

חומש עם רש"י • דברים • ראשון

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

DEVARIM • 1ST ALIYAH

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this opening aliyah of Sefer Devarim, Moshe Rabbeinu begins his final address to Klal Yisrael on the other side of the Yarden. Out of his deep love and concern for the nation, Moshe delivers his words of rebuke with great sensitivity, subtly hinting at the places where they stumbled in the wilderness rather than shaming them openly. He reminds them of the long journey from Chorev and establishes the precise timing of this address—the fortieth year, just months before his passing, after the defeat of Sichon and Og.

Moshe then begins to expound the Torah, recalling Hashem's command at Chorev that it was time to journey onward and inherit the Promised Land. Hashem placed the land before them, swearing to the Avos—Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov—to give it to them and their children. Moshe also recalls how he told the people at that time that he could not bear the heavy burden of leading them alone, as Hashem had blessed them to multiply like the stars of the heaven.

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

פסוק א

Pasuk 1

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל בעבר הירדן במדבר

in the wilderness the Yarden on the side of Yisrael all of to Moshe spoke that the words These are

בערבה מול סוף בין פארן ובין תפל ולבן וחרצת ודי זהב:

Zahav and Di and Chatzeros and Lavan Tofel and between Paran between Suf opposite in the plain

רש"י

אלה הדברים. לפי שהן דברי תוכחות ומנה כאן כל המקומות

the places all here and he enumerated reproofs words of that they are Because the words These are

שהכעיסו לפני המקום בהן, לפיכך סתם את הדברים והזכירם ברמז

with an allusion and mentioned them the matters — he concealed therefore in them the Omnipresent before that they angered

מפני כבודן של ישראל עי' ספרי:

Sifrei see Yisrael of the honor because of

רש"י

אל כל ישראל. אלו הוכיח מקצתן, היו אלו שפשוק אומרים אתם

you saying who were in the street these would have some of them he had reproved if Yisrael all of To

הייתם שומעים מכן עמרם ולא השיבותם דבר מכה וכה? אלו היינו

we had been if and that regarding this a word answer and did not Amram from the son of hearing were

שם היינו משיבים אותו, לכה בנסם כלם ואמר להם הרי כלכם כאן,

here all of you are behold to them and said all of them he assembled them therefore him answered we would have there

כָּל מִי שֶׁיֵּשׁ לוֹ תְּשׁוּבָה יָשִׁיב סִפְרֵי :

Sifrei let him answer an answer to him that has who any

רש"י

במדבר. לא במדבר היו אלא בערבות מואב, ומהו במדבר? אלא
but rather in the wilderness and what is Moav in the plains of but rather were they in the wilderness not In the wilderness
בשביל מה שהכעיסוהו במדבר שאמרו שמות ט"ז "מי יתן מותנו וגו'":
etc we had died that would 16 Shemos that they said in the wilderness which they angered Him that on account of

רש"י

בערבה. בשביל הערבה, שחטאו בכעל פֿעור בשטים בערבות מואב:
Moav in the plains of in Shittim Peor with Baal that they sinned the plain on account of In the plain

רש"י

מול סוף. על מה שהמרו בים סוף בבואם לים סוף, שאמרו שם
there that they said Reeds at the Sea of upon their arrival Reeds at the Sea of they rebelled that which regarding Suph Opposite
י"ד "המבלי אין קברים במצרים", וכן בנסעם מתוך הים, שנאמר
as it is said the sea from the midst of when they journeyed and likewise in Mitzrayim graves there are no Is it because 14
תהלים ק"ו "וימרו על ים בים סוף" כדאיתא בערכין דף ט"ו :
15 page in Arachin as it is Reeds at the Sea of the sea by and they rebelled 106 Tehillim

רש"י

בין פארן ובין תפל ולבן. אמר רבי יוחנן חזרנו על כל המקרא ולא
and not the Scripture all of on we went over Yochanan Rabbi said and Laban Tophel and between Paran Between
מצינו מקום ששמו תפל ולבן, אלא הוכיחן על הדברים שתפלו על
upon that they falsely cast the words for he rebuked them rather or Laban Tophel whose name is a place we found
המן, שהוא לבן, שאמרו במדבר כ"א "ונפשנו קצה בלחם הקלקל", ועל מה
what and for the miserable the bread loathes and our soul 21 in Bamidbar that they said white which is the Manna
שעשו במדבר פארן על ידי המרגלים:
the spies means of by Paran in the wilderness of that they did

רש"י

וחצרת. במחלקתו של קרח; דבר אחר אמר להם הנה לכם ללמד ממה
from what to learn for you It was to them He said explanation Another Korah of regarding the dispute And Hazeroth
שעשיתי למרים בחצרות בשביל לשון הרע, ואתם נדברתם במקום:
against the Omnipresent spoke and you speech slanderous because of at Hazeroth to Miriam Idid

רש"י

ודי זהב. הוכיחן על העגל שעשו בשביל רב זהב שהיה להם,
to them that was gold the abundance of because of which they made the calf on account of He reproved them Zahab And Di
שנאמר הושע ב' "וכסף הרפיתי לה וזהב עשו לפעל" עי' ספרי; ברכות ל"ב :
32 Berachot Sifrei see for the Baal they made and gold for her Imultiplied and silver two Hoshea as it is said

אחד עשר יום מחרב דרך הר שעיר עד קדש ברנע:

Barnea Kadesh until Seir Mount by way of from Chorev days · Eleven

רש"י

אחד עשר יום מחרב. אמר להם משה ראו מה גרמתם אין לכם דרך קצרה
 short route for you there is no you caused what see Moshe to them said from Horeb days ten One
 מחורב לקדש ברנע בדרך הר שעיר, ואף הוא מהלך י"א יום, ואתם הלכתם
 traversed and you days eleven a journey of it and even Seir Mount like the way of Barnea to Kadesh from Horeb
 אותה בשלושה ימים – שהרי בעשרים באיר נסעו מחורב, שנאמר במדבר י'
 ten Bamidbar as it is said from Horeb they journeyed of Iyar on the twentieth for behold days in three it
 "ויהי בשנה השנית בחדש השני בעשרים בחדש וגו'", ובכ"ט בסיון
 of Sivan and on twenty-ninth etcetera of the month on the twentieth the second in the month the second in the year and it was
 שלחו את המרגלים מקדש ברנע תענית כ"ט, צא מהם ל' יום שעשו
 that they sent the spies — they sent from Kadesh Barnea Taanis deduct from them days thirty that they spent
 בקברות התאווה שאכלו הבשר חדש ימים, ושבעה ימים שעשו בחצרות להסגר
 to be shut up at Hazereth that they spent days and seven of days a month the meat where they ate Hataavah at Kibros
 שם מרים, נמצא בשלושה ימים הלכו כל אותו הדרך – וכל כך היתה השכינה
 the Shechinah did this and all way that all of they traversed days in three it follows Miriam there
 מתלבטת בשבילכם למהר ביאתכם לארץ, ובשביל שקלקלתם הסב אתכם
 you He made travel you became degenerate but because to the land your coming to hasten for your sake exert itself
 סביבות הר שעיר ארבעים שנה ע' ספרי:
 Sifrei see years forty Seir Mount around

סוכה ג

ויהי בארבעים שנה בעשתי עשר חדש באחד לחדש דבר משה אל

to Moshe spoke of the month on the first month · in the eleventh year in the fortieth And it was

בני ישראל ככל אשר צוה יהוה אתו אלהם:

to them him Hashem commanded that according to all Yisrael the children of

רש"י

ויהי בארבעים שנה בעשתי עשר חדש באחד לחדש. מלמד שלא
 that not this teaches of the month on the first month · in the eleventh year in the fortieth And it was
 הוכיחון אלא סמוך למיתה; ממי למד? מיצקב, שלא הוכיח את בניו
 his sons — reprove who did not from Yaakov did he learn from whom to the death close except did he reprove them
 אלא סמוך למיתה, אמר, ראובן בני אני אומר לה מפני מה לא הוכחתיה כל
 all did I reprove you not what because of to you say I my son Reuven he said to the death close except
 השנים הללו, כדי שלא תניחני ותלה ותדבק בעשו אחי; ומפני ארבעה
 four and because of my brother to Esav and cling and go you would leave me not so that these the years
 דברים אין מוכיחין את האדם אלא סמוך למיתה, כדי שלא יהא מוכיחו
 reproving him he will be not so that to the death close except a person — reprove we do not things
 וחוזר ומוכיחו, ושל לא יהא חברו רואהו ומתביש ממנו, כו' פדאיתא
 as it is etc. before him and feeling ashamed seeing him his fellow will be and so that not and reproving him and returning

בְּסִפְרִי. וְכֵן יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לֹא הוֹכִיחַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲלֵא סְמוּךְ לְמִיתָה, וְכֵן שְׁמוּאֵל שִׁנְאַמַּר
as it is said Shmuel and so to the death close except Yisrael — reprove did not Yehoshua and so in Sifrei
שְׁמוּאֵל א י"ב, "הִנְנִי עִנּוּ בִי", וְכֵן דָּוִד אֶת שְׁלֹמֹה בְּנוֹ מְלָכִים א ב':
2 I Kings his son Shlomo — Dovid and so against me testify here I am 12 I Shmuel

פסוק ד

Pasuk 4

אַחֲרֵי הַכְּתוֹ אֶת סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֶשְׁבוֹן וְאֵת עוֹג מֶלֶךְ
king of Og and — in Cheshbon dwelt who the Emori king of Sichon — his defeating after
הַבָּשָׁן אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּעֶשְׂתָּרֶת בְּאֶדְרַעִי:
in Edrei in Ashtaros dwelt who the Bashan

רש"י

אַחֲרֵי הַכְּתוֹ. אָמַר מֹשֶׁה אִם אֲנִי מוֹכִיחֶם קֹדֶם שִׁיכְנֶסוּ לְקֶצֶה הָאָרֶץ, יֹאמְרוּ מַה
what they will say the land to the edge of that they enter before reprove them I If Moshe said his smiting After
לָזֶה עָלֵינוּ? מַה הֵיטִיב לָנוּ? אֵינּוּ בָּא אֲלֵא לְקַנְתָּר וְלִמְצֹא עֲלֶה, שְׂאִין
that there is not a pretext and to find to provoke except come he does not us has he benefited what against us has this one
בּוֹ כֵחַ לְהַכְנִיסֵנוּ לָאָרֶץ, לְפִיכָה הִמָּתִין עַד שֶׁהִפִּיל סִיחֹן וְעוֹג לְפָנֵיהֶם
before them and Og Sichon that he cast down until he waited Therefore to the land to bring us in power in him
וְהוֹרִישָׁם אֶת אֶרְצָם וְאַחֲרַיָּה הוֹכִיחֵן סִפְרִי:
Sifrei he reproveth them that and after their land — and gave them inheritance

רש"י

סִיחֹן אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחֶשְׁבוֹן. אֵלּוּ לֹא הָיָה סִיחֹן קָשָׁה וְהָיָה שְׂרֹוֹי בְּחֶשְׁבוֹן, הָיָה
it would be in Heshbon dwelling and he was difficult Sihon were not if in Heshbon dwelt who Sihon
קָשָׁה, שֶׁהַמְּדִינָה קָשָׁה, וְאֵלּוּ הָיְתָה עִיר אַחֶרֶת וְסִיחֹן שְׂרֹוֹי בְּתוֹכָהּ, הָיְתָה קָשָׁה,
difficult it would be within it dwelling and Sihon other a city it were and if is difficult because the city difficult
שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ קָשָׁה, עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ קָשָׁה וְהַמְּדִינָה קָשָׁה שָׁם:
there is difficult and the city is difficult when the king and how much how much one upon is difficult because the king

רש"י

אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּעֶשְׂתָּרֶת. הַמֶּלֶךְ קָשָׁה וְהַמְּדִינָה קָשָׁה:
was difficult and the city was difficult the king at Ashtaroth dwelt who

רש"י

עֶשְׂתָּרֶת. הוּא לְשׁוֹן צוּקִין וְקָשִׁי, כְּמוֹ "עֶשְׂתָּרֶת קַרְנַיִם" בְּרֵאשִׁית י"ד וְעֶשְׂתָּרֶת
and Ashtaroth 14 Bereishis Karnaim Ashtaroth just as and hardness rocks an expression of it is Ashtaroth
זֶה הוּא עֶשְׂתָּרֶת קַרְנַיִם, שֶׁהָיוּ שָׁם רְפָאִים שֶׁהָכָה אֲמֶרְפֶּל, שִׁנְאַמַּר שָׁם "וַיַּכּוּ
and they smote there as it is said Amraphel whom smote Rephaim there where were Karnaim Ashtaroth is this
אֶת רְפָאִים בְּעֶשְׂתָּרֶת קַרְנַיִם". וְעוֹג נִמְלֹט מֵהֶם, וְהוּא שִׁנְאַמַּר שָׁם "וַיָּבֹא הַפָּלִיט",
the fugitive and came there is of whom said and he from them escaped and Og Karnaim in Ashtaroth Rephaim —
וְאֹמַר דְּבָרִים ג' "כִּי רַק עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן נִשְׁאַר מִיָּתֶר הָרְפָאִים":
the Rephaim from the remnant of remained the Bashan king of Og only for 3 Devarim and it says

רש"י

באדרעי. שם המלכות:

the kingdom the name of in Edrei

פסוק ה

Pasuk 5

בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה בְּאֵר אֶת הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר:

saying this the Torah — to explain Moshe undertook Moav in the land of the Jordan On the side of

רש"י

הואיל. התחיל, כמו בראשית י"ח "הנה נא הואלתי" ע' ספרי:

Sifrei see I have begun now behold 18 Bereishis just as he began he began

רש"י

באר את התורה. בשבעים לשון פרשה להם תנחומא; ע' סוטה ל"ב:

32 Sotah 70 Tanchuma to them he explained it languages in seventy the Torah — explained

פסוק ו

Pasuk 6

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ דִּבֶּר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֵרֵב לֵאמֹר רַב לָכֶם שָׁבַת בְּהָר הַזֶּה:

this at mountain dwelling for you much saying at Chorev to us spoke our God Hashem

רש"י

רב לכם שבת. כפשוטו; ויש מ"א, הרבה לכם גדלה ושכר

and reward greatness for you He increased an Agadic explanation and there is according to its plain sense dwelling for you Much

על ישיבתכם בְּהָר הַזֶּה – עשיתם משכן, מנורה, וכלים, קבלתם תורה, מנייתם

you appointed Torah you received and vessels a Menorah a Mishkan you made this in the mountain your dwelling for

לכם סנהדרין, שרי אֶלְפִים ושרי מאות ע' ספרי:

Sifrei see hundreds and captains of thousands captains of a Sanhedrin for yourselves

פסוק ז

Pasuk 7

פָּנוּ וּסְעוּ לָכֶם וּבֹאוּ הָרָה אֲמַרְי וְאֵל כָּל שְׁכֵנָיו בְּעֶרְבָה

in the plain its neighbors all of and to the Emori to the mountain of and come for yourselves and journey turn

בְּהָר וּבְשִׁפְלָה וּבִנְגֹב וּבְחוּף הַיָּם אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַלְבָּנוֹן

and the Levanon the Kenaani the land of the sea and on the coast of and in the south and in the lowland in the mountain

עַד הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נָהָר פֶּרַס:

Peras the river of the great the river until

רש"י

פנו וסעו לכם. זו דרך ערד וחרמה:

and Hormah Arad the way of this is for yourselves and journey Turn

רש"י

ובאו הר האמרי. כמשמעו:

And go to the mountain of the Emori according to its literal meaning

רש"י

ואל כל שכניו. עמון ומואב וְהָרַ שְׁעִיר:

all of and to its neighbors Ammon Moav and Mount Seir

רש"י

בערבה. זֶה מִישׁוֹר שֶׁל יַעַר:

In the plain this is the plain of the forest

רש"י

בהר. זֶה הָר הַמֶּלֶךְ:

In the mountain this is the mountain of the King

רש"י

ובשפלה. זו שְׁפֵלַת דְּרוֹם:

And in the low land this is the low land of the south

רש"י

ובנגב ובחוף הים. אֲשֶׁקְלוֹן וְעֵזָה וְקִיסְרֵי וְכו' כִּדְאִיתָא בְּסִפְרֵי:

and in the south and by the coast of the sea Ashkelon and Gaza and Caesarea etc. as it is in Sifrei

רש"י

עד הנהר הגדל. מִפְּנֵי שֶׁנֶּזְכַּר עִם אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹרְאוֹ גָּדוֹל, מִשַּׁל הַדִּיּוֹט

Until the great the river because that it is mentioned with the Land of Yisrael it calls it great a commoner a proverb of

אומר "עֶבֶד מֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ", "הַדִּבֵּק לַשַּׁחֲרָה וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָהּ", "קָרַב לְגַבִּי דְהִינָא

says "a servant of a king is a king" to a captain "cling and they will bow to you" to an anointed one

וְאִדְהוּן שְׁבוּעוֹת מ"ז :

and be anointed" Shevuos 47

פסוק ח

Pasuk 8

רָאָה נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיכֶם אֶת הָאָרֶץ בָּאוּ וּרְשׁוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה

see I have placed before you — the land — and possess go in the land that Hashem swore

לְאַבְתֵּיכֶם לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לָתֵת לָהֶם וּלְזֶרְעָם אַחֲרֵיהֶם:

to your fathers to Avraham to Yitzchak and to Yaakov to give to them and to their seed after them

רש"י

ראה נתתי. בְּעֵינֵיכֶם אֶתֶם רֹאִים, אֵינִי אוֹמֵר לָכֶם מֵאֲמֵד וּמִשְׁמוּעָה סִפְרֵי :

See I have given with your eyes I do not say from conjecture from Sifrei and from hearsay

רש"י

באו ורשו. אין מערער בדבר, ואינכם צריכים למלחמה, אלו לא שלחו
they had sent not if war needing and you are not in the matter challenger there is no and possess Go in
מרגלים לא היו צריכים לכלי זין ע' שם :
there see war weapons of needing they would have been not spies

רש"י

לאבתיכם. למה הזכיר שוב לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב? אלא אברהם כדאי לעצמו,
by himself is sufficient Avraham but and to Yaakov to Yitzchak to Avraham again did He mention why To your fathers
יצחק כדאי לעצמו, יעקב כדאי לעצמו שם :
there by himself is sufficient Yaakov by himself is sufficient Yitzchak

פסוק ט

Pasuk 9

ואמר אֲלֵכֶם בַּעַת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר לֹא אוֹכֵל לְבִדִּי שְׂאת אֲתָכֶם:
you to bear by myself will I be able not saying that at the time to you And I said

רש"י

ואמר אֲלֵכֶם בַּעַת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר. מהו לֵאמֹר? אָמַר לָהֶם מֹשֶׁה לֹא מַעֲצָמִי אָנִי
do I from myself not Moshe to them said saying what is saying that at the time to you And I said
אֹמֵר לָכֶם, אֲלֵא מִפִּי הַקֹּדֶשׁ שֵׁם :
there the Holy One blessed be from the mouth of but to you say
He

רש"י

לֹא אוֹכֵל לְבִדִּי וגו'. אֶפְשָׁר שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה מֹשֶׁה יָכוֹל לְדוֹן אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל? אָדָם
A man Yisrael — to judge able Moshe was that not Is it possible etc. by myself am I able Not
שְׁהוֹצִיאֵם מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְקָרַע לָהֶם אֶת הַיָּם, וְהוֹרִיד אֶת הַמָּן, וְהִגִּיז הַשָּׁלוּ,
the quail and gathered the Manna — and brought down the sea — for them and split from Mitzrayim who brought them out
לֹא הָיָה יָכוֹל לְדוֹנָם? אֲלֵא כֹּה אָמַר לָהֶם, ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם —
you has multiplied your God Hashem to them he said thus rather to judge them able was not
הַגְדִּיל וְהָרִים אֶתְכֶם עַל דִּינֵיכֶם, נָטַל אֶת הָעֶנֶשׁ מִכֶּם וּנְתָנוּ עַל הַדִּינִי;
the judges upon and placed it from you the punishment — He took your judges above you and elevated He made great
וְכֵן אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה מַלְכִּים א ג' "כִּי מִי יוֹכֵל לְשַׁפֵּט אֶת עַמּוֹ הַכֶּבֶד הַזֶּה"; אֶפְשָׁר
Is it possible this the heavy Your people — judge can who For 3 I Melachim Shlomo said and so
מִי שֶׁכְּתוּב בּוֹ שֵׁם ה' "וַיִּחְכֶּם מִכָּל הָאָדָם", אֹמֵר מִי יוֹכֵל לְשַׁפֵּט?
judge can who says men than all And he was wiser 5 there concerning him of whom it is written he
אֲלֵא כֹּה אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה, אֵין דִּינֵי אָמָה זֶה כְּדִינֵי שְׂאֵר הָאֻמוֹת, שְׂאֵם דִּין
he judges for if the nations the rest of like the judges of this nation the judges of Are not Shlomo said thus rather
וְהוֹרֵג וּמַכָּה וְחוֹנֵק וּמַטָּה אֶת דִּינוֹ וְגוֹזֵל אֵין בְּכָה כָּלוּם, אָנִי אִם חִיבְתִּי
I obligated if I anything in this there is not and robs his judgment — and perverts and strangles and strikes and kills
מִמּוֹן שֶׁלֹּא כְּדִין, נִפְשׁוֹת אָנִי נִתְּבָע, שְׁנֵאמַר מִשְׁלִי כ"ב "וְקָבַע אֶת
— and He robs 22 Mishlei as it is said am held accountable I lives according to law not money

קְבָעֵיהֶם נִפְשׁ ספרי; סנהדרין ז' :

7a Sanhedrin Sifrei of life those who rob them

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם וְהִנֵּכֶם הַיּוֹם כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם לָרֹב:

for multitude the heavens like the stars of today and behold you are — you has multiplied your God Hashem

רש"י

והנכם היום ככוכבי השמים. וכי ככוכבי השמים היו באתו היום,

day on that they were the heavens like the stars of And is it that the heavens like the stars of today And behold you

והלא לא היו אלא ששים רבוא, מהו והנכם היום? הנכם משוּלִים פִּיּוֹם –

to the day are compared behold you today and behold you what is myriad sixty but they were not but behold

חַיִּים לְעוֹלָם פְּתוּחָה וְכִלְכָּנָה וְכַכּוֹכְבִּים עֵי סַפְרֵי :

Sifrei see and like the stars and like the moon like the sun forever existing

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aliyah traces the beginning of Moshe Rabbeinu's rebuke to Klal Yisrael, delivered in the wilderness of Moav in the fortieth year. Moshe recounts the divine command to leave Chorev and possess the land of the Canaanites up to the Euphrates River, emphasizing the oath Hashem made to the Avos. Finally, Moshe recalls the immense growth of the nation, which led him to declare that he could not carry the burden of leadership and judgment by himself.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

In the opening of Sefer Devarim, Moshe Rabbeinu gathers all of Klal Yisrael to speak to them before his passing. Rashi famously explains that the long list of places mentioned in the first verse, the wilderness, the Arabah, Suph, Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahab, are not just geographical locations. Rather, they are hints to the various times and places where the Jewish people stumbled and complained against Hashem. Out of his deep love and respect for the nation, Moshe did not openly shame them. Instead, he chose to mention only the names of the places, hinting at their mistakes so they would understand the rebuke privately, preserving their dignity.

This teaches us a profound lesson in how we must treat one another, especially when we feel the need to correct a child, a spouse, or a friend. It is so easy to point out mistakes bluntly, but the Torah's way is the way of sensitivity. Moshe Rabbeinu shows us that the goal of rebuke is never to make someone feel small or embarrassed; the goal is to help them grow. When we speak with gentleness and use subtle hints rather than harsh, direct accusations, we protect the other person's self-respect, making it much easier for them to truly hear the message and improve.

Today, if you need to correct someone or point out a mistake, pause before you speak. Instead of bringing it up directly and causing them embarrassment, find a gentle, indirect way to hint at the issue, or speak to them privately with the utmost sensitivity to their feelings.

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THE SUGYA

In this daf, we continue our deep dive into the sugya of a fetus's limb that protruded from the womb before shechitah. We explore the machlokes between Rabbi Meir and the Rabbis regarding whether a limb destined to be cut off is already considered severed, and how this affects the tumah of the limb. The Gemara brings a beautiful clarification from Ravina, explaining that even the Rabbis, who normally argue on Rabbi Meir regarding vessels, would agree that food connections are considered separated and merely touching, which directly impacts our understanding of the fetus and its limb.

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

עמוד א' DAF 73A

STATEMENT

כחתוך דמי.

it is **regarded as though** it were already **cut** and separated.

QUESTION

כמאן?

The Gemara asks: **In accordance with whose** opinion is this principle? Is it

INFERENCE

כרבי מאיר, דתנן: כל ידות הפלים שהן ארוכות ועתיד לקצצן – מטביל עד מקום מדה, דברי רבי מאיר.

in accordance with Rabbi Meir? As we learned in a Mishnah: Regarding **all handles of vessels that are too long** and **one is destined to cut them down**, **one** only needs to **immerse** the handle **until the point of** its eventual **measure**, and the vessel is purified even though the rest of the handle was not submerged; these are **the words of Rabbi Meir**.

INFERENCE

וחכמים אומרים: עד שיטביל את כולו.

And the Sages say: The vessel is not purified **until he immerses all of it**, including the entire handle. Evidently, only Rabbi Meir holds that what is destined to be cut is considered already cut.

ANSWER

אפילו תימא רבנן, חבורי אכלין כמאן דמפרתי דמי, ונגיעי בהדידי.

The Gemara answers: **You may even say** that Ravina's explanation is in accordance with **the Rabbis**, for the Rabbis only argue regarding vessels, but **the connections of foods are regarded as though they are separated**, and they are merely **touching one another**. Since the fetus and its limb are treated as food, they are considered separated and touching.

QUESTION

בְּשֵׁלְמָא לְעוּלָא, הֵיִינוּ דְקִתְנִי "חֲתֻכָּה",

The Gemara asks: **Granted according to Ulla**, who says the limb became tamei at the moment of its separation, **this is** the reason **that** the Mishnah **teaches** the case where "**he cut it**",

QUESTION

אֵלָא לְרַבִּינָא, מַאי "חֲתֻכָּה"?

but according to Ravina, who says the connection is like food and it is considered separated even while attached, **what** is the need for the Mishnah to say "**he cut it**"?

ANSWER

אֵיִדִּי דְתַנָּא רִישָׁא "חֲתֻכָּה", תַּנָּא נָמִי סִיפָא "חֲתֻכָּה".

The Gemara answers: **Since** the Tanna **taught in the first clause "he cut it"**, where it was necessary, **he also taught in the latter clause "he cut it"** for stylistic consistency.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

וְחֻכָּמִים אוֹמְרִים: מִנֵּעַ טְרֵפָה שְׁחוּטָה.

The Mishnah stated: **And the Sages say** that the fetus has the status of **contact with a slaughtered tereifah**.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

טְרֵפָה שְׁחוּטָה מִי מְטַמְּא?

The Gemara asks: **Does a slaughtered tereifah impart tumah?**

ANSWER

אֵין, כְּדֹאֲבוּה דְשְׁמוּאֵל, דְּאָמַר אָבוּה דְשְׁמוּאֵל: טְרֵפָה שְׁשֻׁחְטָה מְטַמְּא בְּמוֹקֵדְשִׁין.

The Gemara answers: **Yes, in accordance with** the statement of **Shmuel's father**, as **Shmuel's father said**: A tereifah that one **slaughtered imparts tumah to sacrificial foods** by Rabbinic decree.

משנה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מה מצינו בטריפה ששחיטתה מטהרתה, אף שחיטת בהמה תטהר את העובר.

The Mishnah cited the Rabbis' reasoning: **Just as we find regarding a tereifah that its shechitah purifies it** from the tumah of a carcass, **so too, the shechitah of the animal should purify the limb of the fetus.**

גמרא GEMARA

BRAISA

תנא, אמר להן רבי מאיר: וכי מי טיהרו לאבר זה מידי נבלה? שחיטת אמו! אם כן, תתירנו באכילה!

It was taught in a Braisa: Rabbi Meir said to them: And indeed, what purified this limb from the status of a carcass? The shechitah of its mother! If so, let it also permit it for eating!

BRAISA

אמרו לו: הרבה מצלת על שאינו גופה יותר מגופה, שהרי שנינו: חותך מן העובר שבמעיה – מותר באכילה, מן הטחול ומן הכליות – אסור באכילה.

They said to him: The shechitah saves that which is not its body much more than it saves its own body, as we learned: One who cuts from a fetus that is in its womb and leaves the pieces inside, they are permitted for eating through the mother's shechitah; but if he cuts from the spleen or from the kidneys of the mother, they are forbidden for eating.

QUESTION

מאי קאמר?

The Gemara asks: **What is** this dialogue **saying?** The flow of the argument is unclear.

ANSWER

אמר רבא, ואמרי לה כדי: חסורי מחסרא והכי קתני,

Rava said, and some say it unattributed [kedi]: The Braisa is missing words, and this is what it is teaching:

BRAISA

אמר להן רבי מאיר: וכי מי טיהרו לאבר זה מידי נבלה? שחיטת אמו, אם כן תתירנו באכילה!

Rabbi Meir said to them: And indeed, what purified this limb from the status of a carcass? The shechitah of its mother, if so, let it permit it for eating!

BRAISA

אמרו לו: טריפה תוכיח, ששחיטתה מטהרתה מידי נבלה ואינה מתירתה באכילה.

They said to him: Let the case of a tereifah prove the point, as its shechitah purifies it from the status of a carcass, yet does not permit it for eating.

BRAISA

אמר להן: לא, אם טיהרה שחיטת טרפה אותה, דבר שהיא גופה, תטהר את האבר דבר שאינו גופה?

He said to them: No, if the shechitah of a tereifah purified it itself, which is something that is its own body, should it also purify the limb of the fetus, which is something that is not its own body?

BRAISA

אמרו לו: הרבה מצלות על שאינו גופה יותר מגופה, שהרי שנינו: חותה מן העובר שבמעיה – מותר באכילה, מן הטחול ומן הכליות – אסור באכילה.

They said to him: The shechitah saves that which is not its body much more than it saves its own body, as we learned: One who cuts from a fetus that is in its womb and leaves the pieces inside, they are permitted for eating; but if he cuts from the spleen or from the kidneys of the mother, they are forbidden for eating.

PROOF

תנא נמי הכי: אמר להן רבי מאיר: וכי מי טיהרו לאבר זה מידי נבלה? אמרו לו: שחיטת אמו. אם כן, תתירנו באכילה!

It was also taught likewise in another Braisa: Rabbi Meir said to them: And indeed, what purified this limb from the status of a carcass? They said to him: The shechitah of its mother. He replied: If so, let it permit it for eating!

PROOF

אמרו לו: טרפה תוכיח, ששחיטתה מטהרתה מידי נבלה ואינה מתירתה באכילה.

They said to him: Let the case of a tereifah prove the point, as its shechitah purifies it from the status of a carcass, yet does not permit it for eating.

PROOF

אמר להן: אם טיהרה שחיטת טרפה אותה ואת האבר המדולדל בה, דבר שגופה, תטהר את העובר שאינו גופה?

He said to them: If the shechitah of a tereifah purified it and the limb dangling from it, which is something that is its own body, should it purify the fetus, which is not its own body?

PROOF

אמרו לו: הרבה מצלות על שאינו גופה יותר מגופה, שהרי שנינו: חותה מן העובר שבמעיה – מותר באכילה, מן הטחול ומן הכליות – אסור באכילה.

They said to him: The shechitah saves that which is not its body much more than it saves its own body, as we learned: One who cuts from a fetus that is in its womb and leaves the pieces inside, they are permitted for eating; but if he cuts from the spleen or from the kidneys of the mother, they are forbidden for eating.

STATEMENT

אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש: כמחלוקת בעופרין, כך מחלוקת באיברין.

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: Just as there is a dispute between Rabbi Meir and the Sages regarding the limbs of fetuses, so too there is a dispute regarding the dangling limbs of the mother animal itself.

STATEMENT

ורבי יוחנן אמר: מחלוקת באבר דעופר, אבל באבר דבהמה – דברי הפל שחיטה עושה ניפול.

And Rabbi Yochanan said: The dispute is only regarding a limb of a fetus, but regarding a limb of the animal itself, all agree that shechitah makes it fall away, meaning it is considered completely severed and is not purified from carcass-tumah.

EXPLANATION

אמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: מאי טעמא דרבי יוחנן אליבא דרבנן?

Rabbi Yose b'Rabbi Chanina said: What is the reason of Rabbi Yochanan according to the Rabbis, who distinguish between the limb of a fetus and the limb of the mother?

EXPLANATION

האי אית ליה תקנתא בחירה, והא לית ליה תקנתא בחירה.

This limb of a fetus has a remedy by returning to the womb, for if it is retracted, the shechitah permits it; but this limb of the mother has no remedy by returning, for even if it is reattached, it remains forbidden.

OBJECTION

מיתיבי: אמר להם רבי מאיר: לא, אם טיהרה שחיטת טרפה אותה ואת האבר המדולדל בה – דבר שגופה, תטהר את העופר – דבר שאינו גופה?

The Gemara raises an objection from the Braisa: Rabbi Meir said to them: No, if the shechitah of a tereifah purified it and the limb dangling from it, which is something that is its own body, should it purify the fetus, which is something that is not its own body? This implies that the Rabbis hold that shechitah does purify a dangling limb of the mother!

עמוד ב' DAF 73B

EXPLANATION

בשלמא לרבי שמעון בן לקיש, לדבריהם קאמר להו:

Granted, according to Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, we can explain that Rabbi Meir was speaking to them, the Rabbis, according to their own words, as follows:

EXPLANATION

לדידי לא שניא אבר דעופר ולא שניא אבר דבהמה, כי הדידי ניהו.

According to my own opinion, there is no difference with regard to the limb of a fetus, and there is no difference with regard to the limb of an animal; they are like each other in that the slaughter of the animal does not render either of them pure.

OBJECTION

אלא לרבי יוחנן, קשיא.

But according to Rabbi Yochanan, who holds that both agree that a hanging limb is not rendered pure by slaughter, Rabbi Meir's statement is difficult, as it is inconsistent with both his opinion and the Rabbis' opinion.

RESOLUTION

אָלֵא, אִי אֶתְמַר הָכִי אֶתְמַר:

Rather, if such a dispute was stated, it was stated like this:

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמּוֹן בֶּן לָקִישׁ: כְּמַחְלוקת בְּעוֹפְרִים, כֵּן מַחְלוקת בְּאֵיכָרִין.

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: Just as there is a dispute with regard to the limbs of fetuses that emerged, so too there is a dispute with regard to hanging limbs of an animal.

STATEMENT

וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: מַחְלוקת בְּאֵכָר דְּעוֹפֵר, אֲבָל בְּאֵכָר דְּבִהְמָה – דְּבָרֵי הַכֹּל אֵין שְׁחִיטָה עוֹשֶׂה נִפְּוֹל.

And Rabbi Yochanan said: The dispute is only with regard to the limb of a fetus, but with regard to the limb of an animal, everyone agrees that slaughter does not make it as though it has fallen off prior to the slaughter, and therefore it does not contract the impurity of a carcass.

QUESTION

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: מַאי טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אֲלִיבָא דְּרַבִּי מֵאִיר?

Rabbi Yosei son of Rabbi Chanina said: What is the reason of Rabbi Yochanan according to Rabbi Meir for distinguishing between a hanging limb and a fetus's limb?

ANSWER

הָאִי גּוֹפָה, וְהָאִי לֹא גּוֹפָה.

This hanging limb is part of its own body, but that fetus's limb is not part of its body.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב יִצְחָק בַּר יוֹסֵף אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: הַכֹּל מוֹדִים שְׁמִיתָה עוֹשֶׂה נִפְּוֹל, וְאֵין שְׁחִיטָה עוֹשֶׂה נִפְּוֹל.

Rav Yitzchak bar Yosef said that Rabbi Yochanan said: Everyone agrees that death makes a hanging limb as though it has fallen off beforehand, and everyone agrees that slaughter does not make it as though it has fallen off.

QUESTION

בְּמַאי עֲסָקִינוּ?

With what are we dealing here?

OBJECTION

אִילִימָא בְּאֵכָר דְּעוֹפֵר – מִיפְּלַג פְּלִיגִי!

If we say we are dealing with the limb of a fetus, they explicitly disagree about this!

OBJECTION

אָלֵא בְּאֵכָר דְּבִהְמָה – מִיתָה תְּנִינָא, שְׁחִיטָה תְּנִינָא.

Rather, we must be dealing with the limb of an animal. But if so, the halacha regarding death we have already learned in a Mishnah, and the halacha regarding slaughter we have already learned in a Mishnah!

PROOF

מִיתָה תִּנִּינָא: מִתָּה הִבְהֵמָה – הַבֶּשֶׂר צָרִיךְ הַכָּשֶׁר, וְהָאֶבֶר מְטַמָּא מְשׁוּם אֶבֶר מִן הַחַי, וְאִינוּ מְטַמָּא מְשׁוּם אֶבֶר מִן הַנֶּבֶלָה; דְּבַרֵּי רַבִּי מֵאִיר.

The halacha regarding death we have learned in the Mishnah: If the animal died, the hanging flesh needs susceptibility to impurity, and the limb imparts impurity because of a limb from a living animal, and it does not impart impurity because of a limb from a carcass; these are the words of Rabbi Meir.

PROOF

שְׁחִיטָה נִמְי תִּנִּינָא: נִשְׁחָטָה בְּהֵמָה – הוֹכְשָׁרוּ בְּדָמֶיהָ, דְּבַרֵּי רַבִּי מֵאִיר. רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אוֹמֵר: לֹא הוֹכְשָׁרוּ.

The halacha regarding slaughter also we have learned in that Mishnah: If the animal was slaughtered, they, the limb and the flesh, were rendered susceptible to impurity by its blood; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Shimon says: They were not rendered susceptible by its blood.

ANSWER

אִי מַהֲהִיא, הִוָּה אָמִינָא: מֵאִי "הוֹכְשָׁרוּ" – אֲבָשָׁר.

The Gemara answers: If we had derived it only from that Mishnah, I would have said: What is the meaning of "they were rendered susceptible"? It refers only to the flesh, but the limb is considered as though it fell off beforehand and is already impure as a limb from a living animal.

OBJECTION

וְהָא "הוֹכְשָׁרוּ" קְתַנִּי,

The Gemara objects: But it teaches "they were rendered susceptible" in the plural, which implies both the flesh and the limb!

ANSWER

מֵהוּ דִּתִּימָא: חַד לְבֶשֶׂר הַפּוֹרֵשׁ מִן הִבְהֵמָה, וְחַד לְבֶשֶׂר הַפּוֹרֵשׁ מִן הָאֶבֶר.

The Gemara explains: Lest you say that the plural refers to two types of flesh: one for flesh that separates from the animal, and one for flesh that separates from the limb.

QUESTION

וּמֵאִי אוּלְמִיָּה דְּהָאִי מַהֲאִי?

The Gemara asks: And what is the strength of this flesh over that flesh that they both need to be mentioned?

ANSWER

סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּהּ אָמִינָא, הוּאִיל וּמְטַמָּא טוּמְאָה חֲמוּרָה אֲגַב אֲבִיו, אִימָא לָא לִיבְעֵי הַכָּשֶׁר, קִמְשָׁמַע לָן.

It might enter your mind to say: Since the flesh on the limb imparts a severe impurity along with its father, the limb itself, I might say it does not require susceptibility to impurity; therefore, the Mishnah teaches us that it does.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: נְקוּט דְרַב יִצְחָק בַּר יוֹסֵף בִּידָהּ, דְּרַבָּה בַּר חַנָּה קָאִי כְּוֹתִיהּ.

Rav Yosef said: Hold the ruling of Rav Yitzchak bar Yosef in your hand, for Rabba bar bar Chana stands like him.

PROOF

דְּתַנְיָא: "וּבֶשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה טְרֵפָה לֹא תֹאכְלוּ" – לְהֵבִיא הָאֵכָר וְהַבָּשָׂר הַמְדוּלָּדִין בְּבִהְמָה וּבְחֵיה וּבְעוֹף, וְשֶׁחָטוּן, שֶׁהֵן אֲסוּרִין.

As it is taught in a Braisa: "And flesh in the field that is torn you shall not eat" — this comes to include the limb and the flesh that are hanging from a domesticated animal, a wild animal, or a bird, and he slaughtered them, that they are forbidden to be eaten.

PROOF

וְאָמַר רַבָּה בַּר חַנָּה אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן:

And Rabba bar bar Chana said that Rabbi Yochanan said on this:

SUMMARY

The Gemara goes on to analyze the dialogue and the deep halachic back-and-forth between Rabbi Meir and the Sages regarding whether the mother's shechitah can purify the protruding limb from carcass-tumah. We learn that according to the Rabbis, the shechitah of the mother has a unique power to save that which is not its own body (the fetus) even more than its own body, as seen in the case of one who cuts pieces of a fetus and leaves them inside the womb. Finally, we learn of a major machlokes between Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish and Rabbi Yochanan regarding whether this dispute extends to dangling limbs of the mother animal itself, with Rabbi Yochanan explaining that a fetus's limb is unique because it has a remedy of being retracted back into the womb.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

In our sugya, the Chachamim teach a profound principle: "The shechitah saves that which is not its body much more than it saves its own body." Sometimes, an act of purification or elevation has a far greater impact on the things connected to us, the "fetus" within the womb, than on our own immediate selves.

We often measure our spiritual growth by how much we have personally changed, looking only at "our own body." But the Torah is teaching us that the holiness we generate through our avodah, our mitzvos, and our learning ripples outward, protecting and elevating our children, our students, and our surroundings in ways we cannot even see. Your personal shechitah, your self-discipline and devotion to Hashem, has a saving power that extends far beyond your own boundaries.

Today, when you do a mitzvah or sit down to learn, do not think you are only working on yourself. Have in mind that the holiness you are bringing into your life is actively protecting, nourishing, and elevating your family and everyone around you.

הלכות תלמוד תורה • פרק שלישי

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

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, the Rambam takes us into the very heart of the greatness of Torah study, showing us how the crown of Torah stands supreme above all other crowns in Klal Yisrael. We will learn how the Torah is the inheritance of every single Yid, waiting for anyone who is willing to put in the effort to acquire it, and how a talmid chacham takes precedence in honor over even a Kohen Gadol who is an am ha'aretz.

The chapter also guides us in how to balance our learning with the performance of other mitzvos. The Rambam lays down the practical halachic guidelines for when we must interrupt our learning to perform a mitzvah and when we must remain engrossed in our holy study, based on whether the mitzvah can be performed by others.

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

הלכה א

Halacha 1: The Three Crowns and the Supreme Greatness of the Crown of Torah

בשלושה כתרין נכתרו ישראל.

With three crowns were crowned Israel:

כתר תורה וכתר כהונה וכתר מלכות.

the crown of Torah, and the crown of priesthood, and the crown of royalty.

כתר כהונה זכה בו אהרן

As for the crown of priesthood, Aaron merited it,

שנאמר במדבר כה יג "והיתה לו וליצורעו אחריו ברית כהנות עולם".

as it is said in the Torah, "And it shall be for him and for his descendants after him a covenant of priesthood eternal."

כתר מלכות זכה בו דוד

As for the crown of royalty, Dovid merited it,

שנאמר תהילים פט לו "זרעו לעולם יהיה וכסאו כשמש נגדי".

as it is said in Tehillim, "His seed forever shall be, and his throne like the sun before Me."

כתר תורה הרי מנח ועומד ומוכן לכל ישראל.

But the crown of Torah, behold, it is placed and standing and ready for every Jew,

שנאמר דברים לג ד "תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהל יעקב".

as it is said in the Torah, "Torah commanded us Moshe, an inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov."

כָּל מִי שֶׁיִרְצֶה יָבוֹא וְיִטֵּל.

Therefore, any who desires, let him come and take it.

שָׁמָּה תֹאמַר שְׂאוֹתֵם הַכִּתְרִים גְּדוֹלִים מִכֶּתֶר תּוֹרָה.

And lest you say that those other crowns are greater than the crown of Torah,

הֲרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר מִשְׁלֵי ח טו "בִּי מְלָכִים יִמְלְכוּ וְרוֹזְנִים יַחֲקֻוּ צֶדֶק" מִשְׁלֵי ח טז "בִּי שָׂרִים יִשְׁרֻוּ".

behold, it says in Mishlei on behalf of the Torah, "By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice," and it says, "By me princes rule."

הָא לְמַדְתָּ שֶׁכֶּתֶר תּוֹרָה גְּדוֹל מִשְׁנֵיהֶם:

Behold, you have learned from this that the crown of Torah is greater than both of them.

הַלָּכָה ב

Halacha 2 · Precedence of a Torah Scholar Mamzer Over an Unlearned High Priest

אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים

The Sages said in the Mishnah:

מַמְזֵר תִּלְמִיד חָכָם

a mamzer who is a disciple of a Sage

קוֹדֵם לְכוֹהֵן גָּדוֹל עִם הָאֶרֶץ

precedes a Kohen Gadol who is an unlearned person in honor and for saving his life,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

as it is said in the verse in Mishlei (3:15) regarding the Torah:

"יָקָרָה הִיא מִפְּנִינִים".

"Precious it is more than pearls"—

מִכֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל

which the Sages expound to mean: it is more precious than a Kohen Gadol

שֶׁנִּכְנָס לְפָנֵי וְלִפְנֵימִים:

who enters into the innermost sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, on Yom Kippur, if he is an ignoramus.

אין לך מצוה בכל המצוות כולן

There is not for you a mitzvah among all the mitzvos, all of them,

שהיא שקולה כנגד תלמוד תורה

that is equal to the study of Torah;

אלא תלמוד תורה כנגד כל המצוות כולן

rather, the study of Torah is against—meaning, it outweighs—all the mitzvos, all of them,

שהתלמוד מביא לידי מעשה.

because study brings to the hands of deed.

לפיכך התלמוד קודם למעשה בכל מקום:

Therefore, study precedes deed in every place.

היה לפניו עשיית מצוה ותלמוד תורה.

If there was before him a choice between the performance of a mitzvah and the study of Torah,

אם אפשר למצוה להעשות על ידי אחרים

if it is possible for the mitzvah to be done by the hands of others,

לא יפסיק תלמודו.

he shall not interrupt his study.

ואם לאו

And if not, meaning the mitzvah cannot be performed by anyone else,

יעשה המצוה ויחזור לתלמודו:

he shall perform the mitzvah and then immediately return to his study.

תחלת דינו של אדם

The beginning of the judgment of a person in the World to Come is that

אינו נדון אלא על התלמוד

he is not judged except on his Torah study,

ואחר כך על שאר מעשיו.

and after that he is judged on the rest of his deeds.

לפיכך אמרו חכמים

Therefore, the Sages said that

לעולם יעסק אדם בתורה

always should a person occupy himself in the Torah,

בין לשמה בין שלא לשמה

whether for its sake or whether not for its sake,

שמתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה:

for from within learning not for its sake, he eventually comes to learn it for its sake.

הלכה ו

Halacha 6 · The Proper Path to Acquire the Crown of Torah

מי שנשאף לבו לקיים מצוה זו פראוי

One whose heart inspires him to fulfill this mitzvah of learning Torah properly,

ולהיות מקתיר בכתר תורה.

and to be crowned with the crown of Torah,

לא יסיח דעתו לדברים אחרים.

should not divert his mind to other matters.

ולא ישים על לבו שיקנה תורה עם העושר והכבוד כאחת.

And he should not set upon his heart that he will acquire Torah along with wealth and honor as one.

משנה אבות ו ד "כך היא דרכה של תורה.

As the Mishnah in Avos 6:4 states: "Such is the path of Torah:

פת במלח תאכל

bread with salt you shall eat,

ומים במשורה תשתה

and water by measure you shall drink,

ועל הארץ תישן

and upon the ground you shall sleep,

וחיי צער תחיה

and a life of deprivation you shall live,

ובתורה אתה עמל."

and in Torah you toil."

ולא עליך הדבר לגמר

And yet, **not upon you is the matter to complete** the entire Torah,

ולא אתה בן חורין לבטל ממנה.

and at the same time, **not are you a free man to desist from it** entirely.

ואם הרבית תורה הרבית שכר.

And if you have **increased** your study of Torah, **you have increased** your reward,

והשכר לפי הצער:

and the reward is according to the **pain** and effort you invest.

הלכה ז

Halacha 7 · Making Torah Study Fixed and the Prohibition of Delaying It

שמן תאמר

Perhaps you will say to yourself:

עד שאקבץ ממון

"Until the time **that I gather** enough **money**,

אחזר ואקרא.

only then **I will return** and **I will study**; or,

עד שאקנה מה שאני צריך

until the time **that I buy what that I need** for my household,

ואפנה מעסקי

and **I will be free** from my **business** affairs,

וְאַחֲזֵר וְאֶקְרָא.

and only then I will return and I will study.”

אם תַּעֲלֶה מַחְשָׁבָה זוֹ עַל לִבְךָ

If such a thought arises upon your heart,

אִין אַתָּה זֹכֶה לְכִתְרָה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה לְעוֹלָם.

you will not merit the crown of Torah forever.

אֶלָּא עֲשֵׂה תוֹרָתְךָ קֹבֵעַ

Rather, make your Torah study fixed,

וּמְלֹאכֶתְךָ עֲרָאִי

and your work temporary.

משנה אבות ב ד

As the Sages taught in **Mishnah Avos**, chapter **two**, mishnah **four**:

וְלֹא תֹאמַר "לְכַשְׁאֲפֹנָה אֲשָׁנָה

“And do not say, ‘When I am free I will study,’

שָׁמָּה לֹא תִפְנֶה”:

perhaps you will not be free.”

הַלְכָּה ח

Halacha 8 · Torah is Not Found in the Proud or in Businessmen

כָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה

It is written in the Torah regarding the acquisition of Torah knowledge:

גמרא עירובין נה א "לא בשמים היא ולא מעבר לים היא."

as the Gemara in Eruvin 55a expounds on the verse, "It is not in heaven, and it is not beyond the sea."

לא בשמים היא

It is not in heaven means that

לא בגסי הרוח היא מצויה

it is not found among those of a haughty spirit who hold themselves high like the heavens,

וְלֹא בַמֶּהֱלָכִי מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם הִיא.

and it is **not** found **among** those who travel beyond the sea constantly in pursuit of wealth.

לְפִיכָּה אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים

Therefore, the Sages said in the

משנה אבות ב ה "לא כל המרבה בסחורה מחכים".

Mishnah in Avos 2:5, "Not everyone who increases in business becomes wise."

וְצִוּוּ חֲכָמִים

And the Sages commanded us in Avos 4:10,

הוֹי מִמַּעַט בְּעֵסֶק וְעֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה:

"Minimize business dealings and occupy yourself with the Torah."

הִלָּכָה ט

Halacha 9· Torah is Compared to Water and the Humility Required to Acquire It

דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה נִמְשָׁלוּ בַּמַּיִם

The words of Torah are compared to water,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר יִשְׁעִיָּה נָה א "הוֹי כָּל צָמֵא לָכוּ לַמַּיִם".

as it is said in the Navi Yeshayahu, "Ho, everyone who is thirsty, go to the water."

לֵאמֹר לָךְ

This is to say to you:

מַה מַּיִם אֵינָם מִתְכַּנְּסִין בְּמָקוֹם מִדְּרוֹן

Just as water does not collect in a place of a slope,

אֶלָּא נִזְחָ לִין מֵעָלָיו וּמִתְקַבְּצִים בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁבוּרָן

but flows from upon it and gathers in a place of a depression, a low and hollow basin,

כֹּךְ דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה אֵינָם נִמְצָאִים בְּגִסֵּי הָרוּחַ

so the words of Torah are not found in the haughty of spirit,

וְלֹא בְּלֵב כָּל גִּבְהַ לֵּב

and not in the heart of any haughty of heart,

אֶלָּא בְּדַכָּא וּשְׁפַל רוּחַ

but only in the humble and lowly of spirit,

שמתאבק בעפר רגלי החכמים

who makes himself dusty in the dust of the feet of the Sages,

ומסיר התאוות ותענוגי הזמן מלבו

and removes the desires and pleasures of the time from his heart,

ועושה מלאכה בכל יום מעט כדי חייו

and does melacha in every day a little, just sufficient for his sustenance,

אם לא היה לו מה יאכל

if there was not to him what he will eat otherwise,

ושאר יומו ולילו עוסק בתורה:

and the rest of his day and his night he occupies himself with the Torah.

הלכה י

Halacha 10 · The Prohibition of Benefiting from Torah and the Obligation to Work

כל המשים על לבו

Anyone who places upon his heart

שיעסק בתורה ולא יעשה מלאכה

that he will engage in Torah and not do work

ויתפרנס מן הצדקה

and will be sustained from charity,

הרי זה חלל את השם

behold this one desecrates the Name of Hashem,

ובזה את התורה

and dishonors the Torah,

וכבה מאור הדת

and extinguishes from the light of the faith,

וגרם רעה לעצמו

and causes evil to himself,

ונטל חייו מן העולם הבא.

and removes his life from the world to come.

לְפִי שְׂאָסוּר לְהִנּוּת מִדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

Because it is forbidden to benefit from words of Torah in this world.

אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים

As the Sages said in the Mishnah in Avos, "Anyone who benefits from words of Torah removes his life from the world."

וְעוֹד צִוּוּ וְאָמְרוּ

And further they commanded and said, "Do not make them a crown to magnify oneself with them, nor an axe to chop with them."

וְעוֹד צִוּוּ וְאָמְרוּ

And further they commanded and said, "Love work and hate Rabbinat,"

וְכָל תּוֹרָה שֶׁאֵין עִמָּה מְלָאכָה סוּפָה בְּטִלָּה וְגוֹרָרֶת עוֹן.

"and all Torah that is not with it work, its end is nullified and drags sin."

וְסוֹף אָדָם זֶה שֶׁיִּהְיֶה מְלַסְטִים אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת:

And the end of this man is that he will rob the people.

הַלְכָּה יֵא

Halacha 11 · The Great Virtue of Earning a Livelihood from One's Own Toil

מַעֲלָה גְדוֹלָה הִיא

It is a great virtue

לְמִי שֶׁהוּא מְתַפְרֵן מִמַּעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו.

for one who sustains himself from the work of his hands,

וּמִדַּת חֲסִידִים הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים הִיא.

and it is the trait of the pious ones of the early generations.

וּבְזֶה זִוְכָה לְכָל כְּבוֹד וְטוֹבָה

And through this, he merits all honor and goodness

שֶׁבְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְלְעוֹלָם הַבָּא

that is in this world and for the World to Come,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר תְּהִלִּים כַּח ב' "יִגִּיעַ כַּפְּיָךְ כִּי תֹאכַל אֲשֶׁרִיךָ וְטוֹב לָךְ"

as it is said in Tehillim 128:2, "The toil of your hands when you eat, praiseworthy are you and it is good for you."

משנה אבות ו ד "אשריך בעולם הזה

And the Sages expounded in Mishnah Avos 6:4, "Praise worthy are you in this world,

וטוב לך לעולם הבא"

and it is good for you in the World to Come,"

שכלו טוב:

which is entirely good.

הלכה יב

Halacha 12 · Toil, Self-Sacrifice, and Vocalization in the Study of Torah

אין דברי תורה מתקיימין במי שמרפה עצמו עליהן.

Words of Torah are not established in one who slackens himself upon them, treating his learning with laziness or as a secondary pursuit.

ולא באלו שלומדין מתוך עדון ומתוך אכילה ושתייה.

And not in those who study from a lifestyle of pleasure and from eating and drinking, seeking physical comforts while trying to acquire Torah.

אלא במי שממית עצמו עליהן ומצער גופו תמיד

But rather, they are established only in one who kills himself upon them through intense dedication, and afflicts his body constantly by depriving himself of physical indulgences for the sake of learning,

ולא יתן שנה לעיניו ולעפעפיו תנומה.

and will not give sleep to his eyes and to his eyelids slumber, choosing instead to toil in Torah night and day.

אמרו חכמים דרך רמז במדבר יט יד "זאת התורה אדם כי ימות באהל"

The Sages said by way of allusion to this concept, based on the verse, "This is the Torah: a man when he dies in a tent,"

אין התורה מתקיימת אלא במי שממית עצמו באהלי החכמים.

the Torah is not established except in one who kills himself in the tents of the Sages, dedicating his entire being to the study halls.

וכן אמר שלמה בחכמתו משלי כד י "התרפית ביום צרה צר כחכה".

And so said Shlomo in his wisdom: "If you slackened in a day of distress, narrow is your strength," meaning that if one is lazy in Torah study, he will lack the spiritual strength to stand in times of trouble.

ועוד אמר קהלת ב ט "אף חכמתי עמדה לי"

And further, he said in Koheles: "Even my wisdom stood for me,"

חכמה שלמדתי באף היא עמדה לי.

which the Sages expounded to mean: the wisdom that I learned in anger and self-deprivation, it stood for me and remained with me.

אמרו חכמים ברית כרותה שכל היגע בתורתו בבית המדרש לא במהרה הוא משכח.

The Sages said: A covenant is made that anyone who wearies in his Torah study in the house of study, not quickly he forgets his learning.

וכל היגע בתלמודו בצנעה מחכים שנאמר משלי יא ב "ואת צנועים חכמה".

And anyone who wearies in his study in private becomes wise, as it is said: "And with the modest is wisdom."

וכל המשמיע קולו בשעת תלמודו תלמודו מתקיים בידו.

And anyone who makes heard his voice at the time of his study, his study is established in his hand and is preserved in his memory.

אבל הקורא בלחש במהרה הוא שוכח:

But one who reads in a whisper, quickly he forgets what he has learned.

הלכה יג

Halacha 13 · The Supreme Importance of Nighttime Torah Study and the Severity of Neglecting It

אף על פי שמצוה ללמד ביום ובלילה

Even though it is a mitzvah to study Torah both by day and by night,

אין אדם למד רב חכמתו אלא בלילה.

a person does not acquire most of his wisdom except at night.

לפיכך מי שרצה לזכות בכתר התורה

Therefore, whoever desires to merit the crown of the Torah

יזהר בכל לילותיו

should be careful with all his nights,

ולא יאבד אפלו אחד מהן

and not lose even one of them

בשנה ואכילה ושתיה ושיחה וכיוצא בהן

to sleep, and eating, and drinking, and conversation, and the like with them,

אלא בתלמוד תורה ודברי חכמה.

except in study of Torah and words of wisdom.

אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים אֵין רִנָּה שֶׁל תּוֹרָה אֶלָּא בַּלַּיְלָה

The Sages said: There is no song of Torah except at night,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "קוּמִי רִנֵּי בַּלַּיְלָה".

as it is said in Eichah, "Arise, sing out at night."

וְכֹל הָעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה בַּלַּיְלָה

And anyone who occupies himself with Torah at night,

חוֹט שֶׁל חֶסֶד נִמְשָׁךְ עָלָיו בַּיּוֹם

a strand of favor is extended over him by day,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "יוֹמָם יֵצֵה ה' חֶסֶדּוֹ וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירָה עִמִּי תִפְלָה לְאֵל חַיִּי".

as it is said in Tehillim, "By day He ordains, Hashem, His kindness, and at night His song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life."

וְכֹל בֵּית שֶׁאֵין נִשְׁמָעִים בּוֹ דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה בַּלַּיְלָה

And any house in which is not heard in it words of Torah at night,

אֵשׁ אוֹכֶלֶתּוֹ

fire consumes it,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "כָּל חֹשֶׁךְ טָמוּן לְצַפּוֹנָיו תֹּאכְלֶהוּ אֵשׁ לֹא נִפָּח".

as it is said in Iyov, "All darkness is hidden for his treasures, shall consume him a fire not blown."

בְּזֶה דִּבְרָה ה' זֶה שֶׁלֹּא הִשְׁגִּיתָ עַל דְּבָרֵי תּוֹרָה כָּל עֶקֶר.

The pasuk says, "Because the word of Hashem he has despised" — this refers to one who does not pay attention to words of Torah at all.

וְכֵן כָּל שֶׁאִפְשָׁר לוֹ לְעֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה וְאֵינוֹ עוֹסֵק

And likewise, anyone for whom it is possible for him to occupy himself with Torah and he does not occupy himself,

אוֹ שֶׁקִּרָא וְשָׁנָה וּפָרַשׁ לְהַבְלִי עוֹלָם

or who read Chumash and studied Mishnah and turned away to the vanities of the world,

וְהִנִּיחַ תַּלְמוּדּוֹ וּזְנָחוֹ

and left his study and abandoned it,

הֲרִי זֶה בְּכָלֵל בּוֹזֵה דִּבְרָה ה'.

behold, this one is in the category of one who despises the word of Hashem.

אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים כָּל הַמְבַטֵּל אֶת הַתּוֹרָה מֵעֶשֶׂר

The Sages said: Whoever neglects the Torah from wealth,

סוֹפוֹ לִבְטֹלָה מֵעֲנִי

his end is to neglect it from poverty;

וְכָל הַמְקַיֵּם אֶת הַתּוֹרָה מֵעֲנִי

and whoever maintains the Torah from poverty,

סוֹפוֹ לְקַיְימָהּ מֵעֶשֶׂר.

his end is to maintain it from wealth.

וְעֲנִין זֶה מְפָרֵשׁ הוּא בַּתּוֹרָה,

And this matter, this is explicit in the Torah,

הָרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר "תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא עָבַדְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְטוֹב לֵבָב מִכָּל"

behold, it says: "Because that not you served Hashem your God with joy and with goodness of heart from an abundance of everything,"

"וְעָבַדְתָּ אֶת אֹיְבֶיךָ."

"and you shall serve your enemies."

וְאוֹמֵר "לְמַעַן עֲנִיתֶךָ"

And it says: "In order to afflict you,"

וְאוֹמֵר "לְהֵיטִיבָךָ בְּאַחֲרִיתֶךָ."

and it says: "To do you good in your end."

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Rambam begins by explaining that while the crowns of priesthood and royalty were given to Aaron and Dovid respectively, the crown of Torah is set aside for every Jew to acquire through diligent effort. Because the Torah is more precious than anything else, the study of Torah is equated to all the other mitzvot combined, as study ultimately leads to proper deed. Practically, if a Yid is learning and is confronted with a mitzvah that can be performed by someone else, he should not interrupt his learning; however, if there is no one else available to perform the mitzvah, he must interrupt his study to fulfill Hashem's will.

My dear talmid, look at the beautiful words of the Rambam. The crown of priesthood was given to Aaron and his children; the crown of royalty was given to Dovid HaMelech and his descendants. But the crown of Torah? It is not a closed dynasty. It is sitting in the corner, waiting, ready for any single Yid who wants to come and take it. It does not matter where you come from or what your background is. The Rambam tells us that even a manzer who is a talmid chacham takes precedence over an ignorant Kohen Gadol who enters the Holy of Holies. The crown of Torah is yours for the taking, but it requires you to step forward and claim it.

How do we claim it? The Rambam gives us the secret: "Make your Torah fixed and your work temporary." The yetzer hara loves to whisper, "Just wait until I finish this business deal, or until I get my finances in order, then I will sit down and learn properly." Do not fall into this trap! If you wait until you are free, you may never be free. The Torah is compared to water, which only flows down to the lowest place. It does not stay with the haughty or those who seek luxury and ease. It rests with the humble, with those who are willing to squeeze themselves, to minimize their worldly involvements, and to put their learning first.

True acquisition of Torah comes when a person is willing to exert himself, especially in the quiet hours of the night when the world is asleep. The Sages tell us that the sweet song of Torah is heard most clearly at night. When you make sacrifices for your learning, even small ones, that Torah becomes a part of your very essence. It is not about angelic perfection; it is about a real, working Yid choosing to carve out holy time from the physical demands of this world.

Today, do not say "when I have time, I will learn." Instead, set a fixed, unbreakable time for your learning today, even if it is just fifteen minutes, and treat it as the most important appointment on your calendar, letting nothing else push it aside.

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CHAPTER PREVIEW

We begin our learning of Pirkei Avos by establishing the golden chain of the mesorah, tracing how Moshe Rabbeinu received the Torah at Sinai and passed it down through the generations. This holy transmission went from Yehoshua to the elders, the prophets, and the Men of the Great Assembly, showing us that our oral tradition is unbroken and divine. From there, the chapter introduces the early pairs of Sages, the Zugos, who carried the torch of Torah with immense holiness.

As we delve into their teachings, we find fundamental guidance for our daily avodah and yiras Shamayim. The Sages guide us on how to build a home of Torah, how to conduct ourselves in judgment, how to treat our fellow Jews with warmth, and how to guard our speech. We are introduced to the timeless wisdom of Hillel and Shammai, who teach us the path of peace, diligence in learning, and serving Hashem with absolute sincerity.

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

מִשְׁנָה א

הַשְּׁלֵשֶׁת שֶׁל קַבְּלַת הַתּוֹרָה וְהַנְּהִיגַת הַחֲכָמִים

Mishna 1 • The Chain of Torah Transmission and the Three Directives of the Great Assembly

מֹשֶׁה קִבֵּל תּוֹרָה מִסִּינַי, וּמִסִּינַי לְיֵהוֹשֻׁעַ, וְיֵהוֹשֻׁעַ לְזִקְנִים, וְזִקְנִים
and the elders to the elders and Yehoshua to Yehoshua and transmitted it from Sinai Torah received Moshe
לְנָבִיאִים, וְנָבִיאִים מִסִּינַי לְאַנְשֵׁי כְּנֶסֶת הַגְּדוּלָּה. הֵם אָמְרוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה
three said They the Great the Assembly to the Men of transmitted it and the prophets to the prophets
דְּבָרִים, יְהוּי מִתּוֹנִים בְּדִין, וְהַעֲמִידוּ תַלְמִידִים הֶרְבֵּה, וַעֲשׂוּ סֹגֵר לַתּוֹרָה:
for the Torah a fence and make many disciples and establish in judgment deliberate Be things

This Mishnah establishes the unbroken chain of Torah transmission from Sinai down to the Sages of the Great Assembly, who provided foundational guidance for judges and teachers.

מִשְׁנָה ב

הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁעָלִיָּהֶם הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד

Mishna 2 • The Three Pillars Upon Which the World Stands

שִׁמְעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק הָיָה מִשִּׁיְרֵי כְּנֶסֶת הַגְּדוּלָּה. הוּא הָיָה אֹמֵר, עַל
on say would he the Great the Assembly from the remnants of was the Righteous Shimon
שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוֹדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת
acts of and on the Temple service and on the Torah on stands the world things three
חֲסָדִים:
kindness

Shimon the Righteous teaches that the existence of the world depends upon Torah study, the Temple service, and acts of lovingkindness.

אֲנִיטִיגֶנוֹס אִישׁ סוֹכוֹ קִבֵּל מִשְׁמְעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק. הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר, אַל תְּהִי
be do not say would he the Righteous from Shimon received Socho a man of Antigonus

כְּעֲבָדִים הַמְשַׁמְשִׁין אֶת הָרֵב עַל מְנַת לְקִבֵּל פָּרֶס, אֲלֹא הָיוּ כְּעֲבָדִים
like servants be but a reward to receive condition on the master — who serve like servants

הַמְשַׁמְשִׁין אֶת הָרֵב שְׁלֹא עַל מְנַת לְקִבֵּל פָּרֶס, וַיְהִי מוֹרָא שָׁמַיִם
Heaven the fear of and let be a reward to receive condition on not the master — who serve

עֲלֵיכֶם:

upon you

Antigonus of Socho teaches that one should serve Hashem without the expectation of receiving a reward, while maintaining a constant fear of Heaven.

יוֹסִי בֶן יוֹעֶזֶר אִישׁ צֶרֶדָה וְיוֹסִי בֶן יוֹחָנָן אִישׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יוֹסִי
Yose from them received Yerushalayim man of Yochanan ben and Yose Zeredah man of Yoezer ben Yose

בֶּן יוֹעֶזֶר אִישׁ צֶרֶדָה אוֹמֵר, יְהִי בֵיתְךָ בֵּית וַעַד לַחֲכָמִים, וְהָיָה
and be for the Sages meeting a house of your house let be says Zeredah man of Yoezer ben

מִתַּאֲבָק בַּעֲפָר רַגְלֵיהֶם, וְהָיָה שׁוֹתָהּ בְּצִמָּא אֶת דְּבָרֵיהֶם:
their words — with thirst drinking and be their feet in the dust of attaching yourself

Yose ben Yoezer and Yose ben Yochanan transmit the tradition, advising one to make their home a gathering place for Sages.

יוֹסִי בֶן יוֹחָנָן אִישׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אוֹמֵר, יְהִי בֵיתְךָ פֶּתוּחַ לְרוֹחָה, וַיְהִי
and let be wide open your house let be says Yerushalayim a man of Yochanan son of Yose

עֲנִיִּים בְּנֵי בֵיתְךָ, וְאַל תִּרְבֶּה שִׁיחָה עִם הָאִשָּׁה. בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ אָמְרוּ,
they said with his wife the woman with conversation increase and do not your household members of poor people

קֹל וְחֹמֶר בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ חִבְרוּ. מִכָּאֵן אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים, כָּל זְמַן שֶׁאָדָם מֵרַבֶּה
increases that a man the time all the Sages said from here his fellow with the wife of and heavy a light

שִׁיחָה עִם הָאִשָּׁה, גּוֹרֵם רָעָה לְעַצְמוֹ, וּבּוֹטֵל מִדְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה, וְסוֹפּוֹ
and his end Torah from words of and desists to himself evil he causes the woman with conversation

יורש גִּיהֵנוֹם:

Gehinnom he inherits

Yose ben Yochanan teaches the importance of keeping a home open to the poor and warns against excessive conversation with women, which distracts from Torah study.

עֲשֵׂה לָךְ רֵב וְקִנְיָה לָךְ חֵבֵר

Mishna 6 · Appointing a Teacher, Acquiring a Companion, and Judging Others Favorably

יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה וְנִטַּי הָאֲרֵבֵלִי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה אָמַר,

says Perachyah son of Yehoshua from them received the Arbelite and Nittai Perachyah son of Yehoshua

עֲשֵׂה לָךְ רֵב, וְקִנְיָה לָךְ חֵבֵר, וְהָיִי דָן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם

man every — judging and be a companion for yourself and acquire a teacher for yourself make

לְכָךְ זְכוּת:

merit to the scale of

This Mishnah teaches the importance of spiritual mentorship, friendship, and giving others the benefit of the doubt.

משנה ז

הִרְחַק מִשְׁכּוֹן רָע וּמִרְשָׁע

Mishna 7 · Distancing Oneself from an Evil Neighbor and the Wicked

נִטַּי הָאֲרֵבֵלִי אָמַר, הִרְחַק מִשְׁכּוֹן רָע, וְאַל תִּתְחַבֵּר לְרָשָׁע,

with the wicked associate and do not who is evil from a neighbor distance yourself says the Arbelite Nittai

וְאַל תִּתְיַאֵשׁ מִן הַפְּרָעָנוֹת:

retribution of despair and do not

Nittai the Arbelite warns against associating with bad influences and reminds us that divine justice is inevitable.

משנה ח

הִנְהַגַּת הַדִּין עִם בְּעָלֵי הַדִּין

Mishna 8 · The Conduct of a Judge Toward Litigants

יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבַּי וְשִׁמּוֹן בֶּן שֶׁטַח קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבַּי אָמַר,

says Tabbai son of Yehudah from them received Shetach son of and Shimon Tabbai son of Yehudah

אֵל תַּעֲשֶׂה עֲצָמָה כְּעוֹרְכֵי הַדִּינִין. וּכְשִׁיְהִיו בְּעָלֵי דִינִין עוֹמְדִים

standing judgment the masters of and when are the judges like the arrangers of yourself make do not

לְפָנֶיהָ, יְהִיו בְּעֵינֶיהָ כְּרָשָׁעִים. וּכְשֶׁנִּפְטְרוּ מִלְּפָנֶיהָ, יְהִיו

they should be from before you and when they are like wicked ones in your eyes they should be before you dismissed

בְּעֵינֶיהָ כְּזָכָאִין, כְּשֶׁקִּבְּלוּ עָלֵיהֶם אֶת הַדִּין:

the judgment — upon themselves when they accepted like innocent ones in your eyes

Yehudah ben Tabbai teaches that a judge must remain completely impartial, avoiding advocacy and viewing both parties equally during and after the trial.

משנה ט

דְּרִישָׁה וְחִקְרָה שֶׁל עֲדִים וְזִהְיוּת בְּדִבְרֵי הַדִּינִים

Mishna 9 · Thorough Interrogation of Witnesses and Caution in the Words of Judges

שִׁמּוֹן בֶּן שֶׁטַח אָמַר, הָיִי מְרַבָּה לְחִקֹּר אֶת הָעֲדִים, וְהָיִי זָהִיר

careful and be the witnesses — to investigate much be says Shetach son of Shimon

בְּדִבְרֶיהָ, שְׂמָא מִתּוֹכָם יִלְמְדוּ לְשָׁקֵר:

to lie they will learn from within them lest with your words

Shimon ben Shetach warns judges to cross-examine witnesses thoroughly and to speak carefully so as not to inadvertently teach them how to fabricate testimony.

משנה י

אהבת המלאכה ושנאת הרבנות

Mishna 10 · Loving Work and Shunning Lordship and Government Intimacy

שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטָלְיוֹן קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. שְׁמַעְיָה אָמַר, אָהַב אֶת הַמְּלָאכָה, וּשְׂנָא אֶת
— and hate work — love says Shemaiah from them received and Abtalion Shemaiah
הַרְבָּנוּת, וְאַל תִּתְּוֹדַע לְרִשּׁוֹת:
to the ruling authority make yourself known and do not lordship

Shemaiah and Abtalion teach the importance of honest labor, avoiding positions of power, and keeping a safe distance from the ruling authorities.

משנה יא

אזהרה לחכמים להזהר בדבריהם מפני חלול השם

Mishna 11 · A Warning to Sages to Guard Their Words to Prevent Desecration of Heaven's Name

אַבְטָלְיוֹן אָמַר, חֲכָמִים, הִזָּהָרוּ בְּדַבְרֵיכֶם, שִׁמָּא תַּחֲבוּבוּ חֻבַּת גָּלוּת
exile the obligation of you will obligate lest with your words be careful Sages says Avtalyon
וּתְגַלּוּ לְמָקוֹם מִיַּם הָרָעִים, וְיִשְׁתּוּ הַתְּלָמִידִים הַבָּאִים אַחֲרֵיכֶם
after you who come the disciples and they will drink the evil waters to a place of and you will be exiled
וְיָמוּתוּ, וְנִמְצָא שֵׁם שָׁמַיִם מְתַחֲלָל:
is profaned Heaven the Name of and it will be found and they will die

Avtalyon warns Torah scholars to speak with extreme precision so that heretical disciples do not misinterpret their words and stray after false doctrines.

משנה יב

הנהגת הלל לאהב שלום ולקרב את הבריות

Mishna 12 · The Conduct of Hillel to Love Peace and Draw Creations Close to Torah

הֵלֵל וְשַׁמַּי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. הֵלֵל אָמַר, הֵיטֵב מִתְּלָמִידָיו שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן, אוֹהֵב
loving Aharon of from the disciples be says Hillel from them received and Shammai Hillel
שְׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שְׁלוֹם, אוֹהֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת וּמִקְרָבָן לְתוֹרָה:
to the Torah and drawing them the creations — loving peace and pursuing peace
close

Hillel teaches that one should emulate Aharon the Kohen Gadol by actively pursuing peace and bringing people closer to the Torah through love.

משנה יג

הסכנה בגאווה ובכטול תורה

Mishna 13 · The Danger of Seeking Fame and Neglecting Torah Study

הוּא הָיָה אָמַר, נָגֵד שְׁמָא, אֲבָד שְׁמָה. וְדָלָא מוֹסִיף, יָסַף.
ceases add and one who does not his name destroys his name one who makes great say used to He
וְדָלָא יָלִיף, קָטָלָא חַיִּב. וְדֹאשְׁתִּימָשׁ בְּתַגָּא, חָלַף:
passes away of the crown and one who makes use deserves death learn and one who does not

This Mishnah warns against using Torah knowledge for self-aggrandizement and emphasizes the necessity of continuous study.

משנה יד

הוא הִזָּה אומר, אם אין אני לִי, מי לִי. וכִשְׁאֲנִי לְעַצְמִי, מָה אֲנִי.

am I what for myself alone And when I am is for me who for myself I not If say used to He

וְאִם לֹא עֲכָשְׁיוּ, אִימָתִי:

when now not And if

Hillel teaches that a person must take personal responsibility for their own spiritual growth and act without delay.

מִשְׁנָה טו

קביעות התורה, מעוט דבור והסברת פנים

Mishna 15 · Making Torah Study Fixed, Speaking Little and Doing Much, and Welcoming Everyone Warmly

שַׁמַּאי אומר, עשה תורתך קבוע. אֹמֵר מְעַט וְעֹשֶׂה הַרְבֵּה, וְהוּא מְקַבֵּל אֶת

— receiving and be much and do little say fixed your Torah make says Shammai

כָּל הָאָדָם בְּסִכּוֹר פָּנִים יְפוֹת:

face expression of with a cheerful person every

Shammai teaches the importance of establishing a fixed schedule for Torah study, prioritizing actions over words, and greeting every person with a pleasant and welcoming countenance.

מִשְׁנָה טז

עשה לך רב והרחקה מן הספק

Mishna 16 · Appointing a Teacher and Avoiding Doubt and Estimations in Tithing

רַבִּן גַּמְלִיאֵל הִזָּה אומר, עשה לך רב, והסתלק מן הספק, ואל

and do not doubt from and remove yourself a teacher for yourself make say would Gamliel Rabban

תִּרְבֶּה לְעֹשֶׂר אֲמָדוֹת:

by estimation to tithe increase

Rabban Gamliel teaches the importance of establishing a halachic authority to resolve doubts and avoiding guesswork when performing mitzvos like tithing.

מִשְׁנָה יז

מעלת השתיקה והמעשה על פני הדבור

Mishna 17 · The Virtue of Silence and Action Over Mere Words

שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּנוֹ אומר, כָּל יָמֵי גְדֻלָּתִי בֵּין הַחֲכָמִים, וְלֹא מָצָאתִי לְגוֹף טוֹב

better for the body did I find and not the Sages among I grew up my days all says his son Shimon

אֶלָּא שְׁתִּיקָה. וְלֹא הַמְדָּרֶשׁ הוּא הָעֵקֶר, אֶלָּא הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. וְכָל הַמְרַבֶּה

who increases and anyone the action but the main thing is the study and not silence than

דְּבָרִים, מביא חטא:

sin brings words

Shimon the son of Rabban Gamliel teaches that silence is the best path for the body, and that practical action is superior to mere study and excessive speech.

מִשְׁנָה יח

רַבִּן שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר, עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַדִּין
justice on stands the world things three on says Gamliel ben Shimon Rabban

וְעַל הָאֱמֶת וְעַל הַשְּׁלוֹם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר זְכַרְיָה ח אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפָּט שְׁלוֹם שֹׁפֵט
judge peace and judgment of truth 8 Zechariah as it is said peace and on truth and on

בְּשַׁעְרֵיכֶם:

in your gates

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel teaches that the preservation of human society depends upon the three pillars of justice, truth, and peace.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter opens with the Men of the Great Assembly and Shimon the Righteous establishing the pillars of the world, followed by Antigonus of Socho's warning to serve Hashem without expecting reward. We then progress through the teachings of the Zugos: Yose ben Yoezer and Yose ben Yochanan on bringing Sages and the poor into our homes; Yehoshua ben Perachiah and Nittai the Arbelite on acquiring teachers and avoiding evil neighbors; Yehudah ben Tabbai and Shimon ben Shetach on careful justice; and Shemaiah and Abtalion on avoiding the ruling power and guarding one's words. Finally, Hillel and Shammai teach us to pursue peace, fix our Torah study, and receive everyone with a pleasant countenance, leading into the instructions of Rabban Gamaliel and his son Shimon on silence and action, and concluding with Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel's declaration that the world stands on justice, truth, and peace.

לְמַעַשָׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

My dear friend, look at how this first chapter of Pirkei Avos begins. It does not start with abstract philosophies, but with a chain of transmission: Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and passed it down, generation after generation, until it reached us. This tells us that our Torah is not a theory; it is a living, breathing legacy of connection. When you learn, you are not just reading a book, you are joining a chain of holy souls. And what do these sages tell us? They tell us that the world stands on Torah, avodah, and gemilus chasadim, and that the ultimate goal of all our learning is not just to speak, but to do. Shimon his son says it clearly: 'Study is not the most important thing, but actions.'

Think about Shammai's golden rule: 'Say little, but do much, and receive all men with a pleasant countenance.' How often do we promise ourselves or others big things, only to fall short? The Torah wants us to build our lives on quiet, solid action. When you greet another Yid with a warm, genuine smile, you are literally sustaining the world. You are bringing the peace and truth that Rabban Shimon ben Gamaliel says keeps the world standing.

Let us also take to heart the famous words of Hillel: 'If I am not for myself, who is for me? But if I am for my own self, what am I? And if not now, when?' We cannot wait for someone else to do our avodah for us, nor can we live only for ourselves. We must step up, take responsibility for our spiritual growth, and do it today, without putting it off.

Today, choose one small, concrete action instead of just talking about it. When you meet someone, greet them with a genuine, warm smile and a pleasant countenance, and make a fixed five minutes to learn Torah today without any distractions.

תהלים • חמשה קאפיטלער

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.

פֿאַרק ל"ב CHAPTER 32

לְדוֹד מִשְׁכִּיל אֲשֶׁרִי נָשׁוּי פֶּשַׁע כָּסוּי חֲטָאָה:
אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם לֹא יַחֲשֹׁב יְהוָה לֹא עֶזְרָא וְאִין בְּרוּחוֹ רַמְיָה:
כִּי הִחַרְשֹׁתִי בָּלוּ עֲצָמַי בְּשֹׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם:
כִּי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה תִּכְבֵּד עָלַי יְדָה נִהַפֵּה לְשׁוֹדֵי בַּחֲרֻבִּי קִיץ סָלָה:
חֲטָאתִי אוֹדִיעָה וְעוֹנִי לֹא כֹסִיתִי אֲמַרְתִּי אוֹדָה עָלַי פֶּשַׁעִי לִיהוָה וְאַתָּה נִשְׂאֵת עֶזְרָא חֲטָאתִי סָלָה:
עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חֹסִיד אֱלֹהִים לְעֵת מִצָּא רַק לְשֹׁטֵף מִיָּם רַבִּים אֱלֹהִים לֹא יִגִּיעוּ:
אַתָּה סֹתֵר לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרֵנִי רָנִי פֶלֶט תְּסוּבְּבֵנִי סָלָה:
אֲשַׁכִּילָה וְאוֹרָה בְּדֶרֶךְ זוֹ תִּלְךָ אֵינִי עֹלָה עֵינִי:
אֵל תִּהְיוּ כָּסוּס כְּפָרֵד אִין הָבִין בְּמִתְגַּוְרֵסן עֲדִיו לְבָלוֹם בַּל קָרַב אֱלֹהִים:
רַבִּים מִכְּאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בִּיהוָה חֲסֵד יְסוּבְּבֵנוּ:
שִׁמְחוּ בִיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקִים וְהִרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב:

פֿאַרק מ"ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפֹטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חֲסִיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעוֹלָה תִּפְלֹטֵנִי:
כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים מְעוּזִי לָמָּה וְנִחַתְנִי לָמָּה קוֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחֲץ אוֹיֵב:
שְׁלַח אוֹרָה וְאַמְתָּה הַמָּה יִנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הָר קוֹדֶשֶׁךָ וְאַל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:
וְאַבּוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שְׁמֹחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדָה בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים:
מִה תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה נַפְשִׁי וּמִה תִּתְהַמֵּי עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדְנוּ יְשׁוּעַת פָּנֶי וְאַלְהֵי:

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף:

אֱלֹהִים אֵל דָּמִי לָךְ אֵל תַּחֲרַשׁ וְאֵל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל:

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יִהְיֶינָיִם וּמִשְׁנֵאֶיךָ נִשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ:

עַל עֲמָךְ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וַיִּתְּעֲצּוּ עַל צָפוֹנֶיךָ:

אָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנִכְחִידֶם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזְכָּר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד:

כִּי נִוָּעֲצוּ לֵב יַחֲדוּ עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ:

אֱהִי אֲדוֹם וַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים מוֹאֵב וְהַגָּרִים:

גָּבַל וַעֲמֹן וַעֲמֶלֶק פָּלְשֶׁת עִם יִשְׁבִּי צוּר:

גַּם אֲשׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זְרוּעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סֶלָה:

עָשָׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְּיִבִּין בְּנַחֲל קִישׁוֹן:

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְּעֵין דָּאֵר הָיוּ דָמָן לְאַדְמָה:

שִׁיתֵּמוּ נְדִיבֵמוֹ כְּעֶרֶב וְכִזְאָב וְכִזְבַּח וְכִצְלָמְנָע כָּל גְּסִיכְמוֹ:

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירְשָׁה לָנוּ אֵת גְּאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:

אֱלֹהֵי שִׁיתֵּמוֹ כַּגִּלְגַּל כְּקֶשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ:

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעֶר יָעַר וְכִלְהָבָה תִּלְהַט הָרִים:

כֵּן תִּרְדָּפֶם בְּסַעֲרָךְ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תִּבְהַלֵּם:

מִלֵּא פְּנֵיהֶם קִלּוֹן וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה:

יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּבְהָלוּ עַדִּי עַד וַיִּחַפְּרוּ וַיֵּאבְדּוּ:

וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה לִבְדָּדָה עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ:

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי:

עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה שְׁמִים וְאָרֶץ:

אֵל יִתֵּן לַמוֹט רִגְלָךְ אֵל יָנוּם שְׁמֶרְךָ:

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יְהוָה שְׁמֶרְךָ יְהוָה צִלָּה עַל יַד מִיָּנָה:

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יִכָּכֶה וַיֵּרַח בִּלְיָלָהּ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמֹר צַאתְךָ וּבֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם:

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שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעַמְקִים קִרְאתֶיךָ יְהוָה:

אֲדֹנִי שְׁמַעָה בְּקוֹלִי תַּהֲיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קִשְׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנִי:

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר יְהוָה אֲדֹנִי מִי יַעֲמֵד:

כִּי עָמַךְ הִסְלִיכָה לְמַעַן תִּזְרָא:

קוֹיֵתִי יְהוָה קִוֵּיתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלֵתִי:

נַפְשִׁי לֹאֲדֹנִי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר שׁוֹמְרִים לְבַקֵּר:

יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֲסֵד וְהַרְבֵּה עֲמוֹ פְּדוּת:

וְהוּא יַפְּדֶה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל 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.'