חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִּׁ"י · חֻקַּת־בָּלָק · שִׁשִּׁי

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

CHUKAS-BALAK · 6TH ALIYAH

📖 CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this aliyah, we see the wicked Balak bringing the rasha Balaam to Kiriath-huzoth, hoping to destroy Klal Yisrael through curses. Balak prepares lavish sacrifices, and Balaam instructs him to build seven altars, hoping to find a favorable moment to unleash his evil eye. However, Hashem intervenes, putting holy words of blessing directly into Balaam's mouth instead of the curses he so desperately wanted to utter.

We then hear Balaam's first two poetic prophecies, where he is forced to praise the unique holiness of the Jewish people. He describes how Klal Yisrael dwells apart from the nations, protected by Hashem's love, and how their strength is like that of a mighty lion. Despite Balak's growing frustration and his attempts to move Balaam to different vantage points, the rasha is completely powerless to change the ratzon of Hashem.

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

פָּסוּק א

Pasuk 1

וַיֵּלֶךְ בִּלְעָם עִם בָּלָק וַיָּבֹאוּ קִרְיַת חֻצוֹת׃

And went Bilam with Balak and they came to the city of streets

רַשִּׁ"י

קרית חצות. A city of streets עִיר מְלֵאָה שְׁוָקִים, אֲנָשִׁים וָטַף בְּחוּצוֹתֶיהָ, לוֹמַר רְאֵה וְרַחֵם שֶׁלֹּא יֵעָקְרוּ אֵלּוּ׃ these should be uprooted a city full of streets people and children in its streets as if to say look and have pity that not

פָּסוּק ב

Pasuk 2

וַיִּזְבַּח בָּלָק בָּקָר וָצֹאן וַיִּשְׁלַח לְבִלְעָם וְלַשָּׂרִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ׃

And slaughtered Balak cattle and sheep and he sent to Bilam and to the officers who were with him

רַשִּׁ"י

בקר וצאן. cattle and sheep דָּבָר מוּעָט׃ small a matter

פָּסוּק ג

Pasuk 3

וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַיִּקַּח בָּלָק אֶת בִּלְעָם וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ בָּמוֹת בָּעַל וַיַּרְא

And it was in the morning and took Balak — Bilaam and brought him up to the heights of Baal and he saw

מִשָּׁם קְצֵה הָעָם׃

the people the edge of from there

רַשִׁ״י

במות בעל. כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ, "לְרָמַת דַּחֲלְתֵּהּ", שֵׁם עֲ"זָ׃

Bamoth Baal . is like its Targum "to the heights of his fear" the name of an idol

פָּסוּק ד

Pasuk 4

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם אֶל בָּלָק בְּנֵה לִי בָזֶה שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחֹת וְהָכֵן לִי בָּזֶה שִׁבְעָה

And said Bilam to Balak build for me here seven altars and prepare for me here seven

פָּרִים וְשִׁבְעָה אֵילִים׃

bulls and seven rams

פָּסוּק ה

Pasuk 5

וַיַּעַשׂ בָּלָק כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בִּלְעָם וַיַּעַל בָּלָק וּבִלְעָם פָּר וָאַיִל בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ׃

And did Balak as spoke Bilaam and offered up Balak and Bilaam a bull and a ram on the altar

פָּסוּק ו

Pasuk 6

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם לְבָלָק הִתְיַצֵּב עַל עֹלָתֶךָ וְאֵלְכָה אוּלַי יִקָּרֶה יְהוָה

And he said Bilaam to Balak stand by your burnt-offering and I will go perhaps will happen to meet Hashem

לִקְרָאתִי וּדְבַר מַה יַּרְאֵנִי וְהִגַּדְתִּי לָךְ וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁפִי׃

towards me and the word that He shows me I will tell to you and he went alone

רַשִׁ״י

אולי יקרה ה' לקראתי. אֵינוֹ רָגִיל לְדַבֵּר עִמִּי בַּיּוֹם׃

perhaps will happen Hashem to meet me He is not accustomed to speak with me by day

רַשִׁ״י

וילך שפי. כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ יְחִידִי, לְשׁוֹן שִׁפְעַ וְשֶׁקֶט, שֶׁאֵין עִמּוֹ אֶלָּא שְׁתִיקָה׃

and he went shefi like its Targum alone an expression of ease and quiet that there is not with him except silence

פָּסוּק ז

Pasuk 7

וַיִּקָּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֶת שִׁבְעַת הַמִּזְבְּחֹת עָרַכְתִּי

And happened to meet God . Bilam and he said to Him — the seven of the altars I have set up

וָאַעַל פָּר וָאַיִל בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ׃

and I offered up a bull and a ram on each altar

רַשִׁ״י

ויקר. לְשׁוֹן עֲרַאי, לְשׁוֹן גְּנַאי, לְשׁוֹן טְמְאַת קֶרִי,

And He happened an expression of casualness an expression of disgrace an expression of the uncleanness of a nocturnal emission

כְּלוֹמַר בְּקֹשִׁי וּבְבִזָּיוֹן, וְלֹא הָיָה נִגְלֶה אֵלָיו בַּיּוֹם אֶלָּא בִּשְׁבִיל לְהַרְאוֹת

as if to say with reluctance and with contempt and not was He revealed to him by day except for the sake of to show

חִבָּתָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל בראשית רבה נ"ב :

the preciousness of Yisrael Bereishis Rabbah 52

רַשִׁ"י

את שבעת המזבחת. שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחוֹת עָרַכְתִּי אֵין כְּתִיב כָּאן, אֶלָּא אֶת שִׁבְעַת הַמִּזְבְּחוֹת,

— the seven altars seven is not written here but rather altars

אָמַר לְפָנָיו אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם שֶׁל אֵלּוּ בָּנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחוֹת וַאֲנִי עָרַכְתִּי כְּנֶגֶד

he said before Him the ancestors of these built before Thee seven altars and I have set in order corresponding to

כֻּלָּן, אַבְרָהָם בָּנָה אַרְבָּעָה — "וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה' הַנִּרְאֶה אֵלָיו" בראשית י"ב

all of them Avraham built four — and he built there an altar to Hashem Who appeared to him Bereishis 12

, "וַיַּעְתֵּק מִשָּׁם הָהָרָה" וְגוֹ' שם , "וַיֶּאֱהַל אַבְרָהָם" וְגוֹ' שם י"ג , וְאֶחָד

and one 13 there etc. Avraham and he moved tent there etc. to the mountain from there and he removed

בְּהַר הַמּוֹרִיָּה; וְיִצְחָק בָּנָה אֶחָד — "וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ" וְגוֹ' שם כ"ו , וְיַעֲקֹב בָּנָה

built and Yaakov 26 there etc. an altar there and he built one built and Yitzchak Moriah on Mount

שְׁתַּיִם, אֶחָד בִּשְׁכֶם וְאֶחָד בְּבֵית אֵל:

two one at Shechem and one at Beth El

רַשִׁ"י

ואעל פר ואיל במזבח. וְאַבְרָהָם לֹא הֶעֱלָה אֶלָּא אַיִל אֶחָד תנחומא צו :

and I offered a bull and a ram on the altar but Avraham did not offer except one Tanchuma Tzav

פָּסוּק ח

Pasuk 8

וַיָּשֶׂם יְהוָה דָּבָר בְּפִי בִלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֶל בָּלָק וְכֹה תְדַבֵּר:

And He placed Hashem a word in the mouth of Bilaam and He said to return to Balak and thus you shall speak

פָּסוּק ט

Pasuk 9

וַיָּשָׁב אֵלָיו וְהִנֵּה נִצָּב עַל עֹלָתוֹ הוּא וְכָל שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב:

And he returned to him and behold standing by his elevation-offering he and all the officers of Moav

פָּסוּק י

Pasuk 10

וַיִּשָּׂא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמַר מִן אֲרָם יַנְחֵנִי בָלָק מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב מֵהַרְרֵי קֶדֶם

And he took up his theme and he said From Aram has led me Balak king of Moav from the mountains of the East

לְכָה אָרָה לִי יַעֲקֹב וּלְכָה זֹעֲמָה יִשְׂרָאֵל:

come curse for me Yaakov and come bring anger upon Yisrael

רַשִׁ"י

ארה לי יעקב ולכה זעמה ישראל. בִּשְׁנֵי שְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם אָמַר לוֹ לְקַלְלָם שֶׁמָּא אֶחָד

curse for me Yaakov and come execrate Yisrael by two of their names he said to him to curse them perhaps one

מֵהֶם אֵינוֹ מֻבְהָק׃

distinctive is not of them

פָּסוּק יא

Pasuk 11

מָה אֶקֹב לֹא קַבֹּה אֵל וּמָה אֶזְעֹם לֹא זָעַם יְהוָה׃

Hashem angered has not can I anger and how God cursed him has not can I curse How

רַשִׁ״י

מה אקב לא קבה אל. כְּשֶׁהָיוּ רְאוּיִים לְהִתְקַלֵּל לֹא נִתְקַלְּלוּ — כְּשֶׁהִזְכִּיר when mentioned were they cursed not to be cursed deserving when they were God has cursed not shall I curse How

אֲבִיהֶם אֶת עֲוֹנָם "כִּי בְאַפָּם הָרְגוּ אִישׁ", לֹא קִלֵּל אֶלָּא אַפָּם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "אָרוּר "cursed be as it is said their anger except did he curse not a man" they slew in their anger "for their sin — their father

אַפָּם" בראשית מ"ט ; כְּשֶׁנִּכְנַס אֲבִיהֶם בְּמִרְמָה אֵצֶל אָבִיו הָיָה רָאוּי לְהִתְקַלֵּל, to be cursed deserving he was his father to with deceit their father when entered 49 Bereishis their anger"

מַה נֶּאֱמַר שָׁם? "גַּם בָּרוּךְ יִהְיֶה" שם כ"ז , בַּמְבָרְכִים נֶאֱמַר "אֵלֶּה יַעַמְדוּ לְבָרֵךְ to bless shall stand "these it is said regarding those blessing 27 there he shall be" blessed "also there is said what

אֶת הָעָם", בַּמְקַלְלִים לֹא נֶאֱמַר וְאֵלֶּה יַעַמְדוּ לְקַלֵּל אֶת הָעָם אֶלָּא "וְאֵלֶּה "and these but the people — to curse shall stand and these is it said not regarding those cursing the people" —

יַעַמְדוּ עַל הַקְּלָלָה" דברים כ"ז — לֹא רָצָה לְהַזְכִּיר עֲלֵיהֶם שֵׁם קְלָלָה תנחומא : Tanchuma of curse the term upon them to mention did He want not 27 Devarim the curse" for shall stand

רַשִׁ״י

לא זעם ה׳. אֲנִי אֵין כֹּחִי אֶלָּא שֶׁאֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ לְכַוֵּן הַשָּׁעָה שֶׁהַקָּבָ"ה כוֹעֵס is angry that the Holy One the moment to determine know that I except my power have no I Hashem angry not

בָּהּ, וְהוּא לֹא כָעַס כָּל הַיָּמִים הַלָּלוּ שֶׁבָּאתִי אֵלֶיךָ, וְזֶהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר מיכה ו' "עַמִּי My people six Michah what is said and this is to you that I came these the days all was angry not and He in it

זְכָר נָא מַה יָּעַץ" וְגוֹ' "וּמֶה עָנָה אֹתוֹ בִּלְעָם" וְגוֹ' "לְמַעַן דַּעַת צִדְקוֹת the righteous acts of to know in order etcetera Bilaam him answered and what etcetera devised what please remember

ה'" סנהדרין ק"ה :

one hundred five Sanhedrin Hashem

פָּסוּק יב

Pasuk 12

כִּי מֵרֹאשׁ צֻרִים אֶרְאֶנּוּ וּמִגְּבָעוֹת אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ הֶן עָם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֹּן

it dwells alone a people behold I gaze at him and from hills I see him rocks from the top of For

וּבַגּוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשָּׁב׃

it reckons itself not and among the nations

רַשִׁ״י

כי מראש צרים אראנו. אֲנִי מִסְתַּכֵּל בְּרֵאשִׁיתָם וּבְתְחִלַּת שָׁרְשֵׁיהֶם וַאֲנִי רוֹאֶה behold and I of their root and at the beginning at their origin look I I see him of rocks from the top For

אוֹתָם מְיֻסָּדִים וַחֲזָקִים כְּצוּרִים וּגְבָעוֹת הַלָּלוּ עַל יְדֵי אָבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת תנחומא : Tanchuma and mothers fathers means of by these and hills as rocks and strong founded them

רַשִׁ"י

הן עם לבדד ישכן. הוּא אֲשֶׁר זָכוּ לוֹ אֲבוֹתָיו — לִשְׁכֹּן בָּדָד, כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ:

like its Targum alone to dwell their ancestors for them have acquired what it is shall dwell alone a people Lo

רַשִׁ"י

ובגוים לא יתחשב. כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ, לֹא יִהְיוּ נַעֲשִׂין כְּלָה עִם שְׁאָר הָאֻמּוֹת,

the nations the rest of with destruction made they will be not like its Targum it shall reckon itself not and among nations

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ירמיהו ל' "כִּי אֶעֱשֶׂה כָלָה בְּכָל הַגּוֹיִם" וְגוֹ', אֵינָן נִמְנִין עִם

with reckoned they are not etcetera the nations among all destruction I will make for chapter 30 Yirmeyahu as it is said

הַשְּׁאָר. דָּ"אַ — כְּשֶׁהֵן שְׂמֵחִין אֵין אָמָּה שְׂמֵחָה עִמָּהֶם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "ה' בָּדָד

alone Hashem as it is said with them rejoicing nation there is no rejoice when they another explanation the rest

יַנְחֶנּוּ" דברים ל"ב , וּכְשֶׁהָאֻמּוֹת בְּטוּבָה הֵן אוֹכְלִין עִם כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד

and one one every with eat they are in prosperity and when the nations chapter 32 Devarim will lead him

וְאֵין עוֹלָה לָהֶם מִן הַחֶשְׁבּוֹן, וְזֶהוּ ובגוים לא יתחשב תנחומא :

Tanchuma it shall reckon itself not and among nations and this is the account from to them reckoned and it is not

פָּסוּק יג

Pasuk 13

מִי מָנָה עֲפַר יַעֲקֹב וּמִסְפָּר אֶת רֹבַע יִשְׂרָאֵל תָּמֹת נַפְשִׁי

my soul May die Yisrael the fourth part of — or the number of Yaakov the dust of can count Who

מוֹת יְשָׁרִים וּתְהִי אַחֲרִיתִי כָּמֹהוּ:

like his my end and may be the upright the death of

רַשִׁ"י

מי מנה עפר יעקב וגו'. כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ "דַּעְדְּקָיָּא דְּבֵית יַעֲקֹב", מֵאַרְבַּע

from the four Yaakov of the house of the infants according to its Targum etc. Yaakov the dust of has counted Who

מַשְׁרְיָתָא — מֵאַרְבָּעָה דְּגָלִים; דָּ"אַ, עֲפַר יַעֲקֹב, אֵין חֶשְׁבּוֹן בַּמִּצְוֹת שֶׁהֵם

that they of the mitzvos count there is no Yaakov the dust of Another explanation banners from the four camps

מְקַיְּמִין בְּעָפָר, "לֹא תַחֲרֹשׁ בְּשׁוֹר וּבַחֲמֹר" דברים כ"ב , "לֹא תִזְרַע כִּלְאָיִם" ויקרא

Vayikra mixed seeds sow do not 22 Devarim and with a donkey with an ox plow do not with dust fulfill

י"ט , אֵפֶר פָּרָה וַעֲפַר סוֹטָה וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָהֶם תנחומא :

Tanchuma to them and similar a sotah and the dust of the Red Heifer the ashes of 19

רַשִׁ"י

ומספר את רבע ישראל. רְבִיעוֹתֵיהֶן, זֶרַע הַיּוֹצֵא מִן הַתַּשְׁמִישׁ שֶׁלָּהֶם עי'

see of theirs the relations from that issues offspring their matings of Yisrael the breeding — And the number

נדה ל"א :

31a Niddah

רַשִׁ"י

תמת נפשי מות ישרים. שֶׁבָּהֶם:

who are among them the upright the death of my soul let die

פָּסוּק יד

Pasuk 14

וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל בִּלְעָם מֶה עָשִׂיתָ לִי לָקֹב אֹיְבַי לְקַחְתִּיךָ וְהִנֵּה
And he said Balak to Bilaam what have you done to me to curse my enemies I took you and behold

בֵּרַכְתָּ בָרֵךְ׃
you have blessed blessing

פָּסוּק טו

Pasuk 15

וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמַר הֲלֹא אֵת אֲשֶׁר יָשִׂים יְהוָה בְּפִי אֹתוֹ אֶשְׁמֹר לְדַבֵּר׃
And he answered and he said is it not — that which He puts Hashem in my mouth it I must watch to speak

פָּסוּק טז

Pasuk 16

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בָּלָק לֶךְ לְכָה נָּא אִתִּי אֶל מָקוֹם אַחֵר אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶנּוּ
And he said Balak to him go come please with me to a place another that you may see him

מִשָּׁם אֶפֶס קָצֵהוּ תִּרְאֶה וְכֻלּוֹ לֹא תִרְאֶה וְקָבְנוֹ לִי מִשָּׁם׃
from there only his edge you will see and all of him not you will see and curse him for me from there

רַ"שִׁ"י

וקבנו לי. לְשׁוֹן צִוּוּי, קַלְּלֵהוּ לִי׃
and curse him for me command an expression of for me curse him

פָּסוּק יז

Pasuk 17

וַיִּקָּחֵהוּ שְׂדֵה צֹפִים אֶל רֹאשׁ הַפִּסְגָּה וַיִּבֶן שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחֹת וַיַּעַל
And he took him to the field of Zophim to the top of Pisgah and he built seven altars and he offered

פָּר וָאַיִל בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ׃
a bull and a ram on the altar

רַ"שִׁ"י

שדה צפים. מָקוֹם גְּבוֹהַּ הָיָה שָׁשָׁם הַצּוֹפֶה עוֹמֵד לִשְׁמֹר אִם יָבֹא חַיִל עַל
The field of Zophim a place high it was that there the watchman stands to watch if will come an army against

הָעִיר׃
the city

רַ"שִׁ"י

ראש הפסגה. בִּלְעָם לֹא הָיָה קוֹסֵם כְּבָלָק, רָאָה בָּלָק שֶׁעֲתִידָה פִּרְצָה לְהִפָּרֵץ
The top of the Pisgah Bilaam was not a diviner like Balak saw Balak that in future a breach will be breached

בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מִשָּׁם, שֶׁשָּׁם מֵת מֹשֶׁה, כְּסָבוּר שֶׁשָּׁם תָּחוּל עֲלֵיהֶם הַקְּלָלָה וְזוֹ הִיא
in Yisrael from there for there died Moshe he thought that there will fall upon them the curse and this is

הַפִּרְצָה שֶׁאֲנִי רוֹאֶה תנחומא׃
the breach that I see Tanchuma

פָּסוּק יח

Pasuk 18

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל בָּלָק הִתְיַצֵּב כֹּה עַל עֹלָתֶךָ וְאָנֹכִי אִקָּרֶה כֹּה׃

yonder will be met and I your burnt-offering by here stand Balak to And he said

רַשִׁ״י

אקרה כה. מֵאֵת הַקָּבָ"ה, אקרה — לְשׁוֹן אִתְפַּעֵל׃

passive is a form of the word אקרה the Holy One blessed be He by yonder I will be met

פָּסוּק יט

Pasuk 19

וַיִּקָּר יְהוָה אֶל בִּלְעָם וַיָּשֶׂם דָּבָר בְּפִיו וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֶל בָּלָק

Balak to return and He said in his mouth a word and He placed Bilam · Hashem And happened to meet

וְכֹה תְדַבֵּר׃

you shall speak and thus

רַשִׁ״י

וישם דבר בפיו. וּמַה הִיא הַשִּׂימָה הַזֹּאת? וּמֶה חָסֵר הַמִּקְרָא בְּאָמְרוֹ "שׁוּב אֶל

to Return by its saying the verse lacked and what this the putting is and what in his mouth a word And He put

בָּלָק וְכֹה תְדַבֵּר"? אֶלָּא כְּשֶׁהָיָה שׁוֹמֵעַ שֶׁאֵינוֹ נִרְשֶׁה לְקַלֵּל אָמַר מָה אֲנִי חוֹזֵר

return should I why he said to curse permitted that he is not hearing when he was Rather you shall speak and thus Balak

אֵצֶל בָּלָק לְצַעֲרוֹ? וְנָתַן לוֹ הַקָּבָ"ה רֶסֶן וְחַכָּה בְּפִיו, כְּאָדָם הַפּוֹקֵס

who pricks like a person in his mouth and a hook a bridle the Holy One for him and He placed to distress him Balak to

בְּהֵמָה בְּחַכָּה לְהוֹלִיכָהּ אֶל אֲשֶׁר יִרְצֶה, אָמַר לוֹ עַל כָּרְחֲךָ תָּשׁוּב אֶל בָּלָק שָׁם

there Balak to you shall return your will against to him He said he desires where to to lead it with a hook an animal

׃

פָּסוּק כ

Pasuk 20

וַיָּבֹא אֵלָיו וְהִנּוֹ נִצָּב עַל עֹלָתוֹ וְשָׂרֵי מוֹאָב אִתּוֹ

with him Moav and the officers of his elevation offering by was standing and behold he to him And he came

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בָּלָק מַה דִּבֶּר יְהוָה׃

Hashem did speak What Balak to him and he said

רַשִׁ״י

ושרי מואב אתו. וּלְמַעְלָה הוּא אוֹמֵר "וְכָל שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב", כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאוּ

they saw as soon as Moab the princes of and all says it and above with him Moab And the princes of

שֶׁאֵין בּוֹ תִּקְוָה הָלְכוּ לָהֶם מִקְצָתָם וְלֹא נִשְׁאֲרוּ אֶלָּא מִקְצָתָם׃

some of them except remained and not some of them for themselves went hope in him that there is not

רַשִׁ״י

מה דבר ה'. לְשׁוֹן צְחוֹק הוּא זֶה, כְּלוֹמַר אֵינְךָ בִּרְשׁוּתְךָ שָׁם :

there in your own domain you are not meaning to say is it derision an expression of Hashem has spoken What

פָּסוּק כא

Pasuk 21

וַיִּשָּׂא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמַר קוּם בָּלָק וּשְׁמָע הַאֲזִינָה עָדַי בְּנוֹ צִפּוֹר:

Tzippor son of unto me give ear and hear Balak arise and he said his theme And he took up

רַשִּׁ"י

קום בלק. כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאָהוּ מְצַחֵק בּוֹ, נִתְכַּוֵּן לְצַעֲרוֹ — "עֲמֹד עַל רַגְלֶיךָ, אֵינְךָ

you are not your feet on Stand to distress him he intended at him mocking that he saw him Since Balak Rise up

רַשַּׁאי לֵישֵׁב, וַאֲנִי שָׁלוּחַ אֵלֶיךָ בִּשְׁלִיחוּתוֹ שֶׁל מָקוֹם" שָׁם:

there the Omnipresent of on the mission to you am sent and I to sit permitted

רַשִּׁ"י

בנו צפר. לְשׁוֹן מִקְרָא הוּא זֶה, כְּמוֹ "חַיְתוֹ יָעַר" תהלים נ' "וְחַיְתוֹ אֶרֶץ" בראשית א'

1 Bereishis earth and beast of 50 Tehillim forest beast of like is this it Scripture a style of Zippor son of

, "לְמַעְיְנוֹ מָיִם" תהילים קי"ד:

114 Tehillim water to a spring of

פָּסוּק כב

Pasuk 22

לֹא אִישׁ אֵל וִיכַזֵּב וּבֶן אָדָם וְיִתְנֶחָם הַהוּא אָמַר וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה

do and not say would He that He should relent of man nor a son that He should lie is God a man Not

וְדִבֶּר וְלֹא יְקִימֶנָּה:

fulfill it and not or speak

רַשִּׁ"י

לא איש וגו'. כְּבָר נִשְׁבַּע לָהֶם לַהֲבִיאָם וּלְהוֹרִישָׁם אֶרֶץ שִׁבְעָה אֻמּוֹת וְאַתָּה סָבוּר

think and you nations the seven the land of and to give them to bring them to them He swore Already etc. a man Not

לַהֲמִיתָם בַּמִּדְבָּר?:

in the wilderness to slay them

רַשִּׁ"י

ההוא אמר וגו'. בִּלְשׁוֹן תֹּמַהּ, וְתַרְגּוּמוֹ וְתָיְבִין וּמִתְמַלְכִין — חוֹזְרִים

they retract and they reconsider and they repent and its translation a question in the form of etc. He said Hath that

וְנִמְלָכִין לַחֲזֹר בָּהֶם:

from them to withdraw and reconsider

פָּסוּק כג

Pasuk 23

הִנֵּה בָרֵךְ לָקָחְתִּי וּבֵרַךְ וְלֹא אֲשִׁיבֶנָּה:

reverse it and I cannot and He blessed I have received to bless Behold

רַשִּׁ"י

הנה ברך לקחתי. אַתָּה שׁוֹאֲלֵנִי "מַה דִּבֶּר ה'?", קִבַּלְתִּי מִמֶּנּוּ לְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָם:

them to bless from Him I received Hashem spoke What ask me you I have received to bless Behold

רַשִׁ"י

וברך ולא אשיבנה. הוּא בֵּרַךְ אוֹתָם וַאֲנִי לֹא אָשִׁיב אֶת בִּרְכָתוֹ:

His blessing — reverse cannot and I them blessed He can I reverse it and not And He blessed

רַשִׁ"י

וברך. כְּמוֹ וּבֵרַךְ, וְכֵן הִיא גְּזֵרַת רֵי"ש, כְּמוֹ תהלים ע"ד "אוֹיֵב חֵרֵף"

blasphemed an enemy 74 Tehillim like the letter Reish the rule of it is and so and he blessed is like and he blessed

כְּמוֹ חֵרֵף, וְכֵן שם מ' "וּבֹצֵעַ בֵּרַךְ" — הַמְהַלֵּל וּמְבָרֵךְ אֶת הַגּוֹזֵל וְאוֹמֵר אַל

do not and says the robber — and blesses one who praises he blessed and the robber 10 there and so blasphemed like

תִּירָא כִּי לֹא תֵעָנֵשׁ, שָׁלוֹם יִהְיֶה לְךָ, מַרְגִּיז הוּא לְהַקָּבָ"ה; וְאֵין לוֹמַר ברך

berech to say and there is not the Holy One he angers to you will be peace will you be punished not for fear

שֵׁם דָּבָר, שֶׁאִם כֵּן הָיָה נָקוּד בְּפַתָּ"ח קָטָן וְטַעְמוֹ לְמַעְלָה, אֲבָל לְפִי שֶׁהוּא

that it is because but above and its accent small with a patach voweled it would be so for if · a noun

לְשׁוֹן פִּעֵל, הוּא נָקוּד קָמָץ קָטָן וְטַעְמוֹ לְמַטָּה:

below and its accent small with a kamatz is voweled it Piel an expression of

פָּסוּק כד

Pasuk 24

לֹא הִבִּיט אָוֶן בְּיַעֲקֹב וְלֹא רָאָה עָמָל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ

is with him his God Hashem in Yisrael perverseness He saw and not in Yaakov iniquity He beheld Not

וּתְרוּעַת מֶלֶךְ בּוֹ:

is in him a King and the friendship of

רַשִׁ"י

לא הביט און ביעקב וגו'. כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ; דָּבָר אַחֵר אַחֲרֵי פְּשׁוּטוֹ הוּא

it its plain sense according to explanation Another according to its Targum etc. in Yaakov iniquity beheld He has not

נִדְרָשׁ מִדְרָשׁ נָאֶה —

beautiful an exposition is expounded

רַשִׁ"י

לא הביט. הַקָּבָ"ה אוֹן שֶׁבְּיַעֲקֹב — כְּשֶׁהֵן עוֹבְרִין עַל דְּבָרָיו אֵינוֹ מְדַקְדֵּק

exacting He is not His words · transgress when they which is in Yaakov iniquity the Holy One look at He does not

אַחֲרֵיהֶם לְהִתְבּוֹנֵן בְּאוֹנְיוֹת שֶׁלָּהֶם וַעֲמָלָן שֶׁהֵן עוֹבְרִין עַל דָּתוֹ:

His law · transgress that they and their sin of theirs to the iniquities to pay regard after them

רַשִׁ"י

עמל. לְשׁוֹן עֲבֵרָה, כְּמוֹ "וְהָרָה עָמָל" תהלים ז' , "כִּי אַתָּה עָמָל

transgression You "for 7 Tehillim transgression" "and he conceives as in transgression is an expression of Amal

וְכַעַס תַּבִּיט" שם י' , לְפִי שֶׁהָעֲבֵרָה הִיא עָמָל לִפְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם:

the Omnipresent before a vexation is that the transgression because 10 there behold" and vexation

רַשִׁ"י

ה' אלהיו עמו. אֲפִלּוּ מַכְעִיסִין וּמַמְרִים לְפָנָיו, אֵינוֹ זָז מִתּוֹכָן:

from their midst move He does not before Him and rebel they anger even when is with him his God Hashem

רַשִׁ"י

ותרועת מלך בו. לְשׁוֹן חִבָּה וְרֵעוּת, כְּמוֹ שמואל ב ט"ו "רֵעֶה דָּוִד"

and the friendship of a king is in him an expression of love and fellowship like Shmuel two fifteen the friend of Dovid

— אוֹהֵב דָּוִד, שופטים ט"ו "וַיִּתְּנָהּ לְמֵרֵעֵהוּ", וְכֵן תִּרְגֵּם אָנְקְלוֹס "וּשְׁכִינַת

the beloved of Dovid Shoftim fifteen and he gave her to his companion and so translated Onkelos and the Shechina of

מַלְכְּהוֹן בֵּינֵיהוֹן":

their King is among them

פָּסוּק כה

Pasuk 25

אֵל מוֹצִיאָם מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּתוֹעֲפֹת רְאֵם לוֹ:

God Who brought them out from Mitzrayim like the strength of a wild ox is to Him

רַשִׁ"י

אל מוציאם ממצרים. אַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ "הֵנָּה עַם יָצָא מִמִּצְרַיִם", לֹא יָצָא

God brought them out from Mitzrayim you said "behold a nation went out from Mitzrayim" not did it go out

מֵעַצְמוֹ, אֶלָּא הָאֱלֹהִים הוֹצִיאָם:

of its own accord but God brought them out

רַשִׁ"י

כתועפת ראם לו. כְּתֹקֶף רוֹם וְגֹבַהּ שֶׁלּוֹ, וְכֵן "וְכֶסֶף תּוּעָפוֹת"

Like the strength of a wild ox to Him like the loftiness and height of His and similarly and silver of strength

איוב כ"ב לְשׁוֹן מָעוֹז הֵמָּה, וְאוֹמֵר אֲנִי שֶׁהוּא לְשׁוֹן "וְעוֹף יְעוֹפֵף" בראשית א'

Iyov 22 an expression of strength they are and say I that it is an expression of and bird shall fly Bereishis 1

— הַמְעוֹפֵף בְּרוֹם וְגֹבַהּ, תֹּקֶף רַב הוּא זֶה, וְתוֹעֲפֹת רְאֵם — עֲפִיפַת גֹּבַהּ;

which flies in the loftiness and height strength great it is this and the flight of a wild ox the flight of height

דְּ"אַ, תּוֹעֲפוֹת רְאֵם — תֹּקֶף רְאֵמִים, וְאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ אֵלּוּ הַשֵּׁדִים עי'

another explanation the strength of wild oxen and said our Rabbis these are the demons see

גיטין ס"ח :

Gittin 68

פָּסוּק כו

Pasuk 26

כִּי לֹא נַחַשׁ בְּיַעֲקֹב וְלֹא קֶסֶם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כָּעֵת יֵאָמֵר לְיַעֲקֹב

For there is no divination in Yaakov and no soothsaying in Yisrael at this time it is said to Yaakov

וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל מַה פָּעַל אֵל:

and to Yisrael what has wrought G-d

רַשִׁ"י

כי לא נחש ביעקב. כִּי רְאוּיִים הֵם לִבְרָכָה, שֶׁאֵין בָּהֶם מְנַחֲשִׁים

For there is no enchantment in Yaakov for they are worthy of blessing since there are not amongst them enchanters

וְקוֹסְמִים:

and diviners

רַשִׁ"י

כעת יאמר ליעקב וגו'. עוֹד עָתִיד לִהְיוֹת עֵת כָּעֵת הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר תִּגָּלֶה
will be revealed when this as this time a time to be there will be Again etc. to Yaakov it shall be said In due time

חִבָּתָן לְעֵין כֹּל, שֶׁהֵן יוֹשְׁבִין לְפָנָיו וּלְמֵדִים תּוֹרָה מִפִּיו וּמְחִצָּתָן
and their place from His mouth Torah and learn before Him sit because they all to the eyes of His love for them

לִפְנִים מִמַּלְאֲכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת וְהֵם יִשְׁאֲלוּ לָהֶם מה פעל אל ? וְזֶהוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ישעיהו
Yeshayahu what is said and this is God wrought what of them will ask and they service of the angels of inward

ל' "וְהָיוּ עֵינֶיךָ רֹאוֹת אֶת מוֹרֶיךָ". דָּ"אַ — יאמר ליעקב אֵינוֹ
is not to Yaakov it shall be said Another explanation your Teacher — seeing your eyes and shall be chapter 30

לְשׁוֹן עָתִיד אֶלָּא לְשׁוֹן הֹוֶה, אֵינָן צְרִיכִין לִמְנַחֵשׁ וְקוֹסֵם, כִּי בְכָל עֵת
time at every for and a diviner an enchanter needing they are not present an expression of but future an expression of

שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לְהֵאָמֵר לְיַעֲקֹב וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל מַה פָּעַל הַקָּבָ"ה וּמַה גְּזֵרוֹתָיו בַּמָּרוֹם, אֵינָן
they do not on High are His decrees and what the Holy One wrought what and to Yisrael to Yaakov to be told that is needed

מְנַחֲשִׁים וְקוֹסְמִים אֶלָּא נֶאֱמַר לָהֶם עַל פִּי נְבִיאֵיהֶם מַה הִיא גְּזֵרַת הַמָּקוֹם,
the Omnipresent the decree of is what their prophets mouth of by to them it is told but and divine enchant

אוֹ אוּרִים וְתֻמִּים מַגִּידִים לָהֶם תנחומא ; וְאָנְקְלוֹס לֹא תִרְגֵּם כֵּן:
so translate did not And Onkelos Tanchuma to them declare and Thummim Urim or

פָּסוּק כז

Pasuk 27

הֵן עָם כְּלָבִיא יָקוּם וְכַאֲרִי יִתְנַשָּׂא לֹא יִשְׁכַּב עַד יֹאכַל טֶרֶף
prey it eats until it lies down not it lifts itself and like a lion it rises like a lioness a people Behold

וְדַם חֲלָלִים יִשְׁתֶּה:
it drinks the slain and the blood of

רַשִׁ"י

הן עם כלביא יקום וגו'. כְּשֶׁהֵן עוֹמְדִין מִשְּׁנָתָם שַׁחֲרִית, הֵן מִתְגַּבְּרִין
strengthen themselves they in the morning from their sleep stand up when they etc. rises as a lioness a people Behold

כְּלָבִיא וְכַאֲרִי לַחֲטֹף אֶת הַמִּצְוֹת — לִלְבֹּשׁ טַלִּית, לִקְרֹא אֶת שְׁמַע וּלְהָנִיחַ תְּפִלִּין:
tefillin and to lay Shema — to read tallith to clothe the mitzvos — to snatch and as a lion as a lioness

רַשִׁ"י

לא ישכב. בַּלַּיְלָה עַל מִטָּתוֹ עַד שֶׁהוּא אוֹכֵל וּמְחַבֵּל כָּל מַזִּיק הַבָּא לְטָרְפוֹ,
to prey on him that comes damager every and destroys consumes that he until his bed upon at night lie down He does not

כֵּיצַד? קוֹרֵא אֶת שְׁמַע עַל מִטָּתוֹ וּמַפְקִיד רוּחוֹ בְּיַד הַמָּקוֹם, בָּא מַחֲנֶה
a camp comes the Omnipresent into the hand of his spirit and entrusts his bed upon Shema — he reads how so

וְגַיִס לְהַזִּיקָם, הַקָּבָ"ה שׁוֹמְרָם וְנִלְחָם מִלְחֲמוֹתָם וּמַפִּילָם חֲלָלִים שם ;
there slain and fells them their battles and fights protects them the Holy One to harm them or a troop

דָּ"אַ — הן עם כלביא יקום וגו' , כְּתַרְגּוּמוֹ:
as its Targum etc shall rise as a lioness the people behold another explanation

רַשִׁ"י

ודם חללים ישתה. נִתְנַבֵּא שֶׁאֵין מֹשֶׁה מֵת עַד שֶׁיַּפִּיל מַלְכֵי מִדְיָן
Midyand the kings of he would fell until would die Moshe that not He prophesied he shall drink the slain And the blood of

חֲלָלִים וְיֵהָרֵג הוּא עִמָּהֶם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר יהושע י"ג "וְאֶת בִּלְעָם בֶּן בְּעוֹר הַקּוֹסֵם
slain and would be killed he with them as it is said Yehoshua 13 And — Bilaam the son of Beor the soothsayer

הָרְגוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּחֶרֶב אֶל חַלְלֵיהֶם" עי' תנחומא :
slew the children of Israel with the sword among their slain see Tanchuma

פָּסוּק כח

Pasuk 28

וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל בִּלְעָם גַּם קֹב לֹא תְקַבֶּנּוּ גַּם בָּרֵךְ לֹא תְבָרֲכֶנּוּ:
And said Balak to Bilaam Also curse do not you shall curse him also bless do not you shall bless him

רַ"שִׁ"י

גם קב לא תקבנו. גַּם רִאשׁוֹן מוֹסִיף עַל גַּם הַשֵּׁנִי וְגַם הַשֵּׁנִי עַל גַּם
Also curse do not curse them The also first adds upon the also second and the also second upon the also

רִאשׁוֹן, וְכֵן "גַּם לִי גַּם לָךְ לֹא יִהְיֶה" מלכים א ג' , וְכֵן "גַּם בָּחוּר גַּם
first and so neither for me nor for you shall it be not Melachim Aleph Gimel and so also youth also

בְּתוּלָה" דברים ל"ב :
maiden Devarim Lamed Beis

פָּסוּק כט

Pasuk 29

וַיַּעַן בִּלְעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל בָּלָק הֲלֹא דִּבַּרְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר
And answered Bilam and he said to Balak did I not speak to you saying all that will speak

יְהוָה אֹתוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה:
Hashem it I must do

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aliyah details Balak and Balaam's desperate attempts to curse Klal Yisrael, which Hashem repeatedly turns into beautiful brachos. After building seven altars and offering sacrifices at Bamoth-baal, Balaam receives a message from Hashem and proclaims that the Jewish people are a nation dwelling apart, wishing that his own end could be like theirs. When a furious Balak moves him to the summit of Pisgah to try again, Balaam is once more forced by Hashem to declare that Hashem does not change His mind, that there is no magic or divination that can harm Yisrael, and that they rise up with the strength of a lion, leaving Balak begging him to neither curse nor bless them at all.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

Look at how Balak and Bilaam operate in this parsha. They are desperately looking for a crack in the armor of Klal Yisrael. Balak takes Bilaam from place to place, hoping that from a different angle, or by looking at just a small fraction of the people, they will find some merit missing, some vulnerability to exploit. But the Torah reveals the ultimate truth of our existence: "No harm is in sight for Jacob, no woe in view for Israel. The Eternal their God is with them."

This is the secret of our eternity. The nations of the world look at us and try to find our faults, and even the yetzer hara inside us tries to point out our spiritual shortcomings to make us feel distant from Hashem. But Hashem does not look at us that way. When a Yid is connected to Hashem, there is an essential, unbreakable bond. Hashem chooses not to focus on our temporary struggles or flaws; He sees our inner beauty, our neshama, and our deep-seated desire to do His will.

When you go through your day, the yetzer hara will try to convince you that you are too far gone, or that your small mitzvos don't matter because of your faults. Do not listen to that voice. Remember that you belong to a nation that "dwells apart," protected by a love that transcends any accusation. You are a child of the King, and His presence is right there with you.

Today, when you pray or do a mitzvah, do it with the joy and confidence of knowing how precious you are to Hashem. Before you start, say to yourself: "Hashem is with me, He loves me, and He believes in my goodness."

דַּף יוֹמִי · חֻלִּין · דַּף נ״ז

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📖 **THE SUGYA**

In this daf, we continue our learning of the halachos of tereifos, focusing on the kashrus of birds and animals that have suffered skeletal or limb injuries. We will look at the Gemara's discussion of broken legs in birds, the convergence of sinews in the thigh, and the halachic status of a dislocated femur or wing, which raises concerns about potential damage to the lungs.

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

EXPLANATION

בַּאֲחוּזַת עֵינַיִם,

He did this only **by a sleight of hand**, pretending to slaughter the child.

EXPLANATION

אִינְּגִיד וְאִיתְּנַח,

The father, thinking his son was dead, **fainted and groaned**.

EXPLANATION

עוּל (לְמֵעַיְינֵיהּ) [מַעְיָנֵיהּ]

Through this sudden movement, **his intestines entered** back into his abdominal cavity,

EXPLANATION

וְחַיְּיטֵיהּ לְכֻרְסֵיהּ.

and the Roman doctor **sewed up his stomach**, and he recovered.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

נִשְׁתַּבְּרוּ רַגְלֶיהָ.

The Mishnah stated: If **its legs were broken**, the bird remains kosher.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

STATEMENT

הַהוּא צַנָּא דְּאִינְקוֹרֵי דַּאֲתַאי לְקַמֵּיהּ דְּרָבָא,

The Gemara relates: **A certain basket of** birds with **broken** legs **came before Rava**.

STATEMENT

בַּדְקֵיהּ רָבָא בְּצוֹמֶת הַגִּידִין, וְאַכְשְׁרֵיהּ.

Rava inspected each bird **at the convergence of the sinews** in the thigh, and when he found them intact, **he declared it kosher**.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטַת יָד בַּבְּהֵמָה – כְּשֵׁרָה,

Rav Yehuda said that **Rav said: A dislocated foreleg in an animal is kosher**;

STATEMENT

שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בַּבְּהֵמָה – טְרֵפָה,

a dislocated femur in an animal renders it a **tereifa**;

STATEMENT

שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף – טְרֵפָה,

a dislocated femur in a bird renders it a **tereifa**;

STATEMENT

שְׁמוּטַת גַּף בָּעוֹף – טְרֵפָה, חָיְישִׁינַן שֶׁמָּא נִיקְּבָה הָרֵיאָה.

a dislocated wing in a bird renders it a **tereifa**, because **we are concerned lest the lung was perforated** when the wing was torn from its place.

STATEMENT

וּשְׁמוּאֵל אָמַר: תִּיבָּדֵק,

And Shmuel said: It should be inspected, and if the lung is undamaged, the bird is kosher.

STATEMENT

וְכֵן אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: תִּיבָּדֵק.

And so said Rabbi Yochanan: It should be inspected.

STATEMENT

חִזְקִיָּה אָמַר: אֵין רֵיאָה לָעוֹף,

Chizkiyah said: A bird has no lung.

STATEMENT

וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: יֵישׁ לוֹ וְיֶשְׁנָהּ כְּעָלָה שֶׁל וֶרֶד בֵּין אֲגַפַּיִם.

And Rabbi Yochanan said: It does have a lung, **and it is like a rose petal** in appearance, thin and red, located **between the wings**.

QUESTION

מַאי ״אֵין רֵיאָה לָעוֹף״?

The Gemara asks: **What** does Chizkiyah mean when he says **"A bird has no lung"**?

OBJECTION

אִילֵימָא דְּלֵית לֵיהּ כְּלָל – וְהָא קָא חָזֵינַן דְּאִית לֵיהּ!

If we say that it has none at all, but don't we see that it does have lungs?

ANSWER

אֶלָּא דְּלָא מִיטְרִיךְ בֵּיהּ,

Rather, say he means **that it is not rendered a tereifa by** a puncture in **it**.

OBJECTION

וְהָתָנֵי לֵוִי: טְרֵפוֹת שֶׁמָּנוּ חֲכָמִים בַּבְּהֵמָה – כְּנֶגְדָּן בָּעוֹף,

But didn't Levi teach in a braisa: **The tereifos that the Sages enumerated in an animal, their corresponding** cases apply **in a bird**,

OBJECTION

יָתֵר עֲלֵיהֶן עוֹף נִשְׁבַּר הָעֶצֶם אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא נִיקַּב קְרוּם שֶׁל מוֹחַ!

and **in addition to them, a bird** is a tereifa if **the bone** of the skull **was broken, even though the membrane of the brain was not perforated**! Thus, a punctured lung must also render a bird a tereifa.

ANSWER

אֶלָּא, אֵין לוֹ לֹא לִינָּפֵל וְלֹא לֵיחָמֵר.

Rather, Chizkiyah means: **It has no** law of **falling, and no** law of **singeing**; we do not fear its lungs were damaged if it fell or was in a fire.

EXPLANATION

מַאי טַעְמָא? אָמַר רַב חָנָה: הוֹאִיל וְרוֹב צַלְעוֹתֶיהָ מְגִינוֹת עָלֶיהָ.

What is the reason? Rav Chana said: Since the majority of its ribs protect it, the lung is safe from such impacts.

OBJECTION

וְהָא מִדְּאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: יֵישׁ לוֹ, וְיֶשְׁנָהּ כְּעֵלָּה שֶׁל וֶרֶד בֵּין אֲגַפַּיִם – מִכְּלָל דְּחִזְקִיָּה סָבַר דְּלֵית לֵיהּ!

The Gemara objects: **But from the fact that Rabbi Yochanan says: It does have** a lung, **and it is like a rose petal between the wings, by inference, Chizkiyah holds that it has no** lung at all!

RESOLUTION

אֶלָּא אָמְרִי בְּמַעְרְבָא מִשְּׁמֵיהּ דְּרַבִּי יוֹסֵי בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: מִדְּבָרָיו שֶׁל בְּרִיבִי נִיכָּר שֶׁאֵינוֹ בָּקִי בְּתַרְנְגוֹלִין.

Rather, they say in the West, Eretz Yisrael, **in the name of Rabbi Yosei b'rabbi Chanina: From the words of the Great Scholar**, Chizkiyah, **it is apparent that he is not familiar with chickens**, as he indeed meant that they have no lungs.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב הוּנָא אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף כְּשֵׁרָה.

Rav Huna said that **Rav said: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher**.

QUESTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ רַבָּה בַּר רַב הוּנָא לְרַב הוּנָא: וְהָא רַבָּנַן דְּאָתוֹ מִפּוּמְבְּדִיתָא אָמְרוּ רַב יְהוּדָה מִשְּׁמֵיהּ דְּרַב אָמַר: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף טְרֵפָה!

Rabba bar Rav Huna said to Rav Huna: But the Rabbis who came from Pumbedita said that **Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: A dislocated femur in a bird is a tereifa**!

ANSWER

אָמַר לֵיהּ: בְּרִי, נַהֲרָא נַהֲרָא וּפִשְׁטֵיהּ.

He said to him: My son, every river has its course; different places follow different rulings of Rav according to their local custom.

STATEMENT

אֲזַל רַבִּי אַבָּא, אַשְׁכְּחֵיהּ לְרַב יִרְמְיָה בַּר אַבָּא דְּקָא בָּדֵיק בְּצוֹמֶת הַגִּידִין.

Rabbi Abba went and found Rav Yirmeya bar Abba who was inspecting birds **at the convergence of the sinews**.

QUESTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ: לְמָה לֵיהּ לְמָר כּוּלֵּי הַאי? וְהָא רַב הוּנָא אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף כְּשֵׁרָה!

He said to him: Why does the Master need all this trouble? **But didn't Rav Huna say** that **Rav said: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher**? If the whole thigh being dislocated is kosher, surely a defect in the sinews is kosher!

ANSWER

אָמַר לֵיהּ: אֲנָא מַתְנִיתִין יָדַעְנָא: בְּהֵמָה שֶׁנִּחְתְּכוּ רַגְלֶיהָ מִן הָאַרְכּוּבָּה וּלְמַטָּה כְּשֵׁרָה, מִן הָאַרְכּוּבָּה וּלְמַעְלָה פְּסוּלָה, וְכֵן שֶׁנִּיטַּל צוֹמֶת הַגִּידִין, וְאָמַר רַב עֲלַהּ: וְכֵן בָּעוֹף.

He said to him: I know the Mishnah: An animal whose legs were severed from the knee-joint and below is kosher, from the knee-joint and above is unfit as a tereifa, **and likewise one whose convergence of sinews was removed** is a tereifa; **and Rav said on this: And likewise in a bird**.

OBJECTION

אִי הָכִי, קַשְׁיָא דְּרַב אַדְּרַב!

Rabbi Abba said: **If so, there is a difficulty of Rav's** ruling **against Rav's** other ruling!

STATEMENT

אִישְׁתִּיק.

Rav Yirmeya bar Abba **remained silent**.

EXPLANATION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: דִּלְמָא שָׁנֵי לֵיהּ בֵּין שְׁמוּטָה לַחֲתוּכָה?

Rabbi Abba **said to him: Perhaps there is a difference for him**, Rav, **between a dislocated** femur **and a severed** femur?

ANSWER

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: וְאַתְּ מְפָרְשַׁתְּ שְׁמַעְתָּתֵיהּ דְּרַב? בְּפֵירוּשׁ אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטָה – כְּשֵׁרָה, חֲתוּכָה – פְּסוּלָה.

He said to him: And are you interpreting Rav's teachings on your own? **Rav explicitly said: A dislocated** femur is **kosher, a severed** femur is **unfit**.

EXPLANATION

וְאַל תִּתְמַהּ, שֶׁהֲרֵי חוֹתְכָהּ מִכָּאן וּמֵתָה, חוֹתְכָהּ מִכָּאן וְחָיְתָה.

And do not wonder at this distinction, **for behold, if one cuts it here**, in one place, **it dies, but if one cuts it there**, in another place, **it lives**.

STATEMENT

כִּי סְלֵיק רַבִּי אַבָּא, אַשְׁכְּחֵיהּ לְרַבִּי זֵירָא דְּיָתֵיב וְקָאָמַר: אָמַר רַב הוּנָא אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף טְרֵפָה.

When Rabbi Abba went up to Eretz Yisrael, **he found Rabbi Zeira sitting and saying: Rav Huna said** that **Rav said: A dislocated femur in a bird is a tereifa**.

OBJECTION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: חַיֵּי דְּמָר, מִיּוֹמָא דְּסְלֵיק מָר לְהָכָא הֲוָה לַן פִּתְחוֹן פֶּה קַמֵּיהּ דְּרַב הוּנָא וּשְׁאֵילְנֵיהּ, וַאֲמַר לַן: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף כְּשֵׁרָה.

He said to him: By the Master's life! Since the day the Master came up here, we had the opportunity to speak before Rav Huna and we asked him, and he said to us: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher.

STATEMENT

וְאַשְׁכַּחְתֵּיהּ נָמֵי לְרַבִּי יִרְמְיָה בַּר אַבָּא דְּיָתֵיב וְקָא בָּדֵיק בְּצוֹמֶת הַגִּידִין, וְאַקְשֵׁי לֵיהּ: לָא סָבַר לַהּ מָר הָא דְּאָמַר רַב הוּנָא אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף כְּשֵׁרָה?

And I also found Rabbi Yirmeya bar Abba sitting and inspecting the convergence of the sinews, and I challenged him: Does the Master not hold of that which Rav Huna said in the name of **Rav: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher?**

STATEMENT

אָמַר לִי: אֲנָא מַתְנִיתִין יָדַעְנָא: בְּהֵמָה שֶׁנִּחְתְּכוּ רַגְלֶיהָ, מִן הָאַרְכּוּבָה וּלְמַטָּה – כְּשֵׁרָה, מִן הָאַרְכּוּבָה וּלְמַעְלָה – פְּסוּלָה, וְכֵן שֶׁנִּיטַּל צוֹמֶת הַגִּידִין, וְאָמַר רַב עֲלַהּ: וְכֵן בָּעוֹף.

He said to me: I know the Mishnah: An animal whose legs were severed, from the knee-joint and below is kosher, from the knee-joint and above is unfit, and likewise one whose convergence of sinews was removed, and Rav said on this: And likewise in a bird.

STATEMENT

וַאֲמַרִי לֵיהּ: אִי הָכִי, קַשְׁיָא דְּרַב אַדְּרַב! אִישְׁתִּיק, וַאֲקְשֵׁי לֵיהּ: וְדִלְמָא שָׁנֵי לֵיהּ לְרַב בֵּין שְׁמוּטָה לַחֲתוּכָה?

And I said to him: If so, there is a difficulty of Rav's ruling **against Rav's** other ruling! **He was silent, and I challenged him: But perhaps there is a difference for Rav between a dislocated** femur **and a severed** femur?

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר לִי: וְאַתְּ מְפָרְשַׁתְּ שְׁמַעְתֵּיהּ דְּרַב? בְּפֵירוּשׁ אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטָה – כְּשֵׁרָה, חֲתוּכָה – פְּסוּלָה.

And he said to me: And are you interpreting Rav's teaching on your own? **Rav explicitly said: A dislocated** femur is **kosher, a severed** femur is **unfit**.

QUESTION

וְאַתְּ, מָה בְּיָדָךְ?

Rabbi Abba then asked Rabbi Zeira: **And you, what is in your hand**? What did you hear?

ANSWER

הָכִי אָמַר רַב חִיָּיא בַּר אָשֵׁי אָמַר רַב: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף טְרֵפָה,

He replied: **This is what Rav Chiyya bar Ashi said** that **Rav said: A dislocated femur in a bird is a tereifa**,

STATEMENT

וְכֵן אָמַר רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב בַּר אִידִי אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף טְרֵפָה.

and so said Rabbi Yaakov bar Idi that **Rabbi Yochanan said: A dislocated femur in a bird is a tereifa**.

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב בַּר אִידִי: אִילְמָלֵי הֲוָה רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בְּאַתְרָא דְּאִינְהוּ בַּהּ חַבְרָוָתָא לְהֶתֵּירָא, לָא פַּרְכֵּיס.

And Rabbi Yaakov bar Idi said: If Rabbi Yochanan had been in the place where the colleagues ruled leniently, he would not have objected to their ruling.

PROOF

דְּאָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינָא אָמַר רַבִּי: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף כְּשֵׁרָה.

For Rabbi Chanina said that **Rabbi said: A dislocated femur in a bird is kosher**.

PROOF

וְתַרְנְגוֹלֶת הָיְתָה לוֹ לְרַבִּי חֲנִינָא שֶׁנִּשְׁמְטָה יָרֵךְ שֶׁלָּהּ, וֶהֱבִיאָהּ לִפְנֵי רַבִּי וְהִתִּירָהּ לוֹ,

And Rabbi Chanina had a chicken whose femur was dislocated, and he brought it before Rabbi, and he permitted it to him,

PROOF

וּמִלָּתָהּ רַבִּי חֲנִינָא, וַהֲוָה מוֹרֵי בַּהּ הֲלָכָה לַתַּלְמִידִים: זֶה הִתִּיר לִי רַבִּי, זֶה הִתִּיר לִי רַבִּי.

and Rabbi Chanina salted it to preserve it, and he would teach the halachah to the students: This is what Rabbi permitted to me, this is what Rabbi permitted to me.

RULING

וְלֵית הִלְכְתָא כְּכָל הָנֵי שְׁמַעְתָּתָא, אֶלָּא כִּי הָא דִּשְׁאֵל רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בֶּן נְהוֹרַאי אֶת רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי:

The Gemara notes: And the halachah is not like all these lenient teachings, but rather like this which Rabbi Yosei ben Nehorai asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi:

QUESTION

קְדִירַת קָנֶה בְּכַמָּה?

How much of a puncture in the windpipe renders an animal a tereifa?

ANSWER

אָמַר לוֹ: מִשְׁנָה שְׁלֵמָה שָׁנִינוּ, עַד כְּאִיסָּר הָאִיטַלְקִי.

He said to him: We learned a complete Mishnah: Up to the size of an Italian issar.

OBJECTION

אָמַר לוֹ: וַהֲלֹא רָחֵל אַחַת הָיְתָה בִּשְׁכוּנָתֵנוּ שֶׁנִּקְדַּר קָנֶה שֶׁלָּהּ, וְעָשׂוּ לָהּ קְרוּמִין שֶׁל קָנֶה וְחָיְתָה!

He said to him: But was there not a certain ewe in our neighborhood whose windpipe was punctured more than that, and they made for her a tube of reed and she lived?

ANSWER

אָמַר לוֹ: וְעַל דָּא אַתְּ סָמִיךְ? וַהֲוָה הֲלָכָה רוֹוַחַת בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: שְׁמוּטַת יָרֵךְ בָּעוֹף טְרֵפָה,

He said to him: And on this you rely? But is there not a widespread halachah in Israel: A dislocated femur in a bird is a tereifa,

EXPLANATION

וְתַרְנְגוֹלֶת הָיְתָה לוֹ לְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן חֲלַפְתָּא שֶׁנִּשְׁמְטָה יָרֵךְ שֶׁלָּהּ, וְעָשׂוּ לָהּ שְׁפוֹפֶרֶת שֶׁל קָנֶה וְחָיְתָה!

and Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta had a chicken whose femur was dislocated, and they made for her a tube of reed and she lived! Yet we still rule it is a tereifa.

EXPLANATION

אֶלָּא מַאי אִית לָךְ לְמֵימַר: תּוֹךְ שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ הַוָּה, הָכָא נָמֵי תּוֹךְ שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ הַוָּה.

Rather, what have you to say? It was within twelve months of the injury that she lived, but she would not have survived a full year; here too, it was within twelve months.

STATEMENT

אָמְרוּ עָלָיו עַל רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן חֲלַפְתָּא שֶׁעָסַק בִּדְבָרִים הָיָה,

They said about Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta that he was an experimenter in matters of nature,

EXPLANATION

וְהָיָה עוֹשֶׂה דָּבָר לְהוֹצִיא מִלִּבּוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, שֶׁהָיָה רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: אִם נִיטְּלָה הַנּוֹצָה פְּסוּלָה.

and he would do things to remove from the heart of Rabbi Yehuda his opinion, **for Rabbi Yehuda would say: If the feathers were removed**, the bird is **unfit**.

PROOF

וְתַרְנְגוֹלֶת הָיְתָה לוֹ לְרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן חֲלַפְתָּא שֶׁנִּיטְּלָה נוֹצָה שֶׁלָּהּ, וְהִנִּיחָהּ בַּתַּנּוּר, וְטָלָה עָלֶיהָ בְּמַטְלִית שֶׁל טַרְסִיִּים, וְגִידְּלָה כְּנָפַיִם הָאַחֲרוֹנִים יוֹתֵר מִן הָרִאשׁוֹנִים.

And Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta had a chicken whose feathers were removed, and he placed it in a warm oven, and wrapped it in a weaver's cloth, and it grew new feathers that were even larger than the first ones.

QUESTION

וְדִלְמָא קָסָבַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה טְרֵפָה מַשְׁבַּחַת?

The Gemara asks: **But perhaps Rabbi Yehuda holds that a tereifa can improve** and heal?

ANSWER

אִם כֵּן, בְּמִידֵּי דְּמִיטַּרְפָא בַּהּ – הִגְדִּילָה כְּנָפַיִם הָאַחֲרוֹנִים יוֹתֵר מִן הָרִאשׁוֹנִים?!

If so, in the very thing that renders it a tereifa, would it grow new feathers larger than the first ones? This proves it fully recovered.

QUESTION

מַאי עַסְקָן בִּדְבָרִים?

The Gemara asks: **What** is meant by saying he was **an experimenter in matters**?

EXPLANATION

אָמַר רַב מְשַׁרְשִׁיָא, דִּכְתִיב: ”לֵךְ אֶל נְמָלָה עָצֵל רְאֵה דְרָכֶיהָ וַחֲכָם, אֲשֶׁר אֵין לָהּ קָצִין שֹׁטֵר וּמֹשֵׁל, תָּכִין בַּקַּיִץ לַחְמָהּ”.

Rav Mesharshiya said: As it is written: "Go to the ant, sluggard; see her ways and grow wise, which has no chief, officer, or ruler, yet she prepares her bread in the summer."

EXPLANATION

אָמַר: אֵיזִיל אִיחֲזֵי אִי וַדַּאי הוּא דְּלֵית לְהוּ מַלְכָּא!

Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta **said: I will go and see if it is true that they have no king**.

EXPLANATION

אֲזַל בְּתְקוּפַת תַּמּוּז, פַּרְסֵיהּ לְגִלִּימֵיהּ אַקִּינָא דְּשׁוּמְשְׁמָנֵי.

He went during the Tammuz solstice and spread his cloak over an anthill.

EXPLANATION

נְפַק אַתָּא חַד מִינַּיְיהוּ, אַתְּנַח בֵּיהּ סִימָנָא.

One of them came out, and he placed a mark on it.

EXPLANATION

עָל, אֲמַר לְהוּ: "נְפַל טוּלָּא".

The ant **entered and said to them: "Shade has fallen."**

EXPLANATION

נְפַקוּ וַאֲתוֹ, דַּלְיֵיהּ לְגִלְימֵיהּ, נְפַל שִׁמְשָׁא.

They all came out, and he lifted his cloak, and the sun beat down.

EXPLANATION

נְפַלוּ עֲלֵיהּ וְקַטְלֵיהּ.

They fell upon that ant **and killed it** for lying.

EXPLANATION

אֲמַר: שְׁמַע מִינַּהּ לֵית לְהוּ מַלְכָּא, דְּאִי אִית לְהוּ הַרְמָנָא דְּמַלְכָּא לָא לִיבְעוֹ.

He **said: Learn from this that they have no king, for if they had one, would they not require the king's permission** to execute it?

QUESTION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ רַב אַחָא בְּרֵיהּ דְּרָבָא לְרַב אָשֵׁי: וְדִלְמָא מַלְכָּא הֲוָה בַּהֲדַיְיהוּ?

Rav Acha the son of Rava said to Rav Ashi: But perhaps the king was with them and gave permission?

QUESTION

אִי נָמֵי, הַרְמָנָא דְּמַלְכָּא הֲווֹ נָקְטִי?

Or perhaps they held a standing royal decree to kill liars?

QUESTION

אִי נָמֵי בֵּין מַלְכָּא לְמַלְכָּא הֲוָה, דִּכְתִיב: "בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם אֵין מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינָיו יַעֲשֶׂה"?

Or perhaps it was during an interregnum between kings, as it is written: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes"?

ANSWER

אֶלָּא, סְמוֹךְ אַהֵימָנוּתָא דִּשְׁלֹמֹה.

Rather, rely on the trustworthiness of Shlomo HaMelech, who stated it as a fact.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב הוּנָא: סִימָן לִטְרֵפָה – שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ.

Rav Huna said: The sign of a tereifa is that it cannot live more than **twelve months**.

OBJECTION

מֵיתִיבִי: סִימָן לִטְרֵפָה – כֹּל שֶׁאֵינָהּ יוֹלֶדֶת.

The Gemara raises an objection: The sign of a tereifa is that it does not give birth.

STATEMENT

רַבָּן שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר: מַשְׁבַּחַת וְהוֹלֶכֶת – בְּיָדוּעַ שֶׁהִיא כְּשֵׁרָה, מִתְנַוְּונָה וְהוֹלֶכֶת – בְּיָדוּעַ שֶׁהִיא טְרֵפָה.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: If it continues to improve, it is known to be kosher; if it continues to waste away, it is known to be a tereifa.

STATEMENT

רַבִּי אוֹמֵר: סִימָן לִטְרֵפָה – שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם.

Rabbi says: The sign of a tereifa is thirty days of survival.

OBJECTION

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: וַהֲלֹא הַרְבֵּה מִתְקַיְּימוֹת שְׁתַּיִם שָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים!

They said to him: But do not many tereifos survive two or three years? In any case, twelve months is not mentioned.

ANSWER

תַּנָּאֵי הִיא, דְּתַנְיָא: וּבַגֻּלְגֹּלֶת, עַד שֶׁיֵּשׁ בָּהּ נֶקֶב אֶחָד אָרוֹךְ, אֲפִילּוּ נְקָבִים הַרְבֵּה מִצְטָרְפִים לִמְלֹא מַקְדֵּחַ.

The Gemara answers: It is a dispute of Tannaim, as it is taught in a braisa: And regarding the skull, it is a tereifa if there is a single long hole, or even many holes that combine to the size of a drill-hole.

PROOF

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בֶּן הַמְשׁוּלָּם: מַעֲשֶׂה בְּעֵינבּוּל, בְּאֶחָד שֶׁנִּפְחֲתָה גֻּלְגָּלְתּוֹ, וְעָשׂוּ לוֹ חִידּוּק שֶׁל קְרוּיָה וְחָיָה.

Rabbi Yosei ben HaMeshullam said: There was an incident in Ein Bul of a person whose skull was fractured, and they made for him a plate of gourd and he lived.

ANSWER

אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר: מִשָּׁם רְאָיָה? יְמוֹת הַחַמָּה הָיָה, וְכֵיוָן שֶׁעָבְרוּ עָלָיו יְמוֹת הַצִּנָּה מִיָּד מֵת.

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar said to him: Is there a proof from there? It was during the summer, and as soon as the cold season came upon him, he died immediately. Thus, we see a tereifa can live for a short time but not a full year.

RULING

אָמַר רַב אַחָא בַּר יַעֲקֹב, הֲלָכָה: טְרֵפָה יוֹלֶדֶת וּמַשְׁבַּחַת.

Rav Acha bar Yaakov said: The halachah is that a tereifa can give birth and can improve.

STATEMENT

אָמַר אַמֵּימָר: הָנֵי בֵּיעֵי דְּטְרֵפָה

Ameimar said: These eggs of a tereifa bird...

SUMMARY

The daf begins with Rava inspecting a basket of birds with broken legs, ruling them kosher after verifying that the convergence of sinews remained intact. We then learn of a dispute regarding a dislocated femur or wing in a bird; while some Sages rule it a tereifa due to the fear of a punctured lung, others require an inspection of the lung. This leads to a discussion about the nature of a bird's lungs, with Hizkiyya and Rabbi Yochanan debating their physical reality and halachic vulnerability to falls or fire. Finally, the Gemara explores the apparent contradictions in Rav's rulings regarding a dislocated versus a severed femur, clarifying that different injuries to the leg carry distinct halachic consequences.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

In today's daf, we see the beautiful and meticulous care our Chachamim took to understand the physical reality of Hashem's creations. Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta went so far as to conduct experiments with ants and chickens to verify the reality of the physical world and how it aligns with the words of the Torah and Mishlei. He did not rely on hearsay; he wanted to see the truth of the Aibershter's wisdom with his own eyes.

This teaches us a profound lesson in our own avodah. Torah is not a detached, abstract theory. It is the blueprint of reality. When we learn, we must look at the world around us through the lens of the Torah, seeking to find Hashem's wisdom in every detail of our daily lives, from the smallest insect to the food on our table.

Too often, we walk through life on autopilot, missing the wonders of the Creator that are right in front of us. If we look closer, with the curiosity of our Sages, we will find that everything in creation is screaming out the greatness of Hashem.

Today, take one minute to look closely at something in Hashem's creation—a leaf, a insect, or even the intricate design of your own hand—and consciously thank the Aibershter for the wisdom He put into the world.

הִלְכוֹת יְסוֹדֵי הַתּוֹרָה · פֶּרֶק רְבִיעִי

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

📖 CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, the Rambam takes us on a deep journey into the physical makeup of the world below the sky, showing us how Hashem created everything from four basic elements: fire, wind, water, and earth. We will learn how these elements combine to form every single physical thing in our world, from simple stones to the complex body of a human being, each with its own unique nature and balance of warmth, cold, dryness, and moisture.

We will also see how these elements are in a constant state of movement and change, always returning to their roots and shifting from one to another. Through understanding this beautiful, orderly cycle of creation, a Yid can come to a profound appreciation of Hashem's wisdom and the wondrous way He sustains the universe every single moment.

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

הֲלָכָה א

Halacha 1 · The Four Elements Composing All Creations Below the Sky

אַרְבָּעָה גּוּפִים הַלָּלוּ שֶׁהֵם אֵשׁ וְרוּחַ וּמַיִם וְאֶרֶץ

These four bodies, which are fire, and wind, and water, and earth,

הֵם יְסוֹדוֹת כָּל הַנִּבְרָאִים לְמַטָּה מִן הָרָקִיעַ.

they are the foundations of all the creations below the sky.

וְכָל שֶׁיִּהְיֶה מֵאָדָם וּמִבְּהֵמָה וְעוֹף וְרֶמֶשׂ וְדָג

And everything that exists, from man, and from beast, and fowl, and crawling creature, and fish,

וְצֶמַח וּמַתֶּכֶת וַאֲבָנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמַרְגָּלִיּוֹת וּשְׁאָר אַבְנֵי בִּנְיָן

and plant, and metal, and precious stones, and pearls, and other building stones,

וְהָרִים וְגוּשֵׁי עָפָר

and mountains, and lumps of earth—

הַכֹּל גַּלְמָן מְחֻבָּר מֵאַרְבָּעָה יְסוֹדוֹת הַלָּלוּ.

everything, their matter is composed of these four foundations.

נִמְצְאוּ כָּל הַגּוּפִים שֶׁלְּמַטָּה מִן הָרָקִיעַ חוּץ מֵאַרְבָּעָה יְסוֹדוֹת הָאֵלּוּ

It turns out that all the bodies that are below the sky, except for these four foundations,

מְחֻבָּרִים מִגַּלָּם וְצוּרָה.

are composed of matter and form,

וְגֹלֶם שֶׁלָּהֶם מְחֻבָּר מֵאַרְבָּעָה יְסוֹדוֹת הָאֵלּוּ.

and their matter is composed of these four foundations.

אֲבָל כָּל אֶחָד מֵאַרְבָּעָה הַיְסוֹדוֹת אֵינוֹ מְחֻבָּר אֶלָּא מִגֹּלֶם וְצוּרָה בִּלְבַד:

But each one of the four foundations is not composed except of matter and form alone.

הֲלָכָה ב

Halacha 2 · The Four Elements and the Composition of All Physical Bodies

דֶּרֶךְ הָאֵשׁ וְהָרוּחַ לִהְיוֹת מַהֲלָכָם מִמַּטָּה מִטַּבּוּר הָאָרֶץ לְמַעְלָה כְּלַפֵּי הָרָקִיעַ.

The way of the fire and the wind is to be their movement from below, from the center of the earth, upward toward the sky.

וְדֶרֶךְ הַמַּיִם וְהָאָרֶץ לִהְיוֹת מַהֲלָכָם מִתַּחַת הָרָקִיעַ לְמַטָּה עַד לָאֶמְצַע.

And the way of the water and the earth is to be their movement from under the sky downward until the middle,

שֶׁאֶמְצַע הָרָקִיעַ הוּא הַמַּטָּה שֶׁאֵין לְמַטָּה מִמֶּנּוּ.

for the middle of the sky, it is the bottom, that there is no lower than it.

וְאֵין הֲלוּכָם לֹא בְּדַעְתָּם וְלֹא בְּחֶפְצָם אֶלָּא מִנְהָג שֶׁנִּקְבַּע בָּהֶן וְטֶבַע שֶׁנִּטְבַּע בָּהֶן.

And there is no their movement, not by their knowledge and not by their will, but a pattern that was established in them and a nature that was imprinted in them.

טֶבַע הָאֵשׁ חַם וְיָבֵשׁ וְהוּא קַל מִכֻּלָּם.

The nature of the fire is hot and dry, and it is light of all of them;

וְהָרוּחַ חַם וְלַח.

and the wind is hot and moist;

וְהַמַּיִם קָרִים וְלַחִים.

and the water is cold and moist;

וְהָאָרֶץ יְבֵשָׁה וְקָרָה. וְהִיא כְּבֵדָה מִכֻּלָּם

and the earth is dry and cold, and it is heavy of all of them;

וְהַמַּיִם קַלִּים מִמֶּנָּה לְפִיכָךְ נִמְצָאִים לְמַעְלָה עַל הָאָרֶץ.

and the water is lighter than it, therefore they are found above on the earth;

וְהָרוּחַ קַל מִן הַמַּיִם לְפִיכָךְ הוּא מְרַחֵף עַל פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם.

and the wind is lighter than the water, therefore it hovers over the surface of the water;

וְהָאֵשׁ קַל מִן הָרוּחַ.

and the fire is lighter than the wind.

וּמִפְּנֵי שֶׁהֵם יְסוֹדוֹת לְכָל גּוּפִים שֶׁתַּחַת הָרָקִיעַ

And because that they are foundations for all bodies that are under the sky,

יִמָּצֵא כָּל גּוּף וְגוּף מֵאָדָם וּבְהֵמָה וְחַיָּה וְעוֹף וְדַג וְצֶמַח וּמַתֶּכֶת וְאֶבֶן גָּלְמוֹ מְחֻבָּר מֵאֵשׁ וְרוּחַ וּמַיִם וְעָפָר.

will be found every body and body, from man, and animal, and beast, and bird, and fish, and plant, and metal, and stone, its physical matter combined from fire, and wind, and water, and dust.

וְאַרְבָּעְתָּן יִתְעָרְבוּ בְּיַחַד וְיִשְׁתַּנּוּ כָּל אֶחָד מֵהֶם בְּעֵת הָעֵרוּב

And the four of them mix together and change, each one of them at the time of the mixing,

עַד שֶׁיִּמָּצֵא הַמְּחֻבָּר מֵאַרְבָּעְתָּן אֵינוֹ דּוֹמֶה לְאֶחָד מֵהֶן כְּשֶׁהוּא לְבַדּוֹ.

until that is found the combined from the four of them is not similar to one of them when it is alone.

וְאֵין בַּמַּעֲרָב מֵהֶן אֲפִלּוּ חֵלֶק אֶחָד שֶׁהוּא אֵשׁ בִּפְנֵי עַצְמוֹ אוֹ מַיִם בִּפְנֵי עַצְמָן אוֹ אֶרֶץ בִּפְנֵי עַצְמָהּ אוֹ רוּחַ בִּפְנֵי עַצְמָהּ

And there is not in the mixture of them even part one that is fire by itself, or water by themselves, or earth by itself, or wind by itself,

אֶלָּא הַכֹּל נִשְׁתַּנּוּ וְנַעֲשׂוּ גּוּף אֶחָד.

but the whole changed and became body one.

וְכָל גּוּף וְגוּף הַמְּחֻבָּר מֵאַרְבָּעְתָּן יִמָּצֵא בּוֹ קֹר וְחֹם לַח וְיָבֵשׁ כְּאֶחָד.

And every body and body the combined from the four of them will be found in it cold and heat, moisture and dryness as one.

אֲבָל יֵשׁ מֵהֶם גּוּפִים שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בָּהֶם חָזְקָה מִיסּוֹד הָאֵשׁ כְּמוֹ בַּעֲלֵי נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה. לְפִיכָךְ יֵרָאֶה בָּהֶם הַחֹם יָתֵר.

But there are of them bodies that there will be in them strength from the element of the fire, like possessors of soul living, therefore will appear in them the heat more.

וְיֵשׁ מֵהֶן גּוּפִין שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בָּהֶן חָזְקָה מִיסּוֹד הָאָרֶץ כְּמוֹ הָאֲבָנִים. לְפִיכָךְ יֵרָאֶה בָּהֶם הַיֹּבֶשׁ הַרְבֵּה.

And there are of them bodies that there will be in them strength from the element of the earth, like the stones, therefore will appear in them the dryness much.

וְיֵשׁ מֵהֶן גּוּפִין שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בָּהֶן חָזְקָה מִיסּוֹד הַמַּיִם. לְפִיכָךְ יֵרָאֶה בָּהֶם הַלַּח יָתֵר.

And there are of them bodies that there will be in them strength from the element of the water, therefore will appear in them the moisture more.

וְעַל הַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה יִמָּצֵא גּוּף חַם יֶתֶר מִגּוּף אַחֵר חַם. וְגוּף יָבֵשׁ יֶתֶר מִגּוּף אַחֵר יָבֵשׁ.

And on the way this will be found a body hot more than a body another hot, and a body dry more than a body another dry.

וְכֵן יִמָּצְאוּ גּוּפִים שֶׁיֵּרָאֶה בָּהֶן הַקֹּר בִּלְבַד. וְגוּפִים יֵרָאֶה בָּהֶן הַלַּח בִּלְבַד.

And so will be found bodies that will appear in them the cold alone, and bodies will appear in them the moisture alone.

וְגוּפִים יֵרָאֶה בָּהֶן הַקֹּר וְהַיֹּבֶשׁ כְּאֶחָד בְּשָׁוֶה. אוֹ הַקֹּר וְהַלַּח כְּאֶחָד בְּשָׁוֶה. אוֹ הַחֹם וְהַיֹּבֶשׁ כְּאֶחָד בְּשָׁוֶה. אוֹ הַחֹם וְהַלַּח כְּאֶחָד בְּשָׁוֶה.

And bodies will appear in them the cold and the dryness as one equally, or the cold and the moisture as one equally, or the heat and the dryness as one equally, or the heat and the moisture as one equally.

לְפִי רֹב הַיְסוֹד שֶׁהָיָה בְּעִקַּר הַתַּעֲרֹבֶת יֵרָאֶה מַעֲשֵׂה אוֹתוֹ הַיְסוֹד וְטִבְעוֹ בַּגּוּף הַמְעֹרָב:

According to the majority of the element that was in the essence of the mixture, will appear the action of that element and its nature in the body the mixed.

הֲלָכָה ג

Halacha 3 · The Ultimate Decomposition of All Combined Entities into the Four Elements

וְכָל הַמְחֻבָּר מֵאַרְבָּעָה יְסוֹדוֹת אֵלּוּ

And every entity combined from these four elements

הוּא נִפְרָד בַּסּוֹף.

it separates in the end and decomposes.

יֵשׁ שֶׁהוּא נִפְרָד לְאַחַר יָמִים אֲחָדִים.

There is that it separates after a few days,

וְיֵשׁ שֶׁהוּא נִפְרָד לְאַחַר שָׁנִים רַבּוֹת.

and there is that it separates after many years.

וְכָל שֶׁנִּתְחַבֵּר מֵהֶם

And everything that was combined from them,

אִי אֶפְשָׁר שֶׁלֹּא יִפָּרֵד לָהֶן.

it is impossible that it will not separate into them.

אֲפִלּוּ הַזָּהָב וְהָאֹדֶם

Even the gold and the ruby,

אִי אֶפְשָׁר שֶׁלֹּא יִפָּסֵד וְיַחֲזֹר לִיסוֹדוֹתָיו.

it is impossible that it will not decompose and return to its elements.

וְיָשׁוּב מִקְצָתוֹ לָאֵשׁ.

And a portion of it will return to the fire,

וּמִקְצָתוֹ לַמַּיִם.

and a portion of it to the water,

וּמִקְצָתוֹ לָרוּחַ.

and a portion of it to the wind,

וּמִקְצָתוֹ לָאָרֶץ:

and a portion of it to the earth.

הֲלָכָה ד

Halacha 4 · The Return of All Decomposing Entities to the Four Elements

הוֹאִיל וְכָל הַנִּפְסָד יִפָּרֵד לִיסוֹדוֹת אֵלּוּ

Since, indeed, every decomposing entity will separate eventually to these four basic elements,

לָמָּה נֶאֱמַר לָאָדָם "וְאֶל עָפָר תָּשׁוּב".

why was it said to Adam in the Torah, "and to dust you shall return"?

לְפִי שֶׁרֹב בִּנְיָנוֹ מִן הֶעָפָר.

This is because most of his structure is made from the dust.

וְלֹא כָּל הַנִּפְסָד כְּשֶׁיִּפָּסֵד מִיָּד יַחֲזֹר לְאַרְבָּעָה הַיְסוֹדוֹת.

And not every decomposing entity, when it decomposes, immediately will return to the four elements directly.

אֶלָּא יִפָּסֵד וְיַחֲזֹר לְדָבָר אַחֵר

Rather, it decomposes and returns to another thing,

וְדָבָר אַחֵר לְדָבָר אַחֵר

and that another thing decomposes and turns to yet another thing,

וְסוֹף הַדְּבָרִים יַחֲזֹר לַיְסוֹדוֹת

and at the end of the things, it will return to the basic elements.

וְנִמְצְאוּ כָּל הַדְּבָרִים חוֹזְרִין חֲלִילָה:

And thus all things are found returning in a cycle.

הֲלָכָה ה

Halacha 5 · The Constant Transformation of the Four Elements into One Another

אַרְבָּעָה יְסוֹדוֹת הָאֵלּוּ מִשְׁתַּנִּים זֶה לָזֶה תָּמִיד בְּכָל יוֹם וּבְכָל שָׁעָה

These four elements change into one another constantly, every day and every hour,

מִקְצָתָן לֹא כָּל גּוּפָן.

but only a portion of them, not their entire body.

כֵּיצַד.

How so?

מִקְצָת הָאָרֶץ הַקְּרוֹבָה מִן הַמַּיִם מִשְׁתַּנֵּית וּמִתְפּוֹרֶרֶת וְנַעֲשֵׂית מַיִם.

A portion of the earth which is close to the water changes and crumbles and becomes water.

וְכֵן מִקְצָת הַמַּיִם הַסְּמוּכִים לָרוּחַ מִשְׁתַּנִּין וּמִתְמַסְמְסִין וְהוֹוִין רוּחַ.

And so, a portion of the water which is close to the wind changes and dissolves and becomes wind.

וְכֵן הָרוּחַ מִקְצָתוֹ הַסָּמוּךְ לָאֵשׁ מִשְׁתַּנֶּה וּמִתְחוֹלֵל וְנַעֲשֶׂה אֵשׁ.

And so the wind, a portion of it which is close to the fire, changes and transforms and becomes fire.

וְכֵן הָאֵשׁ מִקְצָתָהּ הַסָּמוּךְ לָרוּחַ מִתְחוֹלֵל מִשְׁתַּנֶּה וּמִתְכַּנֵּס וְנַעֲשֶׂה רוּחַ.

And so the fire, a portion of it which is close to the wind, transforms, changes, and condenses and becomes wind.

וְכֵן הָרוּחַ מִקְצָתוֹ הַסָּמוּךְ לַמַּיִם מִשְׁתַּנֶּה וּמִתְכַּנֵּס וְנַעֲשֶׂה מַיִם.

And so the wind, a portion of it which is close to the water, changes and condenses and becomes water.

וְכֵן הַמַּיִם מִקְצָתוֹ הַסָּמוּךְ לָאָרֶץ מִשְׁתַּנֶּה וּמִתְכַּנֵּס וְנַעֲשֶׂה אָרֶץ.

And so the water, a portion of it which is close to the earth, changes and condenses and becomes earth.

וְשִׁנּוּי זֶה מְעַט מְעַט וּלְפִי אֹרֶךְ הַיָּמִים.

And this change happens little by little, and over the course of time.

וְאֵין כָּל הַיְסוֹד מִשְׁתַּנֶּה עַד שֶׁיֵּעָשֶׂה כָּל הַמַּיִם רוּחַ אוֹ כָּל הָרוּחַ אֵשׁ.

And not all of the element changes, so that all of the water becomes wind, or all of the wind becomes fire,

שֶׁאִי אֶפְשָׁר שֶׁיִּבָּטֵל אֶחָד מִן הַיְסוֹדוֹת הָאַרְבָּעָה.

for it is impossible that one of the four elements should be completely nullified.

אֶלָּא מִקְצָת יִשְׁתַּנֶּה מֵאֵשׁ לְרוּחַ וּמִקְצָת יִשְׁתַּנֶּה מֵרוּחַ לְאֵשׁ.

Rather, a portion will change from fire to wind, and a portion will change from wind to fire.

וְכֵן בֵּין כָּל אֶחָד וַחֲבֵרוֹ יִמָּצֵא הַשִּׁנּוּי בֵּין אַרְבַּעְתָּן וְחוֹזְרוֹת חֲלִילָה לְעוֹלָם:

And so between each one and its fellow, this change is found among the four of them, and they return in a cycle forever.

הֲלָכָה ו

Halacha 6 · The Combination of the Elements and the Bestowal of Form by the Tenth Angel

וְשִׁנּוּי זֶה יִהְיֶה בְּסִבִּיבַת הַגַּלְגַּל

And this change in the elements will be brought about by the revolution of the sphere,

וּמִסִּבִּיבָתוֹ יִתְחַבְּרוּ אַרְבַּעְתָּן

and from its revolution, the four of them will combine together,

וְיִהְיֶה מֵהֶן שְׁאָר גָּלְמֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם

and from them will be formed the rest of the physical matter of the bodies of sons of man,

וְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה צֶמַח וְאֶבֶן וּמַתֶּכֶת.

and the soul of the beast, as well as the physical matter of plant, and stone, and metal.

וְהָאֵל נוֹתֵן לְכָל גֶּלֶם וְגֶלֶם צוּרָה רְאוּיָה לוֹ

And God gives to every matter and matter a spiritual form appropriate to it,

עַל יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ הָעֲשִׂירִי

by the hands of the tenth angel,

שֶׁהִיא הַצּוּרָה הַנִּקְרֵאת אִישִׁים:

which is the level of angelic form that is called Ishim.

הֲלָכָה ז

Halacha 7 · The Connection Between Matter and Form and the Perception of Formless Beings

לְעוֹלָם אֵין אַתָּה רוֹאֶה גֶּלֶם בְּלֹא צוּרָה אוֹ צוּרָה בְּלֹא גֶּלֶם.

Forever, you do not see matter without form, or form without matter in the physical world, as they are always bound together.

אֶלָּא לֵב הָאָדָם הוּא שֶׁמְּחַלֵּק גּוּף הַנִּמְצָא בְּדַעְתּוֹ

Rather, the heart of man, meaning his intellect, **is that which divides** and separates **a physical body that is found** before him, doing so **in his mind**,

וְיוֹדֵעַ שֶׁהוּא מְחֻבָּר מִגֹּלֶם וְצוּרָה.

and knows that it is composed of matter and form, understanding that these are two distinct conceptual components.

וְיוֹדֵעַ שֶׁיֵּשׁ שָׁם גּוּפִים שֶׁגֻּלְמָם מְחֻבָּר מֵאַרְבַּעַת הַיְסוֹדוֹת.

And the intellect **knows that there are bodies** in the lower world **whose matter is composed of the four elements**, fire, wind, water, and earth;

וְגוּפִים שֶׁגֻּלְמָם פָּשׁוּט וְאֵינוֹ מְחֻבָּר מִגֹּלֶם אַחֵר.

and there are celestial **bodies whose matter is simple and is not composed of** any **other matter**, meaning they do not consist of the four elements and cannot change form.

וְהַצּוּרוֹת שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם גֹּלֶם אֵינָן נִרְאִין לָעַיִן

And the forms that do not have matter at all, such as the angels, **are not seen by the** physical **eye**,

אֶלָּא בְּעֵין הַלֵּב הֵן יְדוּעִין.

but with the eye of the heart, through intellectual comprehension, **they are known** and understood;

כְּמוֹ שֶׁיְּדַעְנוּ אֲדוֹן הַכֹּל בְּלֹא רְאִיַּת עַיִן:

just as we know the Master of everything, Hashem, **without seeing of the eye**, but rather through the clear recognition of our mind.

הֲלָכָה ח

Halacha 8 · The Form of Man and the Distinction Between Soul and Physical Appearance

נֶפֶשׁ כָּל בָּשָׂר הִיא צוּרָתוֹ שֶׁנָּתַן לוֹ הָאֵל

The soul of all flesh is its form which God gave to it,

וְהַדַּעַת הַיְתֵרָה הַמְּצוּיָה בְּנַפְשׁוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם

and the extra intellect that is found in the soul of man

הִיא צוּרַת הָאָדָם הַשָּׁלֵם בְּדַעְתּוֹ.

is the form of the man who is perfect in his knowledge.

וְעַל צוּרָה זוֹ נֶאֱמַר בַּתּוֹרָה נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ

And concerning this form it is said in the Torah, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,"

כְּלוֹמַר שֶׁתִּהְיֶה לוֹ צוּרָה הַיּוֹדַעַת וּמַשֶּׂגֶת הַדֵּעוֹת שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם גֹּלֶם

meaning that there will be to him a form that knows and comprehends the ideas that do not have a physical body,

כְּמוֹ הַמַּלְאָכִים שֶׁהֵם צוּרָה בְּלֹא גֹּלֶם עַד שֶׁיִּדְמֶה לָהֶן.

like the angels who are form without a physical body, until he resembles them.

וְאֵינוֹ אוֹמֵר עַל צוּרָה זוֹ הַנִּכֶּרֶת לָעֵינַיִם

And it does not speak concerning this form which is recognized by the eyes,

שֶׁהִיא הַפֶּה וְהַחֹטֶם וְהַלְּסָתוֹת וּשְׁאָר רֹשֶׁם הַגּוּף

which is the mouth and the nose and the cheeks and the rest of the outline of the body,

שֶׁזּוֹ תֹּאַר שְׁמָהּ.

for this physical appearance, "appearance" is its name.

וְאֵינָהּ הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַמְּצוּיָה לְכָל נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה

And it is not the soul that is found in every living soul,

שֶׁבָּהּ אוֹכֵל וְשׁוֹתֶה וּמוֹלִיד וּמַרְגִּישׁ וּמְהַרְהֵר.

with which it eats and drinks and reproduces and feels and thinks.

אֶלָּא הַדֵּעָה שֶׁהִיא צוּרַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ

Rather, it is the intellect, which is the form of the soul,

וּבְצוּרַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כִּדְמוּתֵנוּ.

and concerning the form of the soul the verse speaks when it says, "in our image, in our likeness."

וּפְעָמִים רַבּוֹת תִּקָּרֵא זֹאת הַצּוּרָה נֶפֶשׁ וְרוּחַ.

And many times this form is called "nefesh" and "ruach."

וּלְפִיכָךְ צָרִיךְ לְהִזָּהֵר בִּשְׁמוֹתָן שֶׁלֹּא יִטְעֶה אָדָם בָּהֶן.

And therefore, one must be careful with their names so that a person will not err with them,

וְכָל שֵׁם וְשֵׁם יִלָּמֵד מֵעִנְיָנוֹ:

and each and every name is learned from its context.

הֲלָכָה ט

Halacha 9 · The Eternity of the Form of the Soul and Its Separation from the Body

אֵין צוּרַת הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַזֹּאת מְחֻבֶּרֶת מִן הַיְסוֹדוֹת כְּדֵי שֶׁתִּתְפָּרֵד לָהֶם,

The form of this soul is not composed of the elements so that it would separate into them upon death, like physical matter does,

וְאֵינָהּ מִכֹּחַ הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה עַד שֶׁתְּהֵא צְרִיכָה לַנֶּפֶשׁ כְּמוֹ שֶׁהַנֶּפֶשׁ צְרִיכָה לַגּוּף.

and it is not from the power of the animal soul so that it would be needing the animal soul just as the animal soul needs the body for its existence.

אֶלָּא מֵאֵת ה' מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם הִיא.

Rather, from Hashem, from the heaven, it is—a direct spiritual creation.

לְפִיכָךְ כְּשֶׁיִּפָּרֵד הַגּוּף שֶׁהוּא מְחֻבָּר מִן הַיְסוֹדוֹת

Therefore, when the physical matter, which is composed of the elements, separates and decomposes,

וְנֶאֱבַד הַנֶּפֶשׁ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵינָהּ מְצוּיָה אֶלָּא עִם הַגּוּף וּצְרִיכָה לַגּוּף בְּכָל מַעֲשֶׂיהָ

and the animal soul perishes because it is not found except with the body and it needs the body for all its deeds and physical functions,

לֹא תִּכָּרֵת הַצּוּרָה הַזֹּאת.

this form—the intellectual soul—**will not be cut off** and destroyed.

לְפִי שֶׁאֵינָהּ צְרִיכָה לַנֶּפֶשׁ בְּמַעֲשֶׂיהָ.

Because it does not need the animal soul for its deeds and perceptions.

אֶלָּא יוֹדַעַת וּמַשֶּׂגֶת הַדֵּעוֹת הַפְּרוּדוֹת מִן הַגְּלָמִים

Rather, it knows and comprehends the intellects—the angels—**which are separated from physical matters,**

וְיוֹדַעַת בּוֹרֵא הַכֹּל וְעוֹמֶדֶת לְעוֹלָם וּלְעוֹלְמֵי עוֹלָמִים.

and it knows the Creator of everything, and endures forever and for eternity of eternities.

הוּא שֶׁאָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה בְּחָכְמָתוֹ קהלת יב ז

This is what Shlomo said in his wisdom in the Sefer of **Koheles, chapter twelve, verse seven:**

"וְיָשֹׁב הֶעָפָר עַל הָאָרֶץ כְּשֶׁהָיָה וְהָרוּחַ תָּשׁוּב אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר נְתָנָהּ":

"And the dust shall return upon the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God Who gave it."

הֲלָכָה י

Halacha 10 · The Definition of Ma'aseh Bereshit and the Prohibition of Expounding It in Public

כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ שֶׁדִּבַּרְנוּ בְּעִנְיָן זֶה

All of these matters that we spoke about **concerning this subject** of the physical universe

כְּמַר מִדְּלִי הֵם

are like a drop from a bucket compared to what there is to know,

וּדְבָרִים עֲמֻקִּים הֵם.

and yet **they are deep matters** in their own right.

אֲבָל אֵינָם כְּעִנְיַן עֹמֶק פֶּרֶק רִאשׁוֹן וְשֵׁנִי.

But they are not like the matter of the depth of the first and second chapter, which deal with the spiritual realms and the Creator.

וּבֵאוּר כָּל אֵלּוּ הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁבְּפֶרֶק שְׁלִישִׁי וּרְבִיעִי

And the explanation of all these matters that are in the third and fourth chapter

הוּא הַנִּקְרָא מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.

is that which is called the esoteric study of **Ma'aseh Bereishis**, the Work of Creation.

וְכָךְ צִוּוּ הַחֲכָמִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים

And thus commanded the early Sages of the Mishnah,

שֶׁאֵין דּוֹרְשִׁין בַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ בָּרַבִּים

that we do not expound on these matters in public,

אֶלָּא לְאָדָם אֶחָד מוּדִיעִין דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ

rather, to a single person who is wise and understands on his own, **we make these matters known**

וּמְלַמְּדִין אוֹתָן:

and teach them in private.

הֲלָכָה יא

Halacha 11 · The Difference Between Ma'aseh Merkavah and Ma'aseh Bereshit

וּמָה בֵּין עִנְיַן מַעֲשֵׂה מֶרְכָּבָה לְעִנְיַן מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.

And what is the difference **between the subject of Ma'aseh Merkavah**, the deepest secrets of the Divine Chariot, **to the subject of Ma'aseh Bereshit**, the secrets of creation?

שֶׁעִנְיַן מַעֲשֵׂה מֶרְכָּבָה אֲפִלּוּ לְאֶחָד אֵין דּוֹרְשִׁים בּוֹ

The difference is **that the subject of Ma'aseh Merkavah, even to one** individual **we do not expound on it**

אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן הָיָה חָכָם וּמֵבִין מִדַּעְתּוֹ

unless he was wise and understanding from his own mind, possessing deep intuitive comprehension,

מוֹסְרִין לוֹ רָאשֵׁי הַפְּרָקִים.

and even then, we do not teach him the whole thing, but rather **we transmit to him** only **the outlines of the chapters**, the briefest headings.

וְעִנְיַן מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית מְלַמְּדִין אוֹתוֹ לְיָחִיד

And the subject of Ma'aseh Bereshit, we teach it to an individual

אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מֵבִין אוֹתוֹ מִדַּעְתּוֹ

even though that he does not understand it from his own mind and cannot figure it out on his own,

וּמוֹדִיעִים אוֹתוֹ כָּל מַה שֶּׁיָּכוֹל לֵידַע מִדְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ.

and we inform him of **all that he is able to know of these matters** of creation.

וְלָמָּה אֵין מְלַמְּדִין אוֹתוֹ לָרַבִּים.

And why do we not teach it, even Ma'aseh Bereshit, **to the public** in a large gathering?

לְפִי שֶׁאֵין כָּל אָדָם יֵשׁ לוֹ דַּעַת רְחָבָה

Because not every man has broad understanding

לְהַשִּׂיג פֵּרוּשׁ וּבֵאוּר כָּל הַדְּבָרִים עַל בֻּרְיָן:

to grasp the interpretation and explanation of all the matters to their depth and absolute clarity, and they might come to misunderstand these deep concepts.

הֲלָכָה יב

Halacha 12 · Contemplating the Creations to Achieve Love and Fear of Hashem

בְּזְמַן שֶׁאָדָם מִתְבּוֹנֵן בַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלּוּ

At the time that a person meditates on these matters of the cosmos and the spiritual realms,

וּמַכִּיר כָּל הַבְּרוּאִים מִמַּלְאָךְ וְגַלְגַּל וְאָדָם כַּיּוֹצֵא בּוֹ

and recognizes all the creations, from angel and sphere and man and the like,

וְיִרְאֶה חָכְמָתוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא בְּכָל הַיְצוּרִים וְכָל הַבְּרוּאִים.

and he will see the wisdom of the Holy One, blessed is He, in all the creatures and all the creations,

מוֹסִיף אַהֲבָה לַמָּקוֹם

he increases his **love for the Omnipresent**,

וְתִצְמָא נַפְשׁוֹ וְיִכְמַהּ בְּשָׂרוֹ לֶאֱהֹב הַמָּקוֹם בָּרוּךְ הוּא.

and his soul will thirst and his flesh will yearn to love the Omnipresent, blessed is He.

וְיִירָא וְיִפְחַד מִשִּׁפְלוּתוֹ וְדַלּוּתוֹ וְקַלּוּתוֹ

And he will fear and he will dread from his lowliness and his poverty and his insignificance,

כְּשֶׁיַּעֲרִיךְ עַצְמוֹ לְאֶחָד מֵהַגּוּפוֹת הַקְּדוֹשִׁים הַגְּדוֹלִים.

when he compares himself to one of the holy, great bodies like the celestial spheres.

וְכָל שֶׁכֵּן לְאַחַת מֵהַצּוּרוֹת הַטְּהוֹרוֹת הַנִּפְרָדוֹת מִן הַגְּלָמִים

And all the more so when he compares himself **to one of the pure forms that are separate from physical matter**, namely the angels,

שֶׁלֹּא נִתְחַבְּרוּ בַּגֹּלֶם כְּלָל.

that were not joined with physical matter at all.

וְיִמְצָא עַצְמוֹ שֶׁהוּא כִּכְלִי מָלֵא בּוּשָׁה וּכְלִמָּה רֵיק וְחָסֵר:

And he will find himself to be **like a vessel full of shame and disgrace, empty and lacking**.

הֲלָכָה יג

Halacha 13 · Precedence of Halachic Study to the Esoteric Pardes

וְעִנְיְנֵי אַרְבָּעָה פְּרָקִים אֵלּוּ שֶׁבְּחָמֵשׁ מִצְוֹת הָאֵלּוּ

And the matters of these four chapters, which deal **with these five mitzvos** of knowing and loving Hashem,

הֵם שֶׁחֲכָמִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים קוֹרְאִין אוֹתוֹ פַּרְדֵּס

they are what the early Sages call Pardes, the orchard of deep spiritual wisdom,

כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ אַרְבָּעָה נִכְנְסוּ לַפַּרְדֵּס.

just as they said, "Four Sages **entered the Pardes."**

וְאַף עַל פִּי שֶׁגְּדוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָיוּ וַחֲכָמִים גְּדוֹלִים הָיוּ

And even though they were great men of Yisrael and they were great Sages,

לֹא כֻּלָּם הָיָה בָּהֶן כֹּחַ לֵידַע וּלְהַשִּׂיג כָּל הַדְּבָרִים עַל בֻּרְיָן.

not all of them had the strength in them to know and to comprehend all the matters with absolute **clarity.**

וַאֲנִי אוֹמֵר שֶׁאֵין רָאוּי לְטַיֵּל בַּפַּרְדֵּס

And I say that it is not proper to stroll in the Pardes

אֶלָּא מִי שֶׁנִּתְמַלֵּא כְּרֵסוֹ לֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר.

unless one has filled his belly with bread and meat.

וְלֶחֶם וּבָשָׂר הוּא לֵידַע הָאָסוּר וְהַמֻּתָּר

And "bread and meat" is to know the practical halachos of **the forbidden and the permitted,**

וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶם מִשְּׁאָר הַמִּצְוֹת.

and the like of them from the rest of the mitzvos.

וְאַף עַל פִּי שֶׁדְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ דָּבָר קָטָן קְרָאוּ אוֹתָן חֲכָמִים

And even though the Sages called these matters of practical halacha a "small matter,"

שֶׁהֲרֵי אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים דָּבָר גָּדוֹל מַעֲשֵׂה מֶרְכָּבָה

for behold, the Sages said, "A 'great matter' is the workings of the Chariot,

וְדָבָר קָטָן הַוָּיוֹת דְּאַבַּיֵי וְרָבָא.

and a 'small matter' is the debates of Abbaye and Rava,"

אַף עַל פִּי כֵן רְאוּיִין הֵן לְהַקְדִּימָן.

even so, they are fitting to be given precedence in one's learning,

שֶׁהֵן מְיַשְּׁבִין דַּעְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם תְּחִלָּה.

because they settle the mind of a person first.

וְעוֹד שֶׁהֵם הַטּוֹבָה הַגְּדוֹלָה שֶׁהִשְׁפִּיעַ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא

And furthermore, they are the great goodness that the Holy One, blessed is He, bestowed

לְיִשּׁוּב הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה כְּדֵי לִנְחֹל חַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

for the settling of this world, in order to inherit the life of the World to Come.

וְאֶפְשָׁר שֶׁיְּדָעֵם הַכֹּל קָטָן וְגָדוֹל אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה

And it is possible for everyone to know them, small and great, man and woman,

בַּעַל לֵב רָחָב וּבַעַל לֵב קָצָר:

one of a broad mind and one of a limited mind.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Rambam explains that all physical creations below the sky are made of a combination of fire, wind, water, and earth, which are themselves combinations of matter and form. Each element has its own natural weight and characteristics—fire being warm and dry, wind warm and moist, water cold and moist, and earth cold and dry—which determine how they combine and how the resulting bodies behave. Ultimately, every combined entity must decompose back into these four elements, though this often happens through a gradual cycle of changing into other entities first. Furthermore, these four elements themselves are in a constant state of flux, with portions of them continually transforming into one another in an unceasing cycle driven by the revolution of the sphere.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Rambam teaches us a profound truth about our physical existence: everything in this world below the heavens, including our very bodies, is a mixture of the four basic elements of fire, wind, water, and earth. These elements are in a constant state of flux, shifting and changing from one to another, and ultimately, every physical structure is destined to decompose and return to its source. Even the most precious physical things, like gold and rubies, cannot escape this reality.

When you realize that your physical body is made of these shifting, temporary elements, it changes how you look at yourself. The Rambam explains that what truly makes you a human being, the "tzellem Elokim", is not your physical form, but your neshama, the spiritual form given to you by Hashem that is capable of knowing Him. Your body is just a temporary vessel, a combination of dust and wind that will eventually return to the earth, but your spiritual essence is eternal.

This understanding is a powerful tool for your daily avodah. It helps you put your physical desires and worries into perspective. When the yetzer hara tries to make you overly anxious about material comforts, physical beauty, or worldly possessions, remind yourself of this sugya. These things are just temporary combinations of the four elements, constantly changing and destined to dissolve. Your real focus must be on nurturing your neshama, which connects you directly to the Creator.

Today, when you find yourself getting upset or overly invested in a physical frustration or material desire, pause for a moment. Remind yourself: "This is just temporary matter, but my neshama is eternal." Redirect that energy into a spiritual act, like learning a line of Torah or saying a brachah with deep kavana.

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.'