בעת ההוא. לֹא הָיָה רָאוּי לְמַלְכוּת, מִנְּסִיכֵי מִדְיָן הָיָה, וְכֵינָן שֶׁמֵּת סִיחוֹן

Sichon that died and once he was Midian from the princes of for kingship fitting he was not that At the time

מְנוּהוּ עֲלֵיהֶם לְצָרֵךְ שָׁעָה שם :

there the hour for the need of over them they appointed him

פָּסוּק כ

Pasuk 20

וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים אֶל בִּלְעָם בֶּן בְּעוֹר פְּתוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל הַנָּהָר אֶרֶץ

the land of the river is by which to Pethor Beor son of Bilaam to messengers And he sent

בְּנֵי עַמּוֹ לִקְרֹא לוֹ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עַם יָצָא מִמִּצְרַיִם הִנֵּה כִסָּה

it has covered behold from Mitzrayim has come out a people behold saying him to call his people the children of

אֶת עֵין הָאָרֶץ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב מִמֻּלִי:

opposite me dwells and it the earth the face of —

רַשִׁ"י

פתורה. כְּשֶׁלְּחָנִי זֶה שֶׁהַכֹּל מְרִיצִין לוֹ מָעוֹת, כָּךְ כָּל הַמְּלָכִים מְרִיצִין לוֹ

to him send the kings all so coins to him run that everyone this like a money-changer Pethor

אַגְרוֹתֵיהֶם, וּלְפִי פְּשׁוּטוֹ שֶׁל מִקְרָא כָּךְ שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם שם :

there the place is the name of so the verse of the plain meaning and according to their letters

רַשִׁ"י

ארץ בני עמו. שֶׁל בָּלָק, מִשָּׁם הָיָה, וְזֶה הָיָה מִתְנַבֵּא וְאוֹמֵר לוֹ,

to him and saying prophesying was and this one he was from there Balak of his people the children of The land of

עָתִיד אַתָּה לִמְלֹךְ: וְאִם תֹּאמַר מִפְּנֵי מָה הִשְׁרָה הַקָּבָ"ה שְׁכִינָתוֹ עַל גּוֹי רָשָׁע?

wicked a non-Jew upon His Shechina the Holy One rested what because of you will say And if to rule are you destined

כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה פִּתְחוֹן פֶּה לָאֻמּוֹת לוֹמַר, אִלּוּ הָיוּ לָנוּ נְבִיאִים, חָזַרְנוּ

we would return prophets to us there were if to say to the nations mouth an opening of there will be that not in order

לְמוּטָב, הֶעֱמִיד לָהֶם נְבִיאִים וְהֵם פָּרְצוּ גֶּדֶר הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁמַּתְחִלָּה הָיוּ גְּדוּרִים

fenced in they were for initially the world the fence of breached and they prophets for them He established to the better

בַּעֲרָיוֹת, וְזֶה נָתַן לָהֶם עֵצָה לְהַפְקִיר עַצְמָן לִזְנוּת:

to prostitution themselves to make free counsel to them gave and this one from immorality

רַשִׁ"י

לקרא לו. הַקְרִיאָה הָיְתָה שֶׁלּוֹ וְלַהֲנָאָתוֹ, שֶׁהָיָה פּוֹסֵק לוֹ מָמוֹן הַרְבֵּה:

much money for him fixing for he was and for his benefit his was the calling him To call

רַשִׁ"י

עם יצא ממצרים. וְאִם תֹּאמַר מַה מַּזִּיקֵהוּ?

does it harm you what you will say and if from Mitzrayim has come out A people

רַשִׁ"י

הנה כסה את עין הארץ. סִיחוֹן וְעוֹג שֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹמְרִים אוֹתָנוּ עָמְדוּ עֲלֵיהֶם

against them they stood us protecting who were and Og Sichon the land the eye of — it covered Behold

וַהֲרָגוּם׃
and they slew them

רַשִׁ"י

והוא ישב ממלי. חָסֵר כְּתִיב, קְרוֹבִים הֵם לְהַכְרִיתֵנִי כְּמוֹ תהילים קי"ח כִּי
and he dwells opposite me deficiently it is written near they are to cut me off like Tehillim 118 that

אֲמִילַם תנחומא :
I will cut them off Tanchuma

פָּסוּק כא

Pasuk 21

וְעַתָּה לְכָה נָּא אָרָה לִּי אֶת הָעָם הַזֶּה כִּי עָצוּם הוּא מִמֶּנִּי אוּלַי
and now go please curse for me — the people this for mighty it is more than me perhaps

אוּכַל נַכֶּה בּוֹ וַאֲגָרְשֶׁנּוּ מִן הָאָרֶץ כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר תְּבָרֵךְ
I will be able we will strike at them and I will drive them out from the land for I know — whomever you bless

מְבֹרָךְ וַאֲשֶׁר תָּאֹר יוּאָר׃
is blessed and whomever you curse is cursed

רַשִׁ"י

נכה בו. אֲנִי וְעַמִּי נַכֶּה בָהֶם. דָּ"אַ — לְשׁוֹן מִשְׁנָה הוּא ב"מ
we may smite them I and my people may smite them another explanation an expression of Mishnah it is Bava Metzia

ק"ה , מְנַכֶּה לוֹ מִן הַדָּמִים — לְחַסֵּר מֵהֶם מְעַט תנחומא :
105b he deducts for him from the price to reduce from them a little Tanchuma

רַשִׁ"י

כי ידעתי וגו'. עַל יְדֵי מִלְחֶמֶת סִיחוֹן שֶׁעֲזַרְתּוֹ לְהַכּוֹת אֶת מוֹאָב׃
For I know etc. by means of the war of Sichon that you helped him to smite — Moav

פָּסוּק כב

Pasuk 22

וַיֵּלְכוּ זִקְנֵי מוֹאָב וְזִקְנֵי מִדְיָן וּקְסָמִים בְּיָדָם וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל
And they went the elders of Moav and the elders of Midian with charms in their hand and they came to

בִּלְעָם וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלָיו דִּבְרֵי בָלָק׃
Bilam and they spoke to him the words of Balak

רַשִׁ"י

וקסמים בידם. כָּל מִינֵי קְסָמִים, שֶׁלֹּא יֹאמַר אֵין כְּלֵי תַשְׁמִישִׁי עִמִּי;
and divinations in their hand all kinds of divinations so that not he should say there are no tools of my usage with me

דָּ"אַ — קֶסֶם זֶה נָטְלוּ בְיָדָם זִקְנֵי מִדְיָן, אָמְרוּ אִם יָבֹא עִמָּנוּ בַּפַּעַם
another explanation omen this they took in their hand the elders of Midyan they said if he will come with us at time

הַזֹּאת יֵשׁ בּוֹ מַמָּשׁ, וְאִם יִדְחֵנוּ אֵין בּוֹ תוֹעֶלֶת, לְפִיכָךְ כְּשֶׁאָמַר לָהֶם
this there is in him substance and if he puts us off there is no in him usefulness therefore when he said to them

"לִינוּ פֹּה הַלַּיְלָה" אָמְרוּ אֵין בּוֹ תִּקְוָה, הִנִּיחוּהוּ וְהָלְכוּ לָהֶם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

as it is said for themselves and they went they left him hope in him there is no they said tonight here stay overnight

"וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב עִם בִּלְעָם", אֲבָל זִקְנֵי מִדְיָן הָלְכוּ לָהֶם שָׁם:

there for themselves went Midyan the elders of but Bilaam with Moav the princes of and stayed

פָּסוּק כג

Pasuk 23

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם לִינוּ פֹּה הַלַּיְלָה וַהֲשִׁבֹתִי אֶתְכֶם דָּבָר כַּאֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה

Hashem will speak as word to you and I will return tonight here lodge to them And he said

אֵלָי וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב עִם בִּלְעָם:

Bilam with Moav the princes of and they stayed to me

רַשִׁ"י

לינו פה הלילה. אֵין רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ שׁוֹרָה עָלָיו אֶלָּא בַּלַּיְלָה, וְכֵן לְכָל נְבִיאֵי

prophets of to all and so at night except upon him rests holiness the spirit of not this night here Lodge

אֻמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם, וְכֵן לָבָן בַּחֲלוֹם הַלַּיְלָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בראשית ל"א "וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל

to God and came 31 Bereishis as it is said the night in a dream of Lavan and so the world the nations of

לָבָן הָאֲרַמִּי בַּחֲלוֹם הַלָּיְלָה" כְּאָדָם הַהוֹלֵךְ אֵצֶל פִּילַגְשׁוֹ בְּהֶחְבֵּא תנחומא; ויקרא

Vayikra Tanchuma in secrecy his concubine to who goes like a man the night in a dream of the Aramean Lavan

רבה א' :

1 Rabbah

רַשִׁ"י

כאשר ידבר ה' אלי. אִם יַמְלִיכֵנִי לָלֶכֶת עִם בְּנֵי אָדָם כְּמוֹתְכֶם, אֵלֵךְ עִמָּכֶם,

with you I will go like you man sons of with to go He advises me if to me Hashem shall speak as

שֶׁמָּא אֵין כְּבוֹדוֹ לְתִתִּי לַהֲלֹךְ אֶלָּא עִם שָׂרִים גְּדוֹלִים מִכֶּם:

than you greater princes with except to go to permit me His dignity it is not perhaps

רַשִׁ"י

וישבו. לְשׁוֹן עַכָּבָה:

delaying is an expression of And they stayed

פָּסוּק כד

Pasuk 24

וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה עִמָּךְ:

with you these the men Who and He said Bilaam to God And came

רַשִׁ"י

מי האנשים האלה עמך. לְהַטְעוֹתוֹ בָּא, אָמַר פְּעָמִים שֶׁאֵין הַכֹּל גָּלוּי לְפָנָיו,

before Him is revealed everything that not there are times he said He came to mislead him with you these are the men Who

אֵין דַּעְתּוֹ שָׁוָה עָלָיו, אַף אֲנִי אֶרְאֶה עֵת שֶׁאוּכַל לְקַלֵּל וְלֹא יָבִין

He will understand and not to curse that I can a time will seek I even upon Him is equal His knowledge not

תנחומא :

Tanchuma

פָּסוּק כה

Pasuk 25

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים בָּלָק בֶּן צִפֹּר מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב שָׁלַח אֵלָי׃

And said Bilam to God Balak son of Tzippor king of Moav sent to me

רַשִׁ"י

בלק בן צפור וגו'. אַעַ"פ שֶׁאֵינִי חָשׁוּב בְּעֵינֶיךָ, חָשׁוּב אֲנִי בְּעֵינֵי הַמְּלָכִים שם :

Balak son of Zippor etc. Even though I am not important in Your eyes important am I in the eyes of the kings

פָּסוּק כו

Pasuk 26

הִנֵּה הָעָם הַיֹּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיְכַס אֶת עֵין הָאָרֶץ עַתָּה לְכָה קָבָה לִי אוּלַי אוּכַל לְהִלָּחֶם בּוֹ וְגֵרַשְׁתִּיו׃

Behold the nation that came out from Mitzrayim and it covers the face of the earth now go curse for me perhaps I will be able to battle against him and drive him out

רַשִׁ"י

קבה לי. זוֹ קְשָׁה מֵאָרָה לִי, שֶׁהוּא נוֹקֵב וּמְפָרֵשׁ שם :

Curse for me this is harsher than curse for me for he pronounces and specifies the Name

רַשִׁ"י

וגרשתיו. מִן הָעוֹלָם, וּבָלָק לֹא אָמַר אֶלָּא וַאֲגָרְשֶׁנּוּ מִן הָאָרֶץ — אֵינִי מְבַקֵּשׁ אֶלָּא לְהַסִּיעָם מֵעָלַי, וּבִלְעָם הָיָה שׂוֹנְאָם יוֹתֵר מִבָּלָק שם :

and I will drive them out from the world and Balak not said except and I will drive them out from the land I do not seek except to move them from upon me and Bilaam was hating them more than Balak there

פָּסוּק כז

Pasuk 27

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל בִּלְעָם לֹא תֵלֵךְ עִמָּהֶם לֹא תָאֹר אֶת הָעָם כִּי בָרוּךְ הוּא׃

And said God to Bilaam Do not go with them you shall not curse — the people for it is blessed

רַשִׁ"י

לא תלך עמהם. אָמַר לוֹ אִם כֵּן אֲקַלְלֵם בִּמְקוֹמִי, אָמַר לוֹ לא תאר curse you shall not to him He said in my place I will curse them so if to Him He said with them go You shall not

את העם , אָמַר לוֹ אִם כֵּן אֲבָרְכֵם, אָמַר לוֹ אֵינָם צְרִיכִים לִבְרָכָתְךָ, כי for your blessing needing they are not to him He said I will bless them so if to Him He said the people —

ברוך הוא , מָשָׁל, אוֹמְרִים לְצִרְעָה לֹא מִדִּבְשֵׁךְ וְלֹא מֵעָקְצֵךְ שם :

they are blessed a parable people say to the hornet neither of your honey nor of your sting there

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aliyah begins with Klal Yisrael sending peaceful messengers to Sihon, who refuses passage and attacks, leading to his total defeat and the capture of his cities, including Heshbon. Moshe Rabbeinu then sends spies to Jazer, and the nation successfully marches against Og, the king of Bashan, whom Hashem commands Moshe not to fear; Og and his forces are completely wiped out. Terrified by these events, Balak, the king of Moab, sends a delegation to Balaam to hire him to curse the Jewish people, but Hashem appears to Balaam at night, forbidding him from going or cursing the nation, declaring that Klal Yisrael is blessed.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When Balak sends messengers to Balaam to curse Klal Yisrael, Hashem immediately blocks him, saying: "Do not go with them. You must not curse that people, for they are blessed." Think about this deep truth. The nations of the world were plotting, sending delegations, and preparing spiritual weapons to destroy the Jewish people. Yet, before the Jewish people even knew they were in danger, Hashem was already defending them behind the scenes, declaring their essential holiness and blessing.

We often go through life worrying about the "Balaks" and "Balaams" in our lives, the hidden difficulties, the people who might not have our best interests at heart, or the silent challenges we cannot see. We stress over what might happen and how we will survive. But this parsha reveals the beautiful, comforting reality of Hashgacha Pratis: Hashem is protecting you from dangers you don't even know exist. He is fighting battles for you before they ever reach your doorstep.

Your job is not to live in fear of the hidden curses or the unknown trials of tomorrow. Your avodah is simply to live as a Yid who is "baruch", to align yourself with Torah and mitzvos, keeping yourself connected to the source of all blessing. When you walk with Hashem, His protection surrounds you, turning away every negative force before it can even whisper your name.

Today, when you feel a wave of worry about the future or about things beyond your control, take a deep breath and say: "Hashem, I trust that You are protecting me from what I cannot see. I am in Your hands."

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📖 THE SUGYA

We begin this daf by wrapping up a fascinating discussion regarding the precise measurements of the Sages. The Gemara explores whether the term "up to" a certain measure includes that limit or not, bringing proofs from the laws of tumah and taharah in broken clay vessels and bed-ropes. We learn a beautiful, overarching yesod from Rabbi Yochanan that, as a rule, the Sages established their measures stringently to protect the halacha, ensuring we always err on the side of caution in our avodah.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

עמוד א׳ DAF 55A

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

שִׁיעוּרָן בִּכְדֵי סִיכַּת קָטָן וְעַד לוֹג.

The Mishnah states regarding broken clay vessels: **their measure** to remain susceptible to impurity is if they can hold **enough** oil **for the anointing of a small child, and** this applies to a vessel that held **up to a log** when whole.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

מַאי לָאו לוֹג כְּלְמַטָּה?

What, is it not teaching that a vessel of exactly a **log** is treated **as** though it were **below** that measure, meaning the term 'up to' includes the log itself?

ANSWER

לֹא, לוֹג כְּלְמַעְלָה.

The Gemara answers: **No,** a vessel of exactly a **log** is treated **as** though it were **above** that measure, and 'up to' means up to but not including.

QUESTION

תָּא שְׁמַע: מִלּוֹג עַד סְאָה – בִּרְבִיעִית,

Come and hear a proof from the next clause: If the vessel originally held **from a log up to a se'ah,** its broken pieces must hold **a quarter-log** to be tamei.

QUESTION

מַאי לָאו סְאָה כִּלְמַטָּה?

What, is it not teaching that a vessel of exactly a **se'ah** is treated **as** though it were **below** that measure?

ANSWER

לָא, סְאָה כִּלְמַעְלָה.

The Gemara answers: **No,** a vessel of exactly a **se'ah** is treated **as** though it were **above** that measure.

QUESTION

תָּא שְׁמַע: מִסְּאָה וְעַד סָאתַיִם – בַּחֲצִי לוֹג,

Come and hear another proof: If it held **from a se'ah up to two se'ah,** its pieces must hold **half a log** to be tamei.

QUESTION

מַאי לָאו סָאתַיִם כִּלְמַטָּה?

What, is it not teaching that a vessel of exactly **two se'ah** is treated **as** though it were **below** that measure?

ANSWER

לָא, סָאתַיִם כִּלְמַעְלָה.

The Gemara answers: **No,** a vessel of exactly **two se'ah** is treated **as** though it were **above** that measure.

OBJECTION

וְהָתַנְיָא: לוֹג – כִּלְמַטָּה, סְאָה – כִּלְמַטָּה, סָאתַיִם – כִּלְמַטָּה.

The Gemara objects: **But isn't it taught** explicitly in a braisa: A vessel of exactly a **log** is treated **as below** that; a **se'ah** is treated **as below** that; **two se'ah** is treated **as below** that? This proves that 'up to' includes the limit!

RESOLUTION

הָתָם לְחוּמְרָא, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּהוּ אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כָּל שִׁיעוּרֵי חֲכָמִים לְהַחְמִיר, חוּץ מִכְּגְרִיס שֶׁל כְּתָמִים לְהָקֵל.

The Gemara resolves this: **There** it is interpreted **stringently, as Rabbi Abbahu said** in the name of **Rabbi Yochanan: All measures of the Sages** are interpreted **stringently, except for** the measure of **like a split-bean regarding** blood **stains,** which is interpreted **leniently.** Here, treating the exact limit as 'below' makes the vessel more easily susceptible to tumah, which is a stringency.

INFERENCE

דַּיְקָא נָמֵי, דְּקָתָנֵי עֲלַהּ דְּהַהִיא: חֲמִשָּׁה – כִּלְמַעְלָה, עֲשָׂרָה – כִּלְמַטָּה.

The Gemara notes: The language **is also precise, as it teaches on that** same Mishnah regarding a bed-rope: exactly **five** handbreadths is treated **as above** that, and exactly **ten** handbreadths is treated **as below** that, showing we always rule stringently.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

נִיטַּל הַטְּחוֹל,

We learned in the Mishnah: If **the spleen was removed,** the animal remains kosher.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב עַוִירָא מִשְּׁמֵיהּ דְּרָבָא: לֹא שָׁנוּ אֶלָּא נִיטַּל, אֲבָל נִיקַּב – טְרֵפָה.

Rav Avira said in the name of Rava: They only taught that it is kosher when it was **removed, but** if it was merely **perforated,** it is a **tereifah.**

OBJECTION

מֵתִיב רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בַּר אָבִין, וְאִיתֵּימָא רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בַּר זְבִידָא: חוֹתֵךְ מֵעוּבָּר שֶׁבְּמֵעֶיהָ – מוּתָּר בַּאֲכִילָה, מִן הַטְּחוֹל וּמִן הַכְּלָיוֹת – אָסוּר בַּאֲכִילָה.

Rabbi Yosei bar Avin, and some say Rabbi Yosei bar Zevida, challenged this from a Mishnah: If one **cuts from a fetus that is in its mother's womb,** the cut piece is **permitted for eating** when the mother is slaughtered; but if one cuts **from the spleen or from the kidneys** of the mother, the cut piece is **forbidden for eating.**

INFERENCE

הָא בְּהֵמָה גּוּפַהּ שַׁרְיָא!

We infer: **But the animal itself is permitted!** Even though its spleen was cut, it is not a tereifah, which contradicts Rava's ruling that a damaged spleen makes it a tereifah.

ANSWER

הוּא הַדִּין דַּאֲפִילּוּ בְּהֵמָה נָמֵי אֲסִירָא, אַיְידֵי דְּתָנָא רֵישָׁא "מוּתָּר בַּאֲכִילָה", תָּנָא נָמֵי סֵיפָא "אָסוּר בַּאֲכִילָה".

The Gemara answers: **The same law applies that even the animal itself is also forbidden** as a tereifah; **but since the first clause taught 'permitted for eating', the last clause also taught 'forbidden for eating'** to maintain a parallel structure.

RESOLUTION

וְאִיבָּעֵית אֵימָא: נִיקַּב לְחוֹד, וְנֶחְתַּךְ לְחוֹד.

And if you wish, say instead: A **perforated** spleen is **a separate case** which makes it a tereifah, **and a cut** spleen is **a separate case** which does not make it a tereifah.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

נִיטְּלוּ הַכְּלָיוֹת.

We learned in the Mishnah: If **the kidneys were removed,** the animal remains kosher.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

STATEMENT

אָמַר רָכִישׁ בַּר פָּפָּא מִשְּׁמֵיהּ דְּרַב: לָקְתָה בְּכוּלְיָא אַחַת – טְרֵפָה.

Rakhish bar Pappa said in the name of Rav: If it was diseased in even one kidney, the animal is a **tereifah.**

EXPLANATION

אָמְרִי בְּמַעְרְבָא: וְהוּא דִּמְטַאי לָקוּתָא

They say in the West, Eretz Yisrael: **And this** applies **only when the disease reached** the white area inside the kidney.

עַמּוּד ב׳ DAF 55B

EXPLANATION

לִמְקוֹם חָרִיץ.

The previous statement regarding a kidney defect refers **to the location of the crevice**.

QUESTION

וְהֵיכָא מְקוֹם חָרִיץ?

The Gemara asks: **And where is the location of the crevice** on the kidney?

ANSWER

לְחִיוָּרָא דְּתוּתֵי מָתְנֵי.

The Gemara answers: This is a reference **to the white matter** of fat **under the loins** where the kidney is attached.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב נְחוּנְיָא: שְׁאֵילְתִּינְהוּ לְכוּלְּהוּ טָרוֹפָאֵי דְּמַעְרְבָא, וְאָמְרִי לִי הִלְכְתָא כְּרָכִישׁ בַּר פָּפָּא, וְלֵית הִלְכְתָא כְּרַב עַוִּירָא.

Rav Nechunya said: I asked all the experts on tereifos of the West, Eretz Yisrael, **and they said to me: The halacha is in accordance with** the opinion of **Rachish bar Pappa** in the name of Rav that a diseased kidney renders the animal a tereifah, **but the halacha is not in accordance with** the opinion of **Rav Avira** that a perforated spleen renders the animal a tereifah.

EXPLANATION

דְּרַב עַוִּירָא נָמֵי לָא אֲמַרַן, אֶלָּא בִּקּוּלְּשֵׁיהּ, אֲבָל בְּסוֹמְכֵיהּ – טְרֵפָה,

The Gemara notes: And **even** with regard to the opinion **of Rav Avira, we said** that the halacha is not in accordance with his opinion **only if** the spleen was perforated **in its thin**, narrow end; **but if** it was perforated **in its thick**, upper **end**, the animal is indeed a **tereifah**.

EXPLANATION

וְאִי אִישְׁתַּיֵּיר בֵּיהּ כְּעוֹבִי דִּינַר זָהָב – כְּשֵׁרָה.

And even if it was perforated in its thick end, **if there remained in it** an intact layer of the spleen **like the thickness of a gold dinar**, the animal is **kosher**.

STATEMENT

אָמְרִי בְּמַעְרְבָא: כָּל הַפּוֹסֵל בָּרְיאָה – כָּשֵׁר בַּכּוּלְיָא, שֶׁהֲרֵי נָקֵב פָּסוּל בָּרְיאָה, וְכָשֵׁר בַּכּוּלְיָא, וְכָל שֶׁכֵּן הֵיכָא דְּכָשֵׁר בָּרְיאָה – כָּשֵׁר בַּכּוּלְיָא.

They say in the West: Any injury **that renders** an animal **unfit in the lung is kosher in the kidney; for behold, a perforation renders** the animal **unfit in the lung, but is kosher in the kidney. And all the more so, where** an injury **is kosher in the lung, it is kosher in the kidney**.

QUESTION

מַתְקִיף לַהּ רַבִּי תַּנְחוּמָא: וּכְלָלָא הוּא?

Rabbi Tanchuma objects to this: And is this an established rule?

OBJECTION

הֲרֵי מוּגְלָא, דְּכָשֵׁר בָּרְיאָה וּפָסוּל בַּכּוּלְיָא!

But what about pus, which is kosher in the lung since the lung can discharge it, **but renders** the animal **unfit in the kidney?**

OBJECTION

וַהֲרֵי מַיִם זַכִּין, דִּכְשֵׁרִים הָכָא וְהָכָא,

And what about clear water, which is kosher here in the lung **and there** in the kidney, which does not fit the rule that what is kosher in the lung is all the more so kosher in the kidney, as it is equal in both?

ANSWER

אֶלָּא אָמַר רַב אָשֵׁי: טְרֵפוֹת קָא מְדַמֵּית לַהֲדָדֵי?

Rather, Rav Ashi said: Are you comparing the laws of **tereifos to one another?**

EXPLANATION

אֵין אוֹמְרִים בִּטְרֵפוֹת זוֹ דּוֹמָה לָזוֹ, שֶׁהֲרֵי חוֹתְכָהּ מִכָּאן וְמֵתָה, חוֹתְכָהּ מִכָּאן וְחָיְתָה.

We do not say with regard to tereifos: This is similar to that; for behold, one cuts an organ **from here and** the animal **dies, and one cuts** an organ **from there and it lives**. Therefore, we cannot derive the laws of one organ from another.

EXPLANATION

וּמַיִם זַכִּין כְּשֵׁרִים, לָא אֲמַרַן אֶלָּא דְּצִילִי, אֲבָל עֲכִירִי – טְרֵפָה.

The Gemara notes: **And** with regard to **clear water** found in the lung or kidney, which we said is **kosher, we said so only where they are clear, but if they are cloudy,** the animal is a **tereifah**.

EXPLANATION

וְכִי צִילֵי נָמֵי לָא אֲמַרַן אֶלָּא דְּלָא סְרִיחַ, אֲבָל סְרִיחַ – טְרֵפָה.

And even when they are clear, we said so only where they are not foul-smelling, but if they are foul-smelling, the animal is a **tereifah**.

STATEMENT

הַכּוֹלְיָא שֶׁהִקְטִינָה, בַּדַּקָּה – עַד כְּפוֹל, בַּגַּסָּה – עַד כַּעֲנָבָה בֵּינוֹנִית.

With regard to **a kidney that shrank: In a small animal** like a sheep, it is a tereifah if it shrank **until the size of a bean; in a large animal** like a cow, it is a tereifah if it shrank **until the size of an average grape**.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

נִיטַּל לֶחִי הַתַּחְתּוֹן,

The Mishnah stated: If **the lower jaw was removed**, the animal is kosher.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי זֵירָא: לֹא שָׁנוּ אֶלָּא שֶׁיְּכוֹלָה לִחְיוֹת עַל יְדֵי לְעִיטָה וְהַמְרָאָה, אֲבָל אֵינָהּ יְכוֹלָה לִחְיוֹת עַל יְדֵי לְעִיטָה וְהַמְרָאָה – טְרֵפָה.

Rabbi Zeira said: They only taught this **where** the animal **is able to live by means of stuffing** food into its mouth **and cramming** it down its throat; **but if it is not able to live by means of stuffing and cramming,** it is a **tereifah**.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

נִיטְּלָה הָאֵם שֶׁלָּהּ,

The Mishnah stated: **If its womb was removed**, the animal is kosher.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

BRAISA

תָּנָא: הִיא הָאֵם, הִיא טַרְפַּחַת, וְהִיא שַׁלְפּוּחִית.

A Sage **taught** in a Braisa: **This is the womb, this is the tarpachat, and this is the shalpuachit**; they are all names for the same organ.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

וַחֲרוּתָה בִּידֵי שָׁמַיִם – כְּשֵׁרָה.

The Mishnah stated: **Or if** the lung was **shriveled by the hand of Heaven,** the animal is **kosher**.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

BRAISA

תָּנוּ רַבָּנַן: אֵיזוֹהִי חֲרוּתָה? כֹּל שֶׁצָּמְקָה רֵיאָה שֶׁלָּהּ.

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: **Which is a shriveled lung? Any** animal **whose lung has shriveled**.

BRAISA

בִּידֵי שָׁמַיִם – כְּשֵׁרָה, בִּידֵי אָדָם – טְרֵפָה.

If it shriveled **by the hand of Heaven**, such as from fright of thunder, the animal is **kosher**; but if it shriveled **by the hand of man**, such as if a person frightened it, it is a **tereifah**.

BRAISA

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר אוֹמֵר: אַף בִּידֵי כָּל הַבְּרִיּוֹת.

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: Even by the hand of any creature, such as the roar of a lion.

QUESTION

אִיבַּעְיָא לְהוּ: רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר אֲרֵישָׁא קָאֵי וּלְקוּלָּא, אוֹ אַסֵּיפָא קָאֵי וּלְחוּמְרָא?

A dilemma was raised before them: Does Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar refer to the first clause of the Braisa, **and** his ruling is **for leniency**, meaning that even the roar of a lion is considered like the hand of Heaven and the animal is kosher? **Or does he refer to the latter clause, and** his ruling is **for stringency**, meaning that if it was shriveled by any creature, it is like the hand of man and the animal is a tereifah?

PROOF

תָּא שְׁמַע, דְּתַנְיָא: חֲרוּתָה בִּידֵי אָדָם – טְרֵפָה, רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר אוֹמֵר: אַף בִּידֵי כָּל הַבְּרִיּוֹת.

Come and hear a proof, **as it is taught** in a Braisa: A lung **shriveled by the hand of man** renders the animal a **tereifah; Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: Even by the hand of any creature** it is a tereifah. This proves he refers to the latter clause for stringency.

STATEMENT

רַבָּה בַּר בַּר חָנָה הֲוָה קָאָזֵיל בְּמַדְבְּרָא, אַשְׁכַּח הָנְהוּ דִּיכְרֵי דִּצְמִיק רֵיאָה דִּידְהוּ.

The Gemara relates: **Rabba bar bar Chana was traveling in the desert, and he found certain rams whose lungs were shriveled**.

STATEMENT

אֲתָא שְׁאֵיל בֵּי מִדְרְשָׁא, אֲמַרוּ לֵיהּ:

He came and asked in the study hall how to determine the cause of the shriveling. **They said to him** as follows:

ANSWER

בְּקַיְיטָא – אַיְיתִי מְשִׁיכְלֵי חִיוָּרֵי, וּמַלִּינְהוּ מַיָּא קָרִירֵי, וְאַנְּחִינְהוּ מֵעֵת לְעֵת.

In the summer, bring white basins, and fill them with cold water, and place the lungs **in them for twenty-four hours**.

ANSWER

אִי הָדְרָן בָּרְיָין – בִּידֵי שָׁמַיִם הִיא וּכְשֵׁרָה, וְאִי לָא – טְרֵפָה.

If they return to their healthy state and expand, **it was by the hand of Heaven and** the animal is **kosher; but if not,** it is a **tereifah**.

ANSWER

בְּסִיתְוָא – אַיְיתִי מְשִׁיכְלֵי שִׁיחוּמֵי, וּמַלִּינְהוּ מַיָּא פָּשׁוֹרֵי, וְאַנְּחִינְהוּ מֵעֵת לְעֵת.

In the winter, bring dark basins, and fill them with lukewarm water, and place the lungs **in them for twenty-four hours**.

ANSWER

אִי הָדְרָא בָּרְיָא – כְּשֵׁרָה, וְאִי לָא – טְרֵפָה.

If it returns to its healthy state, the animal is **kosher; but if not,** it is a **tereifah**.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

הַגְּלוּדָה:

The Mishnah stated: **An animal whose hide was removed**, Rabbi Meir deems it kosher and the Sages deem it a tereifah.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

BRAISA

תָּנוּ רַבָּנַן: הַגְּלוּדָה – רַבִּי מֵאִיר מַכְשִׁיר וַחֲכָמִים פּוֹסְלִים,

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: In the case of **an animal whose hide was removed, Rabbi Meir deems it kosher and the Sages deem it unfit**,

BRAISA

וּכְבָר הֵעִיד אֶלְעָזָר סָפְרָא וְיוֹחָנָן בֶּן גּוּדְגְּדָא עַל הַגְּלוּדָה שֶׁפְּסוּלָה.

and Elazar the scribe and Yochanan ben Gudgeda already testified concerning the flayed animal that it is unfit.

BRAISA

אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר: חָזַר בּוֹ רַבִּי מֵאִיר.

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar said: Rabbi Meir retracted his view and agreed with the Sages.

QUESTION

מִכְּלָל דְּלְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר פְּלִיג רַבִּי מֵאִיר בִּגְלוּדָה?

The Gemara asks: By inference, according to Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar, did Rabbi Meir initially disagree regarding a flayed animal?

OBJECTION

וְהָתַנְיָא: אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר: לֹא נֶחְלְקוּ רַבִּי מֵאִיר וַחֲכָמִים עַל הַגְּלוּדָה שֶׁפְּסוּלָה,

But isn't it taught in a different Braisa: Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar said: Rabbi Meir and the Sages did not disagree concerning a flayed animal, for all agree that it is unfit,

BRAISA

וּכְבָר הֵעִיד רַבִּי אוֹשַׁעְיָא בְּנוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הַבַּשָּׂם לִפְנֵי רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי טַרְפוֹן עַל הַגְּלוּדָה שֶׁפְּסוּלָה,

and Rabbi Oshaya the son of Rabbi Yehuda the spice merchant already testified before Rabbi Akiva in the name of Rabbi Tarfon concerning a flayed animal that it is unfit,

BRAISA

וְאִם נִשְׁתַּיֵּיר בּוֹ כְּסֶלַע – כְּשֵׁרָה.

and if there remained on it a piece of hide the size of a sela, the animal is kosher. This implies they never disagreed at all!

RESOLUTION

אָמַר רַב נַחְמָן בַּר יִצְחָק: מַאי "לֹא נֶחְלְקוּ"? לֹא עָמַד רַבִּי מֵאִיר בְּמַחֲלוֹקְתּוֹ.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: What is the meaning of "they did not disagree"? It means Rabbi Meir did not persist in his disagreement, but rather retracted.

STATEMENT

אָמַר מָר: אִם נִשְׁתַּיֵּיר בּוֹ כְּסֶלַע – כְּשֵׁרָה.

The Gemara analyzes the Braisa: The Master said above: If there remained on it a piece of hide the size of a sela, the animal is kosher.

QUESTION

הֵיכָא?

The Gemara asks: **Where** must this piece of hide be located?

ANSWER

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: עַל פְּנֵי הַשִּׁדְרָה כּוּלָּהּ.

Rav Yehuda said that **Shmuel said:** It must be **along the entire spine**.

QUESTION

אִיבַּעְיָא לְהוּ: דַּאֲרִיכָה וְקַטְטִין, דְּכִי מְצָרַף לַהּ הָוֵי כְּסֶלַע, אוֹ דִלְמָא בְּרוֹחַב סֶלַע עַל פְּנֵי הַשִּׁדְרָה כּוּלָּהּ?

A dilemma was raised before them: Does this mean a strip of hide that is **long and thin, which when you combine it** together **it has** the total area of **a sela? Or perhaps** it must be **the width of a sela along the entire spine?**

PROOF

תָּא שְׁמַע, דְּפָרֵישׁ רַבִּי נְהוֹרַאי מִשְּׁמֵיהּ דִּשְׁמוּאֵל: בְּרוֹחַב כְּסֶלַע עַל פְּנֵי כָּל הַשִּׁדְרָה כּוּלָּהּ.

Come and hear, as Rabbi Nehorai explained in the name of Shmuel: It must be **the width of a sela along the entire spine**.

STATEMENT

רַבָּה בַּר בַּר חָנָה אָמַר: רָאשֵׁי פְּרָקִים.

Rabba bar bar Chana said: The remaining hide must be on the **tips of the joints** of the limbs.

STATEMENT

רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אַנְטִיגְנוֹס מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בְּרַבִּי יַנַּאי אָמַר: מְקוֹם טִיבּוֹרוֹ.

Rabbi Elazar ben Antigonus said in the name of Rabbi Elazar the son of Rabbi Yannai: It must be on **the place of its navel**.

QUESTION

בָּעֵי רַבִּי יַנַּאי בְּרַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל: נִיטַּל מְקוֹם הַשִּׁדְרָה וְכוּלּוֹ קַיָּים, נִיטַּל מְקוֹם טִיבּוֹרוֹ וְכוּלּוֹ קַיָּים, נִיטְּלוּ רָאשֵׁי פְּרָקִים וְכוּלּוֹ קַיָּים, מַאי?

Rabbi Yannai the son of Rabbi Yishmael raised a dilemma: If **the place of the spine was removed but all the rest** of the hide **remained,** or if **the place of its navel was removed but all the rest remained,** or if **the tips of the joints were removed but all the rest remained, what** is the law?

RESOLUTION

תֵּיקוּ.

The Gemara concludes: The dilemma **shall stand** unresolved.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב: כָּל הָעוֹר כּוּלּוֹ מַצִּיל בִּגְלוּדָה, חוּץ מֵעוֹר בֵּית הַפָּרְסוֹת,

Rav said: Any part of the hide saves the animal from being a **flayed animal** if it remains, **except for the hide of the hooves**.

STATEMENT

וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: אַפִּילּוּ עוֹר בֵּית הַפְּרָסוֹת נָמֵי מַצִּיל.

And Rabbi Yochanan said: Even the hide of the hooves also saves the animal.

QUESTION

בְּעָא מִינֵּיהּ רַבִּי אַסִּי מֵרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: עוֹר בֵּית הַפְּרָסוֹת מַהוּ שֶׁיַּצִּיל בִּגְלוּדָה?

Rabbi Assi asked Rabbi Yochanan: What is the law regarding **the hide of the hooves, whether it saves in** the case of **a flayed animal?**

ANSWER

אָמַר לֵיהּ: מַצִּיל.

He said to him: It saves.

OBJECTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ, לְמַדְתָּנוּ רַבֵּינוּ: אֵלּוּ שֶׁעוֹרוֹתֵיהֶן כִּבְשָׂרָן – עוֹר בֵּית הַפְּרָסוֹת!

Rabbi Assi **said to him: But did you not teach us, our Rabbi,** in a Mishnah regarding the laws of ritual impurity: **These are** the animals **whose hides are like their flesh**, and among them is listed **the hide of the hooves**? Since it is considered flesh, it should not count as hide to save the animal!

ANSWER

אָמַר לֵיהּ: אַל תַּקְנִיטֵנִי, שֶׁבִּלְשׁוֹן יָחִיד אֲנִי שׁוֹנֶה אוֹתָהּ.

Rabbi Yochanan **said to him: Do not provoke me, for I learn that** Mishnah **as the view of a single** Tanna, which is not the accepted halacha.

PROOF

דְּתַנְיָא: הַשּׁוֹחֵט אֶת הָעוֹלָה לְהַקְטִיר כְּזַיִת מֵעוֹר שֶׁל תַּחַת הָאַלְיָה חוּץ לִמְקוֹמוֹ – פָּסוּל, וְאֵין בּוֹ כָּרֵת;

As it is taught in a Braisa: **One who slaughters an olah-offering** with the intention **to burn an olive's bulk of the hide under the tail outside its proper place,** the offering is **unfit, but there is no** punishment of **kares for it**;

PROOF

חוּץ לִזְמַנּוֹ – פִּגּוּל, וְחַיָּיבִין עָלָיו כָּרֵת.

if he intended to burn it **outside its proper time,** it is **piggul, and one is liable to kares for it**. This is because this hide is considered like flesh.

PROOF

אֱלִיעֶזֶר בֶּן יְהוּדָה אִישׁ אֶיבֶלַיִם אָמַר מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב, וְכֵן הָיָה רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יְהוּדָה אִישׁ [כְּפַר] עִיכּוּס אוֹמֵר מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן:

Eliezer ben Yehuda of Evelayim said in the name of Rabbi Yaakov, and so Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda of Kefar Akos would say in the name of Rabbi Shimon:

PROOF

אֶחָד עוֹר בֵּית הַפַּרְסוֹת, וְאֶחָד עוֹר הָרֹאשׁ שֶׁל עֵגֶל הָרַךְ, וְאֶחָד עוֹר שֶׁל תַּחַת הָאַלְיָה, וְכֹל שֶׁמָּנוּ חֲכָמִים גַּבֵּי טוּמְאָה אֵלּוּ שֶׁעוֹרוֹתֵיהֶן כִּבְשָׂרָן,

Both the hide of the hooves, and the hide of the head of a tender calf, and the hide under the tail, and all those that the Sages enumerated regarding impurity as 'those whose hides are like their flesh' are indeed considered hide for all other matters, showing that the view equating them to flesh is only a minority opinion.

SUMMARY

The Gemara then transitions into the practical halachos of tereifos, focusing on the internal organs of the animal. We learn that while the complete removal of the spleen or kidneys leaves the animal kosher, specific localized damage—such as a perforation in the thick, upper end of the spleen, or a disease that reaches the white area of the kidney—can render the animal a tereifah. Finally, Rav Ashi teaches us a fundamental principle in the laws of tereifos: we cannot compare the vulnerability of one organ to another, as the complex nature of the body means what is fatal in one area may be perfectly survivable in another.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

In today's daf, we learn a profound principle about the nature of halacha and life: "Ein omrim b'treifos zo domeh l'zo"—we do not compare different laws of treifos to one another. The Gemara explains that you cannot make a logical comparison between the lung and the kidney, because "you can cut here and the animal dies, but cut there and it lives." What looks like the exact same wound can be fatal in one organ but completely harmless in another.

This is a powerful lesson for our own avodah. How often do we look at a friend or a neighbor and compare our spiritual struggles to theirs? We see someone else facing a challenge and think, "If they can handle that so easily, why am I struggling so much with this?" Or we look at our own lives and wonder why a small setback in one area completely knocks us off our feet, while a major challenge in another area barely affects us.

The Aibershter created each of us with a unique spiritual anatomy. Our neshama has its own sensitive areas, its own "lungs" and "kidneys." What is a minor scratch for one person can be a deep, painful wound for another. We cannot compare our spiritual health or our struggles to anyone else's, nor can we compare our reactions to different situations in our own lives. Hashem knows exactly where you are sensitive and where you are strong.

Today, when you feel yourself starting to compare your spiritual progress, your struggles, or your reactions to those of someone else, stop and remind yourself: "My neshama is unique. I will focus only on the specific avodah Hashem has given to me, without comparing myself to others."

הִלְכוֹת יְסוֹדֵי הַתּוֹרָה · פֶּרֶק שֵׁנִי

Learned like the daf, the literal words in bold, flowing with the elucidation

📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

In this chapter, the Rambam takes us on a beautiful journey to fulfill the fundamental mitzvos of loving and fearing Hashem. The Rambam teaches us that the path to true yiras Shamayim and ahavas Hashem is through deep contemplation of the wondrous, vast creations that Hashem brought into being. By looking at the greatness of the cosmos, a person's neshama is filled with a powerful yearning to know Hashem, while simultaneously feeling humbled by our own smallness before His infinite wisdom.

To help us begin this contemplation, the Rambam introduces us to the spiritual hierarchy of the universe. He explains the three categories of creation, focusing deeply on the spiritual forms that have no physical bodies—the holy angels. We will learn about their ten distinct spiritual levels, how they receive their existence one from another, and how they all stand in awe, recognizing their Creator according to their spiritual capacity.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

הֲלָכָה א

Halacha 1 · The Mitzvah to Love and Fear the Glorious and Awesome God

הָאֵל הַנִּכְבָּד וְהַנּוֹרָא הַזֶּה

Regarding **this glorious and awesome God**,

מִצְוָה לְאָהֳבוֹ וּלְיִרְאָה אוֹתוֹ

it is a positive **mitzvah to love Him and to fear Him**,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דברים ו ה "וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ".

as it is said in Devarim 6:5, **"And you shall love Hashem your God."**

וְנֶאֱמַר דברים ו יג "אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִּירָא":

And it is said in Devarim 6:13, **"Hashem your God you shall fear."**

הֲלָכָה ב

Halacha 2 · The Path to Attaining Love and Fear of God Through Contemplating His Creation

וְהֵיאַךְ הִיא הַדֶּרֶךְ לְאַהֲבָתוֹ וְיִרְאָתוֹ.

And how is the path to His love and His fear? How does a person reach these lofty levels of loving and fearing Hashem?

בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁיִּתְבּוֹנֵן הָאָדָם בְּמַעֲשָׂיו וּבְרוֹאָיו הַנִּפְלָאִים הַגְּדוֹלִים

At the time that the person contemplates His deeds and His creations, the wondrous and **the great,**

וְיִרְאֶה מֵהֶן חָכְמָתוֹ שֶׁאֵין לָהּ עֵרֶךְ וְלֹא קֵץ

and he sees from them His wisdom, which has no measure and no end,

מִיָּד הוּא אוֹהֵב וּמְשַׁבֵּחַ וּמְפָאֵר וּמִתְאַוֶּה תַּאֲוָה גְּדוֹלָה לֵידַע הַשֵּׁם הַגָּדוֹל.

immediately he loves and praises and glorifies, and yearns with a great yearning to know the great Name of Hashem,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר דָּוִד "צָמְאָה נַפְשִׁי לֵאלֹהִים לְאֵל חָי".

like that which Dovid said, in Tehillim, "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."

וּכְשֶׁמִּתְבּוֹנֵן בַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ עַצְמָן

And when he reflects on these very matters themselves,

מִיָּד הוּא נִרְתָּע לַאֲחוֹרָיו וְיִפָּחֵד וְיוֹדֵעַ שֶׁהוּא בְּרִיָּה קְטַנָּה שְׁפָלָה אֲפֵלָה

immediately he recoils backward and fears, and knows that he is a small, lowly, dark creature,

עוֹמֶדֶת בְּדַעַת קַלָּה מְעוּטָה לִפְנֵי תְּמִים דֵּעוֹת.

standing with a flimsy, limited understanding before the Perfect of knowledge, the Almighty.

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר דָּוִד "כִּי אֶרְאֶה שָׁמֶיךָ מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ" "מָה אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ".

Like that which Dovid said, "When I see Your heavens, the work of Your fingers," and then says, "What is man that You should remember him?"

וּלְפִי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ אֲנִי מְבָאֵר כְּלָלִים גְּדוֹלִים מִמַּעֲשֵׂה רִבּוֹן הָעוֹלָמִים

And according to these matters, I explain great principles of the work of the Master of the worlds,

כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּהְיוּ פֶּתַח לַמֵּבִין לֶאֱהֹב אֶת הַשֵּׁם.

in order that they will be an opening for the understanding one to love the Name of Hashem.

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים בְּעִנְיַן אַהֲבָה שֶׁמִּתּוֹכָהּ כָּךְ אַתָּה מַכִּיר אֶת מִי שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם:

Like that which the Sages said regarding the matter of love, "For from within this, you recognize Him who spoke and the world came into being."

הֲלָכָה ג

Halacha 3 · The Division of All Creations into Three Distinct Categories of Matter and Form

כָּל מַה שֶּׁבָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעוֹלָמוֹ

All that which the Holy One, blessed be He, created in His world

נֶחְלָק לִשְׁלֹשָׁה חֲלָקִים.

is divided into three parts.

מֵהֶן בְּרוּאִים שֶׁהֵן מְחֻבָּרִים מִגֶּלֶם וְצוּרָה

Of them are creations that are joined from matter and form,

וְהֵם הָוִים וְנִפְסָדִים תָּמִיד

and they are coming into being and perishing constantly,

כְּמוֹ גּוּפוֹת הָאָדָם וְהַבְּהֵמָה וְהַצְּמָחִים וְהַמַּתָּכוֹת.

like the bodies of man, and the beast, and the plants, and the metals.

וּמֵהֶן בְּרוּאִים שֶׁהֵן מְחֻבָּרִים מִגֶּלֶם וְצוּרָה

And of them are creations that are joined from matter and form,

אֲבָל אֵינָן מִשְׁתַּנִּין מִגּוּף לְגוּף וּמִצּוּרָה לְצוּרָה כְּמוֹ הָרִאשׁוֹנִים

but they do not change from body to body and from form to form like the first ones;

אֶלָּא צוּרָתָן קְבוּעָה לְעוֹלָם בְּגַלְמָם

rather, their form is fixed forever in their matter,

וְאֵינָן מִשְׁתַּנִּין כְּמוֹ אֵלּוּ.

and they do not change like those first ones.

וְהֵם הַגַּלְגַּלִּים וְהַכּוֹכָבִים שֶׁבָּהֶן.

And they are the spheres and the stars that are in them.

וְאֵין גַּלְמָם כִּשְׁאָר גַּלְמִים וְלֹא צוּרָתָם כִּשְׁאָר צוּרוֹת.

And their matter is not like other matters, and their form is not like other forms.

וּמֵהֶן בְּרוּאִים צוּרָה בְּלֹא גֶּלֶם כְּלָל

And of them are creations of form without matter at all,

וְהֵם הַמַּלְאָכִים.

and they are the angels.

שֶׁהַמַּלְאָכִים אֵינָם גּוּף וּגְוִיָּה

For the angels are not body and physical form,

אֶלָּא צוּרוֹת נִפְרָדוֹת זוֹ מִזּוֹ:

rather, they are forms separated one from another.

הֲלָכָה ד

Halacha 4 · The Non-Physical Nature of Angels and Prophetic Metaphors

וּמַהוּ זֶה שֶׁהַנְּבִיאִים אוֹמְרִים שֶׁרָאוּ הַמַּלְאָךְ אֵשׁ וּבַעַל כְּנָפַיִם.

And what is this that the prophets say, that they saw the angel as **fire and** as a **possessor of wings**?

הַכֹּל בְּמַרְאֵה הַנְּבוּאָה וְדֶרֶךְ חִידָה.

All of this was only **in a vision of the prophecy and by way of** a **riddle**,

לוֹמַר שֶׁאֵינוֹ גּוּף וְאֵינוֹ כָּבֵד כַּגּוּפוֹת הַכְּבֵדִים.

to say and to teach us **that he is not a body, and he is not heavy like the heavy bodies** of this physical world.

כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דברים ד כד "כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵשׁ אֹכְלָה הוּא" וְאֵינוֹ אֵשׁ אֶלָּא מָשָׁל.

This is **just as it is said** in the Torah, **"For Hashem your God, fire consuming is He," and He is not fire, rather** it is **a parable** to describe His power.

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר תהילים קד ד "עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת":

And it is **just as it is said** in Tehillim, **"He makes His angels winds,"** showing they are spiritual and swift.

הֲלָכָה ה

Halacha 5 · The Distinction Between Angels and Their Hierarchy of Existence

וּבַמֶּה יִפָּרְדוּ הַצּוּרוֹת זוֹ מִזּוֹ

And by what means **are** these spiritual **forms separated,** and distinguished, **this** one **from this** other one,

וַהֲרֵי אֵינָן גּוּפִין.

and behold, they are not bodies that could be separated by physical space?

לְפִי שֶׁאֵינָן שָׁוִין בִּמְצִיאוּתָן

It is **because they are not equal in their** level of **existence,**

אֶלָּא כָּל אֶחָד מֵהֶן לְמַטָּה מִמַּעֲלָתוֹ שֶׁל חֲבֵרוֹ.

rather, each one of them is below the level of his fellow angel.

וְהוּא מָצוּי מִכֹּחוֹ זֶה לְמַעְלָה מִזֶּה

And each lower angel **exists from the power of** the one above him, **this** one **above from this** one,

וְהַכֹּל נִמְצָאִים מִכֹּחוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא וְטוּבוֹ.

and everything exists from the power of the Holy One, blessed is He, and His goodness.

וְזֶהוּ שֶׁרָמַז שְׁלֹמֹה בְּחָכְמָתוֹ וְאָמַר

And this is what Shlomo alluded to in his wisdom, and said in the Sefer of **Koheles:**

"כִּי גָבֹהַּ מֵעַל גָּבֹהַּ שֹׁמֵר":

"For high above high watches," meaning that each spiritual level is watched over and sustained by the one above it.

הֲלָכָה ו

Halacha 6 · The Spiritual Hierarchy of Angels and Causes

זֶה שֶׁאָמַרְנוּ לְמַטָּה מִמַּעֲלָתוֹ שֶׁל חֲבֵרוֹ

This which we said regarding the angels, that one is **below the level of his fellow,**

אֵינָהּ מַעֲלַת מָקוֹם.

is not a level of physical **place,**

כְּמוֹ אָדָם שֶׁיּוֹשֵׁב לְמַעְלָה מֵחֲבֵרוֹ.

like a man who sits above his fellow in a physical space.

אֶלָּא כְּמוֹ שֶׁאוֹמְרִין בִּשְׁנֵי חֲכָמִים

But rather, it is **like that which they say regarding two sages,**

שֶׁאֶחָד גָּדוֹל מֵחֲבֵרוֹ בְּחָכְמָה

that one is greater than his fellow in wisdom,

שֶׁהוּא לְמַעְלָה מִמַּעֲלָתוֹ שֶׁל זֶה.

that he is above the level of this other **one** in spiritual stature.

וּכְמוֹ שֶׁאוֹמְרִין בְּעִלָּה

And it is also **like that which they say regarding a cause,**

שֶׁהִיא לְמַעְלָה מִן הֶעָלוּל:

that it is above the effect which stems from it.

הֲלָכָה ז

Halacha 7 · The Ten Spiritual Levels of Angels and Their Respective Names

שִׁנּוּי שְׁמוֹת הַמַּלְאָכִים עַל שֵׁם מַעֲלָתָם הוּא.

The difference of the names of the angels is according to the measure of their level of spiritual attainment.

וְלִפְיכָךְ נִקְרָאִים חַיּוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְהֵם לְמַעְלָה מִן הַכֹּל

And therefore, the highest level **are called Chayyot HaKodesh, and they are above all** the others;

וְאוֹפַנִּים וְאֶרְאֶלִּים וְחַשְׁמַלִּים וּשְׂרָפִים וּמַלְאָכִים וֵאלֹהִים וּבְנֵי אֱלֹהִים וּכְרוּבִים וְאִישִׁים.

and below them are the **Ofanim, and Er'elim, and Chashmalim, and Serafim, and Mal'achim, and Elohim, and sons of Elohim, and Keruvim, and Ishim.**

כָּל אֵלּוּ עֲשָׂרָה הַשֵּׁמוֹת שֶׁנִּקְרְאוּ בָּהֶן הַמַּלְאָכִים עַל שֵׁם עֶשֶׂר מַעֲלוֹת שֶׁלָּהֶן הֵן,

All of these ten names by which the angels are called are according to the measure of their ten levels of spiritual standing.

וּמַעֲלָה שֶׁאֵין לְמַעְלָה מִמֶּנָּה אֶלָּא מַעֲלַת הָאֵל בָּרוּךְ הוּא הִיא מַעֲלַת הַצּוּרָה שֶׁנִּקְרֵאת חַיּוֹת.

And the level that there is not any level **above it except the level of the God, blessed is He, is the level of the form that is called Chayyot.**

לְפִיכָךְ נֶאֱמַר בַּנְּבוּאָה שֶׁהֵן תַּחַת כִּסֵּא הַכָּבוֹד.

Therefore, it is said in prophecy that they are under the Throne of the Glory, indicating their supreme closeness to Hashem.

וּמַעֲלָה עֲשִׂירִית הִיא מַעֲלַת הַצּוּרָה שֶׁנִּקְרֵאת אִישִׁים

And the tenth level is the level of the form that is called Ishim,

וְהֵם הַמַּלְאָכִים הַמְדַבְּרִים עִם הַנְּבִיאִים וְנִרְאִים לָהֶם בְּמַרְאֵה הַנְּבוּאָה.

and they are the angels who speak with the prophets and appear to them in a vision of prophecy.

לְפִיכָךְ נִקְרְאוּ אִישִׁים שֶׁמַּעֲלָתָם קְרוֹבָה לְמַעֲלַת דַּעַת בְּנֵי אָדָם:

Therefore, they are called Ishim, because their level is close to the level of the knowledge of sons of man, allowing humans to perceive and comprehend their message.

הֲלָכָה ח

Halacha 8 · The Spiritual Forms' Comprehension and Knowledge of the Creator

וְכָל הַצּוּרוֹת הָאֵלּוּ חַיִּים וּמַכִּירִין אֶת הַבּוֹרֵא

And all of these forms, the holy angels, **are alive and recognize the Creator**,

וְיוֹדְעִים אוֹתוֹ דֵּעָה גְּדוֹלָה עַד לְמְאֹד.

and they know Him with a knowledge that is **exceedingly great**.

כָּל צוּרָה וְצוּרָה לְפִי מַעֲלָתָהּ לֹא לְפִי גָּדְלָהּ.

This is true of **each and every form according to its** spiritual **level, but not according to His** infinite **greatness**.

אֲפִלּוּ מַעֲלָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה אֵינָהּ יְכוֹלָה לְהַשִּׂיג אֲמִתַּת הַבּוֹרֵא כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא

Even the first and highest **level is unable to grasp the true essence of the Creator as He** truly **is**,

אֶלָּא דַּעְתָּהּ קְצָרָה לְהַשִּׂיג וְלֵידַע

rather, its mind is too limited to grasp and to know Him fully,

אֲבָל מַשֶּׂגֶת וְיוֹדַעַת יוֹתֵר מִמַּה שֶּׁמַּשָּׂגֶת וְיוֹדַעַת צוּרָה שֶׁלְּמַטָּה מִמֶּנָּה.

but it grasps and knows more than what is grasped and known by the form that is below it.

וְכֵן כָּל מַעֲלָה וּמַעֲלָה עַד מַעֲלָה עֲשִׂירִית

And so it is with every single level down to the tenth level,

גַּם הִיא יוֹדַעַת הַבּוֹרֵא דֵּעָה

it too knows the Creator with a knowledge

שֶׁאֵין כֹּחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם הַמְּחֻבָּרִים מִגּלֶם וְצוּרָה יָכוֹל לְהַשִּׂיג וְלֵידַע כְּמוֹתָהּ.

that the power of human beings, who are composed of physical matter and form, is unable to grasp and to know like it.

וְהַכֹּל אֵינָן יוֹדְעִין הַבּוֹרֵא כְּמוֹ שֶׁהוּא יוֹדֵעַ עַצְמוֹ:

Yet, all of them do not know the Creator as He knows Himself.

הֲלָכָה ט

Halacha 9 · All Existence Derives from the Creator and He Knows All Things

כָּל הַנִּמְצָאִים חוּץ מִן הַבּוֹרֵא

All the existing things outside of the Creator,

מִצּוּרָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה עַד יַתּוּשׁ קָטָן שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בְּטַבּוּר הָאָרֶץ

from the first spiritual form until the most small mosquito that is in the center of the earth,

הַכֹּל מִכֹּחַ אֲמִתָּתוֹ נִמְצָאוּ.

everything only exist from the power of His truth.

וְלִפְי שֶׁהוּא יוֹדֵעַ עַצְמוֹ

And because that He knows Himself,

וּמַכִּיר גְּדֻלָּתוֹ וְתִפְאַרְתּוֹ וַאֲמִתָּתוֹ

and recognizes His greatness and His beauty and His truth,

הוּא יוֹדֵעַ הַכֹּל

He knows everything,

וְאֵין דָּבָר נֶעְלָם מִמֶּנּוּ׃

and there is no thing hidden from Him.

הֲלָכָה י

Halacha 10 · The Absolute Unity of the Creator, His Knowledge, and His Life

הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מַכִּיר אֲמִתּוֹ וְיוֹדֵעַ אוֹתָהּ כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִיא.

The Holy One, blessed be He, recognizes His own truth and knows it as it is.

וְאֵינוֹ יוֹדֵעַ בְּדֵעָה שֶׁהִיא חוּץ מִמֶּנּוּ כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָנוּ יוֹדְעִין.

And He does not know with a knowledge that is outside of Him, as we know things,

שֶׁאֵין אָנוּ וְדַעְתֵּנוּ אֶחָד

for we and our knowledge are not one, as our minds are separate from our essence,

אֲבָל הַבּוֹרֵא יִתְבָּרַךְ הוּא וְדַעְתּוֹ וְחַיָּיו אֶחָד מִכָּל צַד וּמִכָּל פִּנָּה וּבְכָל דֶּרֶךְ יִחוּד.

but the Creator, may He be blessed, He and His knowledge and His life are one from every side and from every corner, and in every way of unity.

שֶׁאִלְמָלֵי הָיָה חַי בַּחַיִּים וְיוֹדֵעַ בְּדֵעָה חוּץ מִמֶּנּוּ

For if He were living with a life, and knowing with a knowledge, that were outside of Him,

הָיוּ שָׁם אֱלֹהוּת הַרְבֵּה הוּא וְחַיָּיו וְדַעְתּוֹ,

there would be many gods there: He, His life, and His knowledge;

וְאֵין הַדָּבָר כֵּן אֶלָּא אֶחָד מִכָּל צַד וּמִכָּל פִּנָּה וּבְכָל דֶּרֶךְ יִחוּד.

and the matter is not so, but rather He is one from every side and from every corner, and in every way of unity.

נִמְצֵאתָ אַתָּה אוֹמֵר הוּא הַיּוֹדֵעַ וְהוּא הַיָּדוּעַ וְהוּא הַדֵּעָה עַצְמָהּ הַכֹּל אֶחָד.

Consequently, you must say: He is the Knower, and He is the Known, and He is the Knowledge itself—the whole is one.

וְדָבָר זֶה אֵין כֹּחַ בַּפֶּה לְאָמְרוֹ וְלֹא בָאֹזֶן לִשְׁמְעוֹ וְלֹא בְּלֵב הָאָדָם לְהַכִּירוֹ עַל בָּרְיוֹ.

And this matter, there is no power in the mouth to say it, nor in the ear to hear it, nor in the heart of man to recognize it upon its truth and fully grasp it.

וּלְפִיכָךְ אוֹמֵר חֵי פַּרְעֹה וְחֵי נַפְשְׁךָ

And therefore, when swearing by a creation, the Torah says, "By the life of Pharaoh," and, "By the life of your soul," using the construct form 'chei' which implies a life possessed by the person,

וְאֵין אוֹמֵר חֵי ה' אֶלָּא חַי ה'.

and it does not say, "By the life of Hashem" in the construct form, **but rather, "As Hashem lives,"** using the absolute form 'chai'.

שֶׁאֵין הַבּוֹרֵא וְחַיָּיו שְׁנַיִם כְּמוֹ חַיֵּי הַגּוּפִים הַחַיִּים אוֹ כְּחַיֵּי הַמַּלְאָכִים.

For the Creator and His life are not two, like the life of living bodies, or like the life of the angels, whose life is distinct from their essence.

לְפִיכָךְ אֵינוֹ מַכִּיר הַבְּרוּאִים וְיוֹדְעָם מֵחֲמַת הַבְּרוּאִים כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָנוּ יוֹדְעִין אוֹתָם

Therefore, He does not recognize the creations and know them because of the creations, as we know them, by looking outside of ourselves,

אֶלָּא מֵחֲמַת עַצְמוֹ יְדָעֵם.

but rather, because of Himself He knows them.

לְפִיכָךְ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא יוֹדֵעַ עַצְמוֹ יוֹדֵעַ הַכֹּל שֶׁהַכֹּל נִסְמָךְ לוֹ בַּהֲוָיָתוֹ.

Therefore, because He knows Himself, He knows everything, for everything is dependent on Him for its existence.

הֲלָכָה יא

Halacha 11 · The Depth of Ma'aseh Merkavah and the Limits of Explanation

דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ שֶׁאָמַרְנוּ בְּעִנְיָן זֶה

These matters that we have said regarding this subject

בִּשְׁנֵי פְּרָקִים אֵלּוּ

in these two chapters

כְּמוֹ טִפָּה מִן הַיָּם הֵם

are like a drop from the sea

מִמַּה שֶּׁצָּרִיךְ לְבָאֵר בְּעִנְיָן זֶה.

compared **to what is needed to explain regarding this subject.**

וּבֵאוּר כָּל הָעִקָּרִים שֶׁבִּשְׁנֵי פְּרָקִים אֵלּוּ

And the explanation of all the principles that are in these two chapters

הוּא הַנִּקְרָא מַעֲשֵׂה מֶרְכָּבָה:

is that which is called the Work of the Chariot.

הֲלָכָה יב

Halacha 12 · The Restriction and Concealment of the Secrets of the Torah

צִוּוּ חֲכָמִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים

The early Sages commanded

שֶׁלֹּא לִדְרֹשׁ בִּדְבָרִים אֵלּוּ

not to expound on these matters of Ma'aseh Merkavah

אֶלָּא לְאִישׁ אֶחָד בִּלְבַד

except to one man alone,

וְהוּא שֶׁיִּהְיֶה חָכָם וּמֵבִין מִדַּעְתּוֹ

and he must be such that he is wise and understanding from his own knowledge.

וְאַחַר כָּךְ מוֹסְרִין לוֹ רָאשֵׁי הַפְּרָקִים

And after that, they transmit to him the outlines of the chapters,

וּמוֹדִיעִין אוֹתוֹ שֶׁמֶץ מִן הַדָּבָר

and they make known to him only a trace of the matter,

וְהוּא מֵבִין מִדַּעְתּוֹ

and he understands from his own knowledge

וְיֵדַע סוֹף הַדָּבָר וְעָמְקוֹ.

and knows the end of the matter and its depth.

וּדְבָרִים אֵלּוּ דְּבָרִים עֲמֻקִּים הֵם עַד לִמְאֹד

And these matters are exceedingly deep matters,

וְאֵין כָּל דַּעַת וְדַעַת רְאוּיָה לְסָבְלָן.

and not every mind is fitting to bear them.

וַעֲלֵיהֶם אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה בְּחָכְמָתוֹ דֶּרֶךְ מָשָׁל

And concerning them, Shlomo said in his wisdom by way of metaphor:

כְּבָשִׂים לִלְבוּשֶׁךָ

"Lambs for your clothing."

כָּךְ אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים בְּפֵרוּשׁ מָשָׁל זֶה

So said the Sages in the explanation of this metaphor:

דְּבָרִים שֶׁהֵן כִּבְשׁוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם יִהְיוּ לִלְבוּשֶׁךָ

Matters that are the secrets of the world shall be for your clothing,

כְּלוֹמַר לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ וְאַל תִּדְרֹשׁ אוֹתָם בָּרַבִּים.

meaning to say, for you alone, and do not expound them in public.

וַעֲלֵיהֶם אָמַר

And concerning them, the verse **says:**

יִהְיוּ לְךָ לְבַדֶּךָ וְאֵין לְזָרִים אִתָּךְ.

"They shall be for you alone, and not for strangers with you."

וַעֲלֵיהֶם אָמַר

And concerning them, the verse **says:**

דְּבַשׁ וְחָלָב תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנֶךָ

"Honey and milk under your tongue."

כָּךְ פֵּרְשׁוּ חֲכָמִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים

So explained the early Sages:

דְּבָרִים שֶׁהֵן כִּדְבַשׁ וְחָלָב יִהְיוּ תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנְךָ:

Matters that are like honey and milk shall be under your tongue and kept hidden.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter begins by establishing the mitzvos of loving and fearing Hashem, explaining that these middos are awakened when we contemplate the greatness of His creations. The Rambam then categorizes all creation into three groups: physical things that change, permanent physical bodies like the stars and spheres, and purely spiritual forms without any physical matter, which are the angels. He explains that the physical descriptions of angels in the Torah are merely prophetic metaphors, as they have no physical form or weight. Instead, they are structured in ten spiritual levels, from the holy chayyot down to the ishim, who communicate with the prophets. The Rambam concludes by explaining that while these lofty spiritual beings have immense knowledge of Hashem, even the highest angel cannot fully comprehend the Creator, whose knowledge, life, and Essence are completely one.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Rambam is teaching us a fundamental secret about how a Yid builds a real, living relationship with Hashem. We often think that love and fear of Hashem are emotions that just have to strike us like lightning, or that they are reserved only for the greatest tzaddikim. But the Torah commands every single one of us, "And you shall love... and you shall fear." How is this possible? The Rambam reveals the path: it comes through active contemplation. When you stop to look at the world, from the vastness of the stars to the intricate design of a tiny leaf, you are looking at the wisdom of the Creator.

This contemplation is a two-step movement of the soul. First, when you see the infinite wisdom and beauty in creation, your heart is pulled close; you are filled with a deep yearning and love to know Hashem. But in the very next moment, as you realize how small and limited you are standing before the Master of the universe, you naturally recoil in healthy awe and yiras Shamayim. True avodah requires both. We cannot serve Hashem properly with love alone, which can lead to familiarity, nor with fear alone, which can lead to coldness. We need the heartbeat of both running and returning.

Today, take just two minutes to step away from your busy schedule, look at something in Hashem's creation, even just the breath in your lungs or the sky outside your window, and think: "The Creator of the entire universe made this with infinite wisdom, and He wants a relationship with me."

תְּהִלִּים · חֲמִשָּׁה קַאפִּיטְלָעך

The Five Daily Kapitlach

📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

These are the five kapitlach of Tehillim said every single day: 32, 43, 83, 121, and 130, each set word for word with its English meaning. They are gathered here as one section so the whole daily Tehillim can be said and downloaded together.

All introductions and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פֶּרֶק ל״ב CHAPTER 32

לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה׃

אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יַחְשֹׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עָוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה׃

כִּי הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי בָלוּ עַצְמָי בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם׃

כִּי יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יָדֶךָ נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי בְּחַרְבֹנֵי קַיִץ סֶלָה׃

חַטָּאתִי אוֹדִיעֲךָ וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא כִסִּיתִי אָמַרְתִּי אוֹדֶה עֲלֵי פְשָׁעַי לַיהוָה וְאַתָּה נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי סֶלָה׃

עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חָסִיד אֵלֶיךָ לְעֵת מְצֹא רַק לְשֵׁטֶף מַיִם רַבִּים אֵלָיו לֹא יַגִּיעוּ׃

אַתָּה סֵתֶר לִי מִצַּר תִּצְּרֵנִי רָנֵּי פַלֵּט תְּסוֹבְבֵנִי סֶלָה׃

אַשְׂכִּילְךָ וְאוֹרְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ זוּ תֵּלֵךְ אִיעֲצָה עָלֶיךָ עֵינִי׃

אַל תִּהְיוּ כְּסוּס כְּפֶרֶד אֵין הָבִין בְּמֶתֶג וָרֶסֶן עֶדְיוֹ לִבְלוֹם בַּל קְרֹב אֵלֶיךָ׃

רַבִּים מַכְאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בַּיהוָה חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ׃

שִׂמְחוּ בַיהוָה וְגִילוּ צַדִּיקִים וְהַרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׁרֵי לֵב׃

פֶּרֶק מ״ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חָסִיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה תְּפַלְּטֵנִי׃

כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי לָמָּה זְנַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב׃

שְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ הֵמָּה יַנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הַר קָדְשְׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ׃

וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שִׂמְחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדְךָ בְכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָי׃

מַה תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי׃

פֶּרֶק פ״ג CHAPTER 83

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף׃

אֱלֹהִים אַל דֳּמִי לָךְ אַל תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל׃

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יֶהֱמָיוּן וּמְשַׂנְאֶיךָ נָשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ׃

עַל עַמְּךָ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וְיִתְיָעֲצוּ עַל צְפוּנֶיךָ׃

אָמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַכְחִידֵם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזָּכֵר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד׃

כִּי נוֹעֲצוּ לֵב יַחְדָּו עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ׃

אָהֳלֵי אֱדוֹם וְיִשְׁמְעֵאלִים מוֹאָב וְהַגְרִים׃

גְּבָל וְעַמּוֹן וַעֲמָלֵק פְּלֶשֶׁת עִם יֹשְׁבֵי צוֹר׃

גַּם אַשּׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זְרוֹעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סֶלָה׃

עֲשֵׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְיָבִין בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן׃

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְעֵין דֹּאר הָיוּ דֹמֶן לָאֲדָמָה׃

שִׁיתֵמוֹ נְדִיבֵמוֹ כְּעֹרֵב וְכִזְאֵב וּכְזֶבַח וּכְצַלְמֻנָּע כָּל נְסִיכֵמוֹ׃

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירָשָׁה לָּנוּ אֵת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים׃

אֱלֹהַי שִׁיתֵמוֹ כַגַּלְגַּל כְּקַשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ׃

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר יָעַר וּכְלֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט הָרִים׃

כֵּן תִּרְדְּפֵם בְּסַעֲרֶךָ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תְבַהֲלֵם׃

מַלֵּא פְנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן וִיבַקְשׁוּ שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה׃

יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ עֲדֵי עַד וְיַחְפְּרוּ וְיֹאבֵדוּ׃

וְיֵדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה לְבַדֶּךָ עֶלְיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ׃

פֶּרֶק קכ״א CHAPTER 121

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הֶהָרִים מֵאַיִן יָבֹא עֶזְרִי׃

עֶזְרִי מֵעִם יְהוָה עֹשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ׃

אַל יִתֵּן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ אַל יָנוּם שֹׁמְרֶךָ׃

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל׃

יְהוָה שֹׁמְרֶךָ יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל יַד יְמִינֶךָ׃

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יַכֶּכָּה וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה׃

יְהוָה יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשֶׁךָ׃

יְהוָה יִשְׁמָר צֵאתְךָ וּבוֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם׃

פֶּרֶק ק״ל CHAPTER 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעֲמַקִּים קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה׃

אֲדֹנָי שִׁמְעָה בְקוֹלִי תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי׃

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר יָהּ אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד׃

כִּי עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא׃

קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחָלְתִּי׃

נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר׃

יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֶסֶד וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְּדוּת׃

וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו׃

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When you feel weighed down by your mistakes, do not keep silent or try to hide them. Open your heart to Hashem in honest confession, and then immediately shift your focus to absolute trust in His forgiveness and constant protection, knowing that He never slumbers and is always guarding your steps.

Today, the moment you feel a heavy heart or a sense of spiritual distance, stop what you are doing, speak to Hashem in your own words to acknowledge your mistake, and then say out loud: 'My help is from Hashem, who forgives and guards my soul.'