חוּמָּשׁ עִם רַשִׁ"י · עקב · שְׁלִישִׁי

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

EIKEV · 3RD ALIYAH

📖 CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this aliyah, Moshe Rabbeinu is warning the Bnei Yisrael not to fall into the trap of thinking that they are inheriting the land of Eretz Yisrael because of their own righteousness. Moshe makes it very clear that the driving out of the Canaanite nations is davka because of those nations' wickedness, and to fulfill the oath that Hashem made to the Avos, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.

To drive this point home and break any feelings of pride, Moshe reminds the people of their history of being a stiffnecked people. He begins to recount the painful memory of the Cheit HaEgel, the Sin of the Golden Calf, reminding them how they provoked Hashem's anger at Chorev right after receiving the Torah.

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

פָּסוּק א

Pasuk 1

אַל תֹּאמַר בִּלְבָבְךָ בַּהֲדֹף יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֹתָם מִלְּפָנֶיךָ לֵאמֹר

Do not say in your heart when thrusting away Hashem your God them from before you saying

בְּצִדְקָתִי הֱבִיאַנִי יְהוָה לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וּבְרִשְׁעַת הַגּוֹיִם

because of my righteousness brought me Hashem to possess — the land this and because of the wickedness of the nations

הָאֵלֶּה יְהוָה מוֹרִישָׁם מִפָּנֶיךָ׃

these Hashem is driving them out from before you

רַשִׁ"י

אל תאמר בלבבך. צִדְקָתִי וְרִשְׁעַת הַגּוֹיִם גָּרְמוּ׃

Do not say in your heart my righteousness and the wickedness of the nations caused

פָּסוּק ב

Pasuk 2

לֹא בְצִדְקָתְךָ וּבְיֹשֶׁר לְבָבְךָ אַתָּה בָּא לָרֶשֶׁת אֶת אַרְצָם כִּי

Not because of your righteousness and because of the uprightness of your heart are you coming to possess — their land but

בִּרְשַׁעַת הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מוֹרִישָׁם מִפָּנֶיךָ וּלְמַעַן

because of the wickedness of the nations these Hashem your God is driving them out from before you and in order

הָקִים אֶת הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב׃

to fulfill — the word which swore Hashem to your fathers to Avraham to Yitzchak and to Yaakov

רַשִׁ"י

לֹא בְצִדְקָתְךָ, אַתָּה בָא לָרֶשֶׁת, כִּי בִּרְשָׁעַת הַגּוֹיִם. הֲרֵי כִּי מְשַׁמֵּשׁ
Not for your righteousness do you come to possess but for the wickedness of the nations behold the word כִּי serves

בִּלְשׁוֹן אֲלָא:
but in the meaning of

פָּסוּק ג

Pasuk 3

וְיָדַעְתָּ כִּי לֹא בְצִדְקָתְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לְךָ אֶת הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה
And you shall know that not for your righteousness Hashem your God is giving to you — the land the good

הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ כִּי עַם קְשֵׁה עֹרֶף אָתָּה:
this to possess it for a people stiff of neck you are

פָּסוּק ד

Pasuk 4

זְכֹר אַל תִּשְׁכַּח אֵת אֲשֶׁר הִקְצַפְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמִּדְבָּר לְמִן הַיּוֹם
Remember do not forget — how you provoked Hashem your God in the wilderness from the day

אֲשֶׁר יָצָאתָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַד בֹּאֲכֶם עַד הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה מַמְרִים
that you went out from the land of Mitzrayim until your coming to the place this rebellious

הֱיִיתֶם עִם יְהוָה:
with Hashem you have been

פָּסוּק ה

Pasuk 5

וּבְחֹרֵב הִקְצַפְתֶּם אֶת יְהוָה וַיִּתְאַנַּף יְהוָה בָּכֶם לְהַשְׁמִיד אֶתְכֶם:
And at Chorev you provoked — Hashem and was angry Hashem with you to destroy you

פָּסוּק ו

Pasuk 6

בַּעֲלֹתִי הָהָרָה לָקַחַת לוּחֹת הָאֲבָנִים לוּחֹת הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת
when I ascended the mountain to receive the tablets of the stones the tablets of the covenant that made

יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם וָאֵשֵׁב בָּהָר אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה לֶחֶם לֹא
Hashem with you and I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights bread not

אָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתִיתִי:
did I eat and water not did I drink

רַשִׁ"י

וְאשב בהר. אֵין יְשִׁיבָה אֶלָּא לְשׁוֹן עַכָּבָה מגילה כ"א :
And I stayed on the mountain there is no sitting but an expression of delaying Megillah 21a

פָּסוּק ז

Pasuk 7

וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה אֵלַי אֶת שְׁנֵי לוּחֹת הָאֲבָנִים כְּתֻבִים בְּאֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים

And He gave Hashem to me — the two of the tablets of the stones written with the finger of God

וַעֲלֵיהֶם כְּכָל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם בָּהָר מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ

and upon them like all of the words that Hashem spoke with you on the mountain from the midst of the fire

בְּיוֹם הַקָּהָל׃

on the day of the assembly

רַשִּׁ"י

לוחת. לוחת כְּתִיב שֶׁשְּׁתֵּיהֶן שָׁוות תנחומא׃

Tablets luchas is written that both of them were equal Tanchuma

פָּסוּק ח

Pasuk 8

וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לָיְלָה נָתַן יְהוָה אֵלַי אֶת שְׁנֵי

And it was at the end of forty day and forty night gave Hashem to me — the two of

לֻחֹת הָאֲבָנִים לֻחוֹת הַבְּרִית׃

tablets of the stones tablets of the covenant

פָּסוּק ט

Pasuk 9

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי קוּם רֵד מַהֵר מִזֶּה כִּי שִׁחֵת עַמְּךָ אֲשֶׁר

And He said Hashem to me arise go down quickly from here for has corrupted your people whom

הוֹצֵאתָ מִמִּצְרָיִם סָרוּ מַהֵר מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִם עָשׂוּ

you brought out from Mitzrayim they strayed quickly from the path which I commanded them they made

לָהֶם מַסֵּכָה׃

for themselves a molten image

פָּסוּק י

Pasuk 10

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר רָאִיתִי אֶת הָעָם הַזֶּה וְהִנֵּה עַם קְשֵׁה עֹרֶף

And said Hashem to me saying I have seen — this the nation and behold a nation stiff of neck

הוּא׃

it is

פָּסוּק יא

Pasuk 11

הֶרֶף מִמֶּנִּי וְאַשְׁמִידֵם וְאֶמְחֶה אֶת שְׁמָם מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם וְאֶעֱשֶׂה

desist from Me and I will destroy them and I will blot out — their name from under the heavens and I will make

אוֹתְךָ לְגוֹי עָצוּם וָרָב מִמֶּנּוּ׃

than they and more numerous mighty into a nation you

פָּסוּק יב

Pasuk 12

וָאֵפֶן וָאֵרֶד מִן הָהָר וְהָהָר בֹּעֵר בָּאֵשׁ וּשְׁנֵי לֻחֹת

the Tablets of and the two of with fire was burning and the mountain the mountain from and I went down And I turned

הַבְּרִית עַל שְׁתֵּי יָדָי׃

hands my two were upon the Covenant

פָּסוּק יג

Pasuk 13

וָאֵרֶא וְהִנֵּה חֲטָאתֶם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם עֲשִׂיתֶם לָכֶם עֵגֶל מַסֵּכָה

molten metal a calf of for yourselves you had made your God to Hashem you had sinned and behold And I saw

סַרְתֶּם מַהֵר מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם׃

you Hashem commanded which the path from quickly you had strayed

פָּסוּק יד

Pasuk 14

וָאֶתְפֹּשׂ בִּשְׁנֵי הַלֻּחֹת וָאַשְׁלִכֵם מֵעַל שְׁתֵּי יָדָי וָאֲשַׁבְּרֵם לְעֵינֵיכֶם׃

before your eyes and I smashed them hands my two from upon and I flung them tablets · the two And I gripped

פָּסוּק טו

Pasuk 15

וָאֶתְנַפַּל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כָּרִאשֹׁנָה אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה לֶחֶם לֹא

not bread nights and forty days forty as the first time Hashem before And I threw myself

אָכַלְתִּי וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתִיתִי עַל כָּל חַטַּאתְכֶם אֲשֶׁר חֲטָאתֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע

the evil to do you sinned which your sin all of because of did I drink not and water did I eat

בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְהַכְעִיסוֹ׃

to anger Him Hashem in the eyes of

רַ"שִׁ"י

ואתנפל לפני ה' כראשנה ארבעים יום. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר שמות ל"ב וְעַתָּה אֶעֱלֶה אֶל

to I will go up and now thirty-two Shemos as it is said days forty as the first Hashem before And I fell down

ה' אוּלַי אֲכַפְּרָה, בְּאוֹתָהּ עֲלִיָּה נִתְעַכַּבְתִּי אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם, נִמְצְאוּ כָּלִים

terminating they are found days forty I tarried ascent at that I may atone perhaps Hashem

בְּכ"ט בְּאָב, שֶׁהוּא עָלָה בְּשְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר בְּתַמּוּז, בּוֹ בַּיּוֹם נִתְרַצָּה

He became reconciled same day on that of Tammuz · on the eighteenth ascended since he of Av on the twenty-ninth

לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַר לוֹ לְמֹשֶׁה פְּסָל לְךָ שְׁנֵי לֻחוֹת שם ל"ד עָשָׂה עוֹד

another he stayed thirty-four Shemos tablets two for yourself hew to Moshe to him and He said with Israel

אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם, נִמְצְאוּ כָּלִים בְּיוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים, בּוֹ בַּיּוֹם נִתְרַצָּה הַקָּבָ"ה

the Holy One was reconciled same day on that Atonement on the Day of terminating they are found days forty

לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׂמְחָה וְאָמַר לוֹ לְמֹשֶׁה סָלַחְתִּי כִּדְבָרֶךָ בְּמִדְבַּר י"ד , לְכָךְ
therefore fourteen Bamidbar according to your word I have forgiven to Moshe to him and He said with joy with Israel

הֻקְבַּע לִמְחִילָה וְלִסְלִיחָה, וּמִנַּיִן שֶׁנִּתְרַצָּה בְּרָצוֹן שָׁלֵם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
because it is stated complete with goodwill that He was reconciled and from where and for forgiveness for pardon it was appointed

בָּאַרְבָּעִים שֶׁל לוּחוֹת אַחֲרוֹנוֹת דִּבְרִים י' וְאָנֹכִי עָמַדְתִּי בָּהָר כַּיָּמִים
according to the days in the mountain stayed and I ten Devarim the last tablets of in the forty

הָרִאשׁוֹנִים, מַה הָרִאשׁוֹנִים בְּרָצוֹן אַף הָאַחֲרוֹנִים בְּרָצוֹן, אֶמַר מֵעַתָּה אֶמְצָעִיִּים
the middle ones from now say were in goodwill the last so too were in goodwill the first just as the first

הָיוּ בְּכַעַס:
were in anger

פָּסוּק ט ז

Pasuk 16

כִּי יָגֹרְתִי מִפְּנֵי הָאַף וְהַחֵמָה אֲשֶׁר קָצַף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם לְהַשְׁמִיד אֶתְכֶם
— you to destroy against you Hashem was angry that and the wrath the anger because of I dreaded For

וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֵלַי גַּם בַּפַּעַם הַהִוא:
that at the time also to me Hashem and listened

פָּסוּק י ז

Pasuk 17

וּבְאַהֲרֹן הִתְאַנַּף יְהוָה מְאֹד לְהַשְׁמִידוֹ וָאֶתְפַּלֵּל גַּם בְּעַד אַהֲרֹן בָּעֵת
at the time Aaron on behalf of also and I prayed to destroy him very much Hashem was angry And with Aaron

הַהִוא
that

רַשִׁ"י

ובאהרן התאנף ה'. לְפִי שֶׁשָּׁמַע לָכֶם:
to you that he listened because Hashem was angry and with Aaron

רַשִׁ"י

להשמידו. זֶה כִּלּוּי בָּנִים, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר עמוס ב' וָאַשְׁמִיד פִּרְיוֹ מִמַּעַל:
from above his fruit and I destroyed two Amos states it and so children extermination of this to destroy him

רַשִׁ"י

ואתפלל גם בעד אהרן. וְהוֹעִילָה תְּפִלָּתִי לְכַפֵּר מֶחֱצָה, וּמֵתוּ שְׁנַיִם וְנִשְׁאֲרוּ
and remained two and died half to atone my prayer and it availed Aharon on behalf of also And I prayed

הַשְּׁנַיִם:
the two

פָּסוּק י ח

Pasuk 18

וְאֶת חַטַּאתְכֶם אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת הָעֵגֶל לָקַחְתִּי וָאֶשְׂרֹף אֹתוֹ בָּאֵשׁ וָאֶכֹּת
and I crushed in the fire it and I burned I took the calf — you made which your sin and —

אֹתוֹ טָחוֹן הֵיטֵב עַד אֲשֶׁר דַּק לְעָפָר וָאַשְׁלְךְ אֶת עֲפָרוֹ אֶל הַנַּחַל
the brook into its dust — and I threw to dust it was fine that until well grinding it

הַיֹּרֵד מִן הָהָר׃
the mountain from that flows down

רַשִׁ״י

טחון. לְשׁוֹן הַוָּיָה, כְּמוֹ הָלוֹךְ וְכַלּוֹת, מולא"נט בְּלַעַז׃
in Old French moulant and destroying going on like continuous action an expression of grinding

פָּסוּק יט

Pasuk 19

וּבְתַבְעֵרָה וּבְמַסָּה וּבְקִבְרֹת הַתַּאֲוָה מַקְצִפִים הֱיִיתֶם אֶת יְהוָה׃
Hashem — you were provokers of wrath the craving and at the graves of and at Massah And at Taberah

פָּסוּק כ

Pasuk 20

וּבִשְׁלֹחַ יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם מִקָּדֵשׁ בַּרְנֵעַ לֵאמֹר עֲלוּ וּרְשׁוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
that the land — and possess go up saying Barnea from Kadesh you Hashem And when sending

נָתַתִּי לָכֶם וַתַּמְרוּ אֶת פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְלֹא הֶאֱמַנְתֶּם לוֹ
Him did you believe and not your God Hashem the word of — and you rebelled against to you I have given

וְלֹא שְׁמַעְתֶּם בְּקֹלוֹ׃
to His voice did you listen and not

פָּסוּק כא

Pasuk 21

מַמְרִים הֱיִיתֶם עִם יְהוָה מִיּוֹם דַּעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם׃
— you my knowing from the day of Hashem with you have been rebellious

פָּסוּק כב

Pasuk 22

וָאֶתְנַפַּל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֵת אַרְבָּעִים הַיּוֹם וְאֵת אַרְבָּעִים הַלַּיְלָה אֲשֶׁר
that the nights forty and — the days forty — Hashem before And I prostrated

הִתְנַפַּלְתִּי כִּי אָמַר יְהוָה לְהַשְׁמִיד אֶתְכֶם׃
you to destroy Hashem said because I prostrated

רַשִׁ״י

ואתנפל וגו'. אֵלּוּ הֵן עַצְמָם הָאֲמוּרִים לְמַעְלָה, וּכְפָלָן כָּאן, לְפִי שֶׁכָּתוּב
that is written because here and he repeated them above that are mentioned themselves are these etc. And I fell down

כָּאן סֵדֶר תְּפִלָּתוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ה' אֱלֹהִים אַל תַּשְׁחֵת עַמְּךָ וגו' :
etc. Your people destroy do not God Hashem as it is said his prayer the order of here

פָּסוּק כג

Pasuk 23

וָאֶתְפַּלֵּל אֶל יְהוָה וָאֹמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אַל תַּשְׁחֵת עַמְּךָ וְנַחֲלָתְךָ אֲשֶׁר

And I prayed to Hashem and I said my Lord Hashem do not destroy Your people and Your inheritance whom

פָּדִיתָ בְגָדְלֶךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתָ מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה׃

You redeemed in Your greatness whom You brought out from Mitzrayim with a hand strong

פָּסוּק כד

Pasuk 24

זְכֹר לַעֲבָדֶיךָ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב אַל תֵּפֶן אֶל קְשִׁי

Remember for Your servants for Avraham for Yitzchak and for Yaakov do not turn to the stubbornness of

הָעָם הַזֶּה וְאֶל רִשְׁעוֹ וְאֶל חַטָּאתוֹ׃

the people this and to its wickedness and to its sinfulness

פָּסוּק כה

Pasuk 25

פֶּן יֹאמְרוּ הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתָנוּ מִשָּׁם מִבְּלִי יְכֹלֶת יְהוָה לַהֲבִיאָם אֶל

lest they will say the land which You brought us out from there from a lack of ability of Hashem to bring them to

הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָהֶם וּמִשִּׂנְאָתוֹ אוֹתָם הוֹצִיאָם לַהֲמִתָם בַּמִּדְבָּר׃

the land which He spoke to them and from His hatred of them He brought them out to slay them in the wilderness

פָּסוּק כו

Pasuk 26

וְהֵם עַמְּךָ וְנַחֲלָתֶךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתָ בְּכֹחֲךָ הַגָּדֹל וּבִזְרֹעֲךָ

And they are Your people and Your inheritance whom You brought out with Your power the great and with Your arm

הַנְּטוּיָה׃

the outstretched

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Moshe Rabbeinu reviews the tragic events of the Golden Calf, describing how he ascended the mountain for forty days and forty nights without food or water to receive the Luchos, only to be told by Hashem to go down quickly because the people had corrupted themselves. Moshe recounts seeing the calf, smashing the Luchos before their eyes, and throwing himself down in tefillah for another forty days to avert Hashem's decree of destruction against the nation and against Aaron. He describes destroying the calf itself, grinding it to dust, and goes on to list other places where the Bnei Yisrael provoked Hashem, such as Taberah, Massah, Kibros HaTa'avah, and Kadesh Barnea, concluding with his heartfelt tefillah pleading with Hashem to spare His nation for the sake of the Avos and His great Name.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Torah is warning us here about a very dangerous yet natural human reaction. When things go good for us, when we see hatzlahah in our lives, the yetzer hara immediately whispers in our ear: "It is because of your righteousness, because you are so worthy, that Hashem is giving you this." Moshe Rabbeinu is breaking this illusion. He tells Klal Yisrael straight out: "Know, then, that it is not for any virtue of yours that Hashem is giving you this good land... for you are a stiffnecked people."

Lichoira, this is a difficult thing to hear. But the deep yesod here is actually the greatest source of comfort. If our relationship with Hashem, and all the brachos He gives us, depended solely on our perfect righteousness, we would be in big trouble. The moment we stumbled, we would lose everything. But Moshe Rabbeinu is teaching us that Hashem's goodness to us is rooted in something much deeper, it is because of the covenant with the Avos, and because we are His children, His "am u'nachalah," even when we are struggling and far from perfect.

This means we must live with a double-consciousness. On one hand, we must never become arrogant or feel entitled to our blessings, thinking we earned them through our own frumkeit or hard work. On the other hand, we should never despair when we fall, thinking Hashem has abandoned us because we messed up. He loves us and sustains us because of who we are to Him, not because we have achieved flawless perfection.

Today, when you experience a success, whether in your learning, your parnassah, or with your family, stop for a moment and say: "Hashem, I know this is a free gift from You, not because I am perfect or deserve it. Thank You for Your endless chesed."

דַּף יוֹמִי · חֻלִּין · דַּף פ״ט

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📖 THE SUGYA

We start off this part of the sugya with a beautiful and inspiring dray in the Aggadata, looking at the incredible zechus of Avraham Avinu. The Gemara brings down how his deep humility and his refusal to take even a thread or a shoe strap from the king of Sedom earned his children the beautiful mitzvos of tzitzis and tefillin. We learn about the special koach of techeiles, which brings a Yid to think of the Kisei HaKavod, and we delve into the midda of anavah, seeing how Hashem loves Klal Yisrael because we make ourselves small even when bestowed with greatness.

After this warm and uplifting Aggadic piece, the Gemara returns to the halachos of kisuy hadam. The shakla v'tarya focuses on what kind of dust is kosher for covering the blood of a chayah or an off. Specifically, the Gemara asks a kasha about using the dust of an Ir HaNidachas, which is assur b'hana'ah, leading us into a major yeshivish yesod regarding whether mitzvos are considered to have been given for physical benefit.

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

עַמּוּד א׳ DAF 89A

STATEMENT

״אִם מִחוּט וְעַד שְׂרוֹךְ נַעַל״, זָכוּ בָּנָיו לִשְׁתֵּי מִצְוֹת: לְחוּט שֶׁל תְּכֵלֶת, וּרְצוּעָה שֶׁל תְּפִילִּין.

Because Avraham Avinu said to the king of Sedom, **"If from a thread and even to a shoe strap"** will I take from you, **his children merited two mitzvos** as a reward: **the thread of sky-blue wool** of tzitzis, **and the strap of tefillin**.

QUESTION

בִּשְׁלָמָא רְצוּעָה שֶׁל תְּפִילִּין, כְּתִיב: ״וְרָאוּ כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי שֵׁם ה׳ נִקְרָא עָלֶיךָ״, וְתַנְיָא: רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר הַגָּדוֹל אוֹמֵר: אֵלּוּ תְּפִילִּין שֶׁבָּרֹאשׁ,

The Gemara asks: **Granted** as to the **strap of tefillin**, we can understand why this is a fitting reward, since **it is written** regarding them: **"And all the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of Hashem is called upon you,** and they shall be afraid of you," **and it was taught** in a braisa that **Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: This** verse **refers to the tefillin of the head** which are visible to all and bring honor to Klal Yisrael,

QUESTION

אֶלָּא חוּט שֶׁל תְּכֵלֶת מַאי הִיא?

but as for the **thread of sky-blue wool** of tzitzis, **what is it**? What special benefit or honor does it bring to a person?

ANSWER

דְּתַנְיָא, רַבִּי מֵאִיר אוֹמֵר: מָה נִּשְׁתַּנָּה תְּכֵלֶת מִכָּל הַצְּבָעוֹנִין? מִפְּנֵי שֶׁתְּכֵלֶת דּוֹמָה לַיָּם, וְיָם דּוֹמֶה לָרָקִיעַ, וְרָקִיעַ דּוֹמֶה לְאֶבֶן סַפִּיר, וְאֶבֶן סַפִּיר דּוֹמָה לְכִסֵּא הַכָּבוֹד,

The Gemara answers: It is **as it was taught** in a braisa, **Rabbi Meir says: Why is sky-blue different from all other colors** that it was chosen for tzitzis? **Because sky-blue is similar to** the color of **the sea, and the sea is similar to the sky, and the sky is similar to a sapphire stone, and a sapphire stone is similar to the Throne of Glory**,

PROOF

דִּכְתִיב: "וַיִּרְאוּ אֵת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתַחַת רַגְלָיו וגו'", וּכְתִיב: "כְּמַרְאֵה אֶבֶן סַפִּיר דְּמוּת כִּסֵּא".

as it is written in one pasuk: **"And they saw the Elokim of Yisrael, and under His feet** was like a paved work of sapphire stone, and like the very heaven for clearness," **and it is written** in another pasuk: **"As the appearance of a sapphire stone was the likeness of a throne."** Thus, looking at the techeiles brings a person to contemplate the Shechinah itself.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי אַבָּא: קָשֶׁה גָּזֵל הַנֶּאֱכָל, שֶׁאֲפִילּוּ צַדִּיקִים גְּמוּרִים אֵינָן יְכוֹלִין לְהַחְזִירוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "בִּלְעָדַי רַק אֲשֶׁר אָכְלוּ הַנְּעָרִים".

Rabbi Abba said: Difficult is the return of **theft that has been consumed, for even the completely righteous are unable to return it, as it is stated** by Avraham: **"Far be it from me! Only that which the young men have eaten."** Even Avraham Avinu could not return what was already consumed by his men.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן: כָּל מָקוֹם שֶׁאַתָּה מוֹצֵא דִּבְרֵיו שֶׁל רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בְּנוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי יוֹסֵי הַגְּלִילִי בַּהֲגָדָה – עֲשֵׂה אָזְנֶיךָ כְּאַפַּרְכֶּסֶת.

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon: Any place where you find the words of Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, in Aggadah, make your ears like a funnel to receive his deep insights.

EXPLANATION

"לֹא מֵרַבְּכֶם מִכָּל הָעַמִּים חָשַׁק ה' בָּכֶם וגו'" – אָמַר לָהֶם הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: חוֹשְׁקַנִי בָּכֶם, שֶׁאֲפִילּוּ בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁאֲנִי מַשְׁפִּיעַ לָכֶם גְּדוּלָּה – אַתֶּם מְמַעֲטִין עַצְמְכֶם לְפָנַי.

He expounded on the pasuk: **"Not because you are more in number than any people did Hashem desire you..."** — **The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Yisrael: I desire you, because even at a time when I bestow greatness upon you, you diminish yourselves before Me** in humility.

PROOF

נָתַתִּי גְּדוּלָּה לְאַבְרָהָם – אָמַר לְפָנַי: "וְאָנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵפֶר", לְמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן – אָמַר: "וְנַחְנוּ מָה", לְדָוִד – אָמַר: "וְאָנֹכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא אִישׁ".

For example, **I gave greatness to Avraham, yet he said before Me: "And I am but dust and ashes."** I gave greatness **to Moshe and Aharon, yet they said: "And what are we?"** I gave greatness **to Dovid, yet he said: "But I am a worm and no man."**

EXPLANATION

אֲבָל אוּמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם אֵינָן כֵּן, נָתַתִּי גְּדוּלָּה לְנִמְרוֹד – אָמַר: "הָבָה נִבְנֶה לָנוּ עִיר", לְפַרְעֹה – אָמַר: "מִי ה'",

But the nations of the world are not so. I gave greatness to Nimrod, yet he said: "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower... and make a name for ourselves." **To Pharaoh, yet he said: "Who is Hashem** that I should listen to His voice?"

PROOF

לְסַנְחֵרִיב – אָמַר: "מִי בְּכָל אֱלֹהֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת וְגוֹ'", לִנְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר – אָמַר: "אֶעֱלֶה עַל בָּמֳתֵי עָב", לְחִירָם מֶלֶךְ צוֹר – אָמַר: "מוֹשַׁב אֱלֹהִים יָשַׁבְתִּי בְּלֵב יַמִּים".

I gave greatness **to Sancheriv, yet he said: "Who are they among all the gods of the countries..."** I gave greatness **to Nevuchadnezzar, yet he said: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds."** I gave greatness **to Chiram, the king of Tzor, yet he said: "I sit in the seat of Elokim, in the heart of the seas."**

STATEMENT

אָמַר רָבָא, וְאִיתֵּימָא רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: גָּדוֹל שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן יוֹתֵר מִמַּה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּאַבְרָהָם, דְּאִילּוּ בְּאַבְרָהָם כְּתִיב: "וְאָנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵפֶר", וְאִילּוּ בְּמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן כְּתִיב: "וְנַחְנוּ מָה".

Rava said, and some say it was Rabbi Yochanan: Greater is that which was said regarding Moshe and Aharon than that which was said regarding Avraham. For whereas regarding Avraham it is written: "And I am but dust and ashes," which is at least something, **regarding Moshe and Aharon it is written: "And what are we?"** — they made themselves completely like nothing.

STATEMENT

וְאָנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵפֶר", וְאִילּוּ בְּמֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן כְּתִיב: "וְנַחְנוּ מָה". וְאָמַר רָבָא, וְאִיתֵּימָא רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אֵין הָעוֹלָם מִתְקַיֵּים אֶלָּא בִּשְׁבִיל מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן, כְּתִיב הָכָא: "וְנַחְנוּ מָה", וּכְתִיב הָתָם: "תּוֹלֶה אָרֶץ עַל בְּלִימָה".

And Rava said, and some say it was Rabbi Yochanan: The world only endures in the merit of Moshe and Aharon. It is written here: "And what are we [mah]," and it is written there: "He hangs the earth upon nothingness [belimah]" — meaning, in the merit of those who make themselves like nothing.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי אִילְעָא: אֵין הָעוֹלָם מִתְקַיֵּים אֶלָּא בִּשְׁבִיל מִי שֶׁבּוֹלֵם אֶת עַצְמוֹ בִּשְׁעַת מְרִיבָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "תּוֹלֶה אָרֶץ עַל בְּלִימָה".

Rabbi Ile'a said: The world only endures in the merit of one who restrains [bolem] himself during a quarrel, as it is stated: "He hangs the earth upon nothingness [belimah]" — which is read as b'limah, one who shuts his mouth.

STATEMENT

רַבִּי אַבָּהוּ אָמַר: מִי שֶׁמַּשִּׁים עַצְמוֹ כְּמִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וּמִתַּחַת זְרוֹעוֹת עוֹלָם".

Rabbi Abbahu said: The world endures in the merit of **one who makes himself as if he does not exist, as it is stated: "And underneath are the everlasting arms"** — the one who places himself underneath everyone else is the arm that supports the world.

QUESTION

אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק: מַאי דִּכְתִיב "הַאָמְנָם אֵלֶם צָדֶק תְּדַבֵּרוּן מֵישָׁרִים תִּשְׁפְּטוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם"?

Rabbi Yitzchak said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Do you indeed speak righteousness in silence [elem]? Do you judge with equity, O sons of men?"

ANSWER

מָה אוּמָנוּתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה – יַשְׁתֵּי עַצְמוֹ כְּאִלֵּם.

This means: **What should be a person's occupation [umanus] in this world? He should make himself like a mute [ilem]** and avoid idle chatter.

INFERENCE

יָכוֹל אַף לְדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה? תַּלְמוּד לוֹמַר "צֶדֶק תְּדַבֵּרוּן".

One **might have thought** that he should remain silent **even regarding words of Torah? Therefore, the verse teaches: "Speak righteousness"** — meaning, speak words of Torah.

INFERENCE

יָכוֹל יָגֵיס דַּעְתּוֹ? תַּלְמוּד לוֹמַר "מֵישָׁרִים תִּשְׁפְּטוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם".

One **might have thought** that because he speaks words of Torah, **he may become arrogant? Therefore, the verse teaches: "Judge with equity, O sons of men"** — remain humble and straightforward like a fair judge.

RULING

אָמַר רַבִּי זְעֵירָא, וְאִיתֵּימָא רַבָּה בַּר יִרְמְיָה: מְכַסִּין בַּעֲפַר עִיר הַנִּדַּחַת.

The Gemara returns to the halachos of kisuy hadam: **Rabbi Zeira said, and some say it was Rabba bar Yirmeya: One may cover** the blood of a wild animal or bird **with the dust of an Ir HaNidachas**, a city led astray to avodah zarah.

QUESTION

וְאַמַּאי? אִיסּוּרֵי הֲנָאָה הוּא!

The Gemara asks: **But why** is this permitted? The dust of an Ir HaNidachas **is an object from which benefit is prohibited**, and using it to fulfill a mitzvah is considered deriving benefit!

ANSWER

אָמַר זְעֵירִי: לֹא נִצְרְכָה אֶלָּא לַעֲפַר עֲפָרָהּ,

Ze'eiri said: This was only necessary to permit **the dust of its ground**, which was not part of the city's property that must be destroyed,

PROOF

דִּכְתִיב: "וְאֶת כָּל שְׁלָלָהּ תִּקְבֹּץ אֶל תּוֹךְ רְחֹבָהּ וְשָׂרַפְתָּ", מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מְחוּסָּר אֶלָּא קְבִיצָה וּשְׂרֵפָה, יָצָא זֶה שֶׁמְּחוּסָּר תְּלִישָׁה, קְבִיצָה וּשְׂרֵפָה.

as it is written: "And all its spoil you shall gather into the midst of its open square, and you shall burn it." This applies only to **that which is not lacking anything other than gathering and burning; but this** ground **is excluded, as it is lacking uprooting, gathering, and burning**, and therefore the ground itself is not forbidden.

ANSWER

וְרָבָא אָמַר: מִצְוֹת לָאו לֵיהָנוֹת נִיתְּנוּ.

And Rava said a different teretz: Even if the dust itself is forbidden, **mitzvos were not given for** physical **benefit**, and performing a mitzvah is not considered deriving benefit from a forbidden object.

OBJECTION

יָתֵיב רָבִינָא וְקָאָמַר לַהּ לְהָא שְׁמַעְתָּא, אֵיתִיבֵיהּ רַב רְחוּמִי לְרָבִינָא: שׁוֹפָר שֶׁל עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה לֹא יִתְקַע בּוֹ. מַאי לָאו, אִם תָּקַע לֹא יָצָא?

Ravina sat and was saying this halachah of Rava, that mitzvos are not for benefit. **Rav Rechumi challenged Ravina** from a Mishnah: **A shofar of avodah zarah, one should not blow it. What, is it not** that **if he did blow it, he did not fulfill his obligation** because it is forbidden?

RESOLUTION

לָא, אִם תָּקַע יָצָא.

Ravina answered: **No, if he blew it, he did fulfill his obligation** bedi'avad, because mitzvos are not for benefit.

OBJECTION

לוּלָב שֶׁל עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה לֹא יִטּוֹל. מַאי לָאו, אִם נָטַל לֹא יָצָא?

Rav Rechumi challenged him again: The Mishnah says, **A lulav of avodah zarah, one should not take it. What, is it not** that **if he did take it, he did not fulfill his obligation?**

RESOLUTION

לָא, אִם נָטַל יָצָא.

Ravina answered: **No, if he took it, he did fulfill his obligation** bedi'avad.

REFUTATION

וְהָתַנְיָא: תָּקַע לֹא יָצָא, נָטַל לֹא יָצָא!

Rav Rechumi objected: **But was it not taught** explicitly in a braisa: If **he blew** a shofar of Asherah **he did not fulfill his obligation**, and if **he took** a lulav of Asherah **he did not fulfill his obligation**!

RESOLUTION

אָמַר רַב אָשֵׁי: הָכִי הַשְׁתָּא? הָתָם

Rav Ashi said: How can you compare the two? There, in the case of the shofar and lulav of avodah zarah, the reason he does not fulfill his obligation is different.

עַמּוּד ב׳ DAF 89B

EXPLANATION

שִׁיעוּרָא בָּעֵינַן, וַעֲבוֹדָה זָרָה כַּתּוֹתֵי מְכַתְּתַהּ שִׁיעוּרָא.

For those mitzvos, **we require a minimum measure**, **and** since an object of **idol worship** must be burned, its **measure is** viewed by halacha as **crushed** into powder, so it lacks the required size. But

EXPLANATION

הָכָא, כֹּל מָה דִּמְכַתֵּת מְעַלֵּי לְכִסּוּי.

here, regarding the ashes used for covering the blood, **any amount that is crushed is** actually **better for** the mitzvah of **covering**, so the status of being crushed does not disqualify it.

STATEMENT

הֲדַרַן עֲלָךְ כִּסּוּי הַדָּם.

May we return to you, "Kisuy HaDam" (the chapter of "Covering the Blood").

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מַתְנִי׳ גִּיד הַנָּשֶׁה נוֹהֵג בָּאָרֶץ וּבְחוּצָה לָאָרֶץ, בִּפְנֵי הַבַּיִת וְשֶׁלֹּא בִּפְנֵי הַבַּיִת, בַּחוּלִּין וּבַמּוּקְדָּשִׁין,

MISHNAH: The prohibition of **the sciatic nerve applies in Eretz Yisrael and outside of Eretz Yisrael, in the presence of the Temple and not in the presence of the Temple, with regard to non-sacred animals and with regard to sacrificial animals,**

MISHNAH

וְנוֹהֵג בִּבְהֵמָה וּבְחַיָּה, בִּירֶךְ שֶׁל יָמִין וּבִירֶךְ שֶׁל שְׂמֹאל,

and it applies to domesticated animals and to undomesticated animals, to the thigh of the right leg and to the thigh of the left leg.

MISHNAH

וְאֵינוֹ נוֹהֵג בָּעוֹף – מִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵין לוֹ כַּף.

But it does not apply to a bird, due to the fact that it has no spoon-shaped thigh, as the Torah refers to the "spoon of the thigh."

MISHNAH

וְנוֹהֵג בַּשְּׁלִיל.

And it applies to a late-term fetus in the womb.

MISHNAH

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: אֵינוֹ נוֹהֵג בַּשְּׁלִיל, וְחֶלְבּוֹ מוּתָּר.

Rabbi Yehuda says: It does not apply to a fetus, and likewise **its forbidden fat is permitted** to be eaten.

MISHNAH

וְאֵין הַטַּבָּחִין נֶאֱמָנִין עַל גִּיד הַנָּשֶׁה, דִּבְרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר.

And butchers are not believed when they claim **that the sciatic nerve** was removed; this is **the statement of Rabbi Meir.**

MISHNAH

וַחֲכָמִים אוֹמְרִים: נֶאֱמָנִין עָלָיו וְעַל הַחֵלֶב.

And the Sages say: They are believed about it and about the forbidden fat.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

גְּמָ׳ מוּקְדָּשִׁין – פְּשִׁיטָא!

GEMARA: The Mishnah says that the prohibition applies to **sacrificial animals.** The Gemara asks: Is this not **obvious?**

QUESTION

מִשּׁוּם דְּאַקְדְּשֵׁיהּ פְּקַע לֵיהּ אִיסּוּר גִּיד מִינֵּיהּ?

Just **because he consecrated it, does the prohibition of the sciatic nerve leave it?** Why would we think it is permitted?

OBJECTION

וְכִי תֵּימָא יֵשׁ בְּגִידִין בְּנוֹתָן טַעַם, וְאָתֵי אִיסּוּר מוּקְדָּשִׁין וְחָייֵל אַאִיסּוּר גִּיד, הַאי ״מוּקְדָּשִׁין נוֹהֵג בְּגִיד״ מִיבָּעֵי לֵיהּ.

And if you say that the Mishnah is teaching us that **nerves have the ability to impart flavor, and** therefore the **prohibition of sacrificial animals comes and takes effect upon the** existing **prohibition of the sciatic nerve,** then **it should have formulated this** as: "The prohibition of **sacrificial animals applies to the sciatic nerve."**

EXPLANATION

אֶלָּא קָסָבַר אֵין בְּגִידִין בְּנוֹתָן טַעַם, וּבְמוּקְדָּשִׁין אִיסּוּר גִּיד אִיכָּא, אִיסּוּר מוּקְדָּשִׁין לֵיכָּא.

Rather, we must say that the Tanna **holds that nerves do not have the ability to impart flavor, and** therefore **with regard to sacrificial animals, the prohibition of the sciatic nerve is present, but the prohibition of sacrificial animals is not present** on the nerve itself.

QUESTION

וְקָסָבַר תַּנָּא דִּידַן אֵין בְּגִידִין בְּנוֹתָן טַעַם?

The Gemara asks: **And does our Tanna** really **hold that nerves do not have the ability to impart flavor?**

OBJECTION

וְהָתְנַן: יָרֵךְ שֶׁנִּתְבַּשֵּׁל בָּהּ גִּיד הַנָּשֶׁה, אִם יֵשׁ בָּהּ בְּנוֹתָן טַעַם – הֲרֵי זוֹ אֲסוּרָה!

But didn't we learn in a Mishnah later on: In the case of **a thigh with which the sciatic nerve was cooked, if there is enough in it to impart flavor, it is forbidden?** This proves that nerves do impart flavor!

RESOLUTION

אֶלָּא, הָכָא בִּוְלָדוֹת קָדָשִׁים עָסְקִינַן, וְקָסָבַר נוֹהֵג בַּשְּׁלִיל, וְקָסָבַר וְלָדוֹת קָדָשִׁים בִּמְעֵי אִמָּן הֵן קְדוֹשִׁים, דְּאִיסּוּר גִּיד וְאִיסּוּר מוּקְדָּשִׁין בַּהֲדֵי הֲדָדֵי קָאָתֵי.

Rather, here we are dealing with the offspring of sacrificial animals, and the Tanna **holds that** the prohibition **applies to a fetus, and he holds that the offspring of sacrificial animals are holy while in their mother's womb.** Therefore, **the**

prohibition of the sciatic nerve and the prohibition of sacrificial animals come at the exact same time, so both take effect.

OBJECTION

וּמִי מָצֵית מוֹקְמַתְּ לַהּ בְּשִׁלְיָל, וְהָא מִדְּקָתָנֵי סֵיפָא "נוֹהֵג בַּשִּׁלְיָל", מִכְּלָל דְּרֵישָׁא לָאו בְּשִׁלְיָל עָסְקִינַן!

The Gemara asks: **But how can you establish this as referring to a fetus? Since the latter clause teaches: "It applies to a fetus," this implies that the first clause is not dealing with a fetus!**

RESOLUTION

הָכִי קָאָמַר: דָּבָר זֶה מַחְלוֹקֶת דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה וְרַבָּנַן.

The Gemara answers: **This is what the Tanna is saying: This matter** of the first clause **is a dispute between Rabbi Yehuda and the Rabbis,** and the first clause represents the view of the Rabbis.

QUESTION

וּמִי מָצֵית אָמְרַתְּ דְּתַרְוַיְיהוּ בַּהֲדֵי הֲדָדֵי קָאָתוּ?

The Gemara asks: **But how can you say that both** prohibitions **come at the exact same time** when the fetus is formed?

OBJECTION

וְהָתְנַן: עַל אֵלּוּ טוּמְאוֹת הַנָּזִיר מְגַלֵּחַ, עַל הַמֵּת וְעַל כְּזַיִת מִן הַמֵּת.

But didn't we learn in a Mishnah: For these impurities a Nazir must shave: For a corpse, and for an olive-sized piece of a corpse.

OBJECTION

וְקַשְׁיָא לַן: עַל כְּזַיִת מִן הַמֵּת מְגַלֵּחַ, עַל כּוּלּוֹ לֹא כָּל שֶׁכֵּן?

And we were bothered by this: If he shaves for an olive-sized piece of a corpse, is it not all the more so that he shaves for an entire corpse? Why mention both?

OBJECTION

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: לֹא נִצְרְכָה אֶלָּא לְנֶפֶל שֶׁלֹּא (נקשרו) [נִתְקַשְּׁרוּ] אֵבָרָיו בְּגִידִין.

And Rabbi Yochanan said: It is only necessary for a miscarried fetus whose limbs were not yet bound by nerves. This shows that the limbs and nerves are not formed at the exact same moment, so the prohibitions would not come at the same time!

SUMMARY

The daf begins with a beautiful Aggadic discussion on the reward Avraham Avinu received for his selflessness, leading to the mitzvos of tzitzis and tefillin, and expounds on the supreme value of humility as exemplified by Avraham, Moshe, Aharon, and Dovid. The Gemara then transitions back to the halachos of kisuy hadam, discussing whether one may use the dust of an Ir HaNidachas for covering the blood. This brings a classic machlokes where Ze'eiri limits the allowance to the actual ground of the city which is not subject to burning, while Rava establishes the famous halachic rule that mitzvos were not given for physical benefit, meaning that fulfilling a mitzvah with an object is not considered deriving forbidden benefit.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Gemara is mechadesh a beautiful sevara about how the entire world is sustained. We learn that the world only endures in the merit of those who make themselves like nothing, as the pasuk says, "He hangs the earth upon nothingness, belimah." Rabbi Ile'a takes this further and teaches that this refers to one who restrains, bolem, himself during a quarrel. When a dispute is heating up and you have the perfect comeback ready, the natural reaction is to let it fly. But the Tanna is telling us that the ultimate avodah is to make yourself like a mute in that very second.

Think about how much koach is hidden in that moment of silence. Lichoira, we think that standing up for ourselves and having the last word is where strength lies. But the Torah teaches us the exact opposite. True strength, the kind that literally holds up the entire world, is the quiet choice to step back and say nothing. When you are b'davka in the middle of a fight and you choose to hold your tongue, you are connecting yourself directly to the middah of Moshe and Aharon who said, "And what are we?"

Today, when someone says something that gets under your skin or a small argument starts brewing at home or in the bais medrash, make yourself like a "belimah." Take one deep breath, swallow your pride, and choose to remain completely silent for just that one moment.

הִלְכוֹת עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים · פֶּרֶק י״ב

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

📖 **CHAPTER PREVIEW**

In this chapter, the Rambam takes us into the holy boundaries of our physical appearance, showing how a Yid must carry himself with yiras Shamayim even in how he cuts his hair and trims his beard. Hashem separated us from the ways of the goyim and their idolatrous priests, commanding us not to destroy the corners of our heads or our beards. We will learn the exact definitions of these prohibitions, who is obligated in them, and how they apply to men, women, and those of doubtful gender status.

We will also learn about other prohibitions that set us apart from the surrounding nations, such as the prohibition against tattooing our skin, making gashes in our flesh as a sign of mourning, or shaving our heads in grief. Through these halachos, the Torah teaches us to treat our bodies with holiness and dignity, keeping us far removed from the dark practices of avodah zarah.

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

הֲלָכָה א

Halacha 1 · The Prohibition of Shaving the Corners of the Head

אֵין מְגַלְּחִין פַּאֲתֵי הָרֹאשׁ

We do not shave the corners of the head

כְּמוֹ שֶׁהָיוּ עוֹשִׂין עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים

like that which the star-worshipers would do,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ויקרא יט כז "לֹא תַקִּפוּ פְּאַת רֹאשְׁכֶם".

as it is said in the Torah (Vayikra 19:27), **"Do not round the corner of your head."**

וְחַיָּב עַל כָּל פֵּאָה וּפֵאָה.

And a person **is liable for each and every corner** that he shaves.

לְפִיכָךְ הַמְגַלֵּחַ שְׁנֵי צִדָּעָיו

Therefore, one who shaves his two temples,

אֲפִלּוּ בְּבַת אַחַת וְהַתְרָאָה אַחַת

even at one time and under **one warning**,

לוֹקֶה שְׁתַּיִם.

is lashed twice.

אֶחָד הַמְגַלֵּחַ הַפֵּאוֹת בִּלְבַד וּמֵנִיחַ שֵׂעָר כָּל הָרֹאשׁ

It is the **same** law for **one who shaves the corners alone and leaves the hair of the rest of the head**,

וְאֶחָד הַמְגַלֵּחַ כָּל הָרֹאשׁ כְּאֶחָד

and the **same** law for **one who shaves the entire head at once**; in both cases he **is lashed**,

לוֹקֶה הוֹאִיל וְגִלַּח הַפֵּאוֹת.

since he shaved the corners as part of the shaving.

בַּמֶּה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים בְּאִישׁ הַמְגַלֵּחַ

In what case **are these words said? Regarding the man who shaves** another person,

אֲבָל אִישׁ הַמִּתְגַּלֵּחַ אֵינוֹ לוֹקֶה

but the man who is shaven is not lashed,

אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן סִיַּע לַמְגַלֵּחַ.

unless he assisted the one who shaves him.

וְהַמְגַלֵּחַ אֶת הַקָּטָן לוֹקֶה:

And one who shaves the corners of **a minor is lashed**.

הֲלָכָה ב

Halacha 2 · Exemption of Women and Obligation of Slaves in Shaving the Corners of the Head

הָאִשָּׁה שֶׁגִּלְּחָה פְּאַת רֹאשׁ הָאִישׁ

A woman who shaved the corner of the head of a **man**,

אוֹ שֶׁנִּתְגַּלְּחָה

or who was shaven by someone else,

פְּטוּרָה

is **exempt** from the Torah prohibition,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ויקרא יט כז "לֹא תַקִּפוּ פְּאַת רֹאשְׁכֶם"

as it is said in the pasuk, **"Do not round the corner of your head,"**

ויקרא יט כז "וְלֹא תַשְׁחִית פְּאַת זְקָנֶךָ"

and immediately following, **"and do not destroy the corner of your beard."**

כָּל שֶׁיֵּשְׁנוֹ בְּבַל תַּשְׁחִית יֵשְׁנוֹ בְּבַל תַּקִּיפ,

The Sages derived from this juxtaposition: **everyone who is** included **in** the prohibition of **"do not destroy"** a beard, **is** included **in** the prohibition of **"do not round"** the head;

וְאִשָּׁה שֶׁאֵינָהּ בְּכַלָּל תַּשְׁחִית

and a woman, who is not included **in** the prohibition of **"do not destroy"**

לְפִי שֶׁאֵין לָהּ זָקָן

because there is not to her a beard naturally,

אֵינָהּ בְּכַלָּל תַּקִּיפ.

she is not included **in** the prohibition of **"do not round."**

לְפִיכָךְ הָעֲבָדִים

Therefore, Canaanite **slaves,**

הוֹאִיל וְיֵשׁ לָהֶם זָקָן

since there is to them a beard and they are obligated in this mitzvah,

אֲסוּרִין בְּהַקָּפָה:

are forbidden in rounding the corners of their heads.

הֲלָכָה ג

Halacha 3 · The Obligation of Women in Positive and Negative Commandments

כָּל מִצְוֹת לֹא תַּעֲשֶׂה שֶׁבַּתּוֹרָה

All negative commandments that are in the Torah,

אֶחָד אֲנָשִׁים וְאֶחָד נָשִׁים חַיָּבִים

both men and women are obligated to observe them,

חוּץ מִ"בַּל תַּשְׁחִית" וּ"בַל תַּקִּיף"

except for the prohibition of **"do not destroy"** the corners of the beard **and "do not round"** the corners of the head,

וּ"בַל יִטַּמֵּא כֹּהֵן לַמֵּתִים" מִשְׁנָה קִידּוּשִׁין א ז.

and "do not become impure, a Kohen, to the dead," as taught in **Mishnah Kiddushin 1:7.**

וְכָל מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה שֶׁהִיא מִזְּמַן לִזְמַן וְאֵינָהּ תְּדִירָה

And every positive commandment that is from time to time and is not constant, meaning it is a time-bound positive mitzvah,

נָשִׁים פְּטוּרוֹת

women are exempt from it,

חוּץ מִקִּדּוּשׁ הַיּוֹם

except for sanctification of the day, the Friday night Kiddush on Shabbos,

וַאֲכִילַת מַצָּה בְּלֵילֵי הַפֶּסַח

and eating of matzah on the nights of Pesach,

וַאֲכִילַת הַפֶּסַח וּשְׁחִיטָתוֹ

and eating of the Pesach offering and its slaughtering,

וְהַקְהֵל וְשִׂמְחָה

and Hakhel, the gathering in the Beis HaMikdash once in seven years, **and rejoicing** on the festivals,

שֶׁהַנָּשִׁים חַיָּבוֹת׃

all of **which women are obligated** to perform.

הֲלָכָה ד

Halacha 4 · The Legal Status of a Tumtum and an Androgynous Regarding Mitzvos

טֻמְטוּם וְאַנְדְּרוֹגִינוּס הֲרֵי הֵן סָפֵק,

A tumtum whose gender is hidden **and an androgynous** who possesses both male and female physical characteristics, **behold they are** considered a halachic **doubt** as to whether they are male or female,

נוֹתְנִין עֲלֵיהֶן חֻמְרֵי הָאִישׁ וְחֻמְרֵי הָאִשָּׁה בְּכָל מָקוֹם

therefore **we place upon them the stringencies of the man and the stringencies of the woman in every place** and in regard to all mitzvos,

וְחַיָּבִים בַּכֹּל.

and thus **they are obligated in everything**—including all time-bound positive mitzvos from which women are exempt.

וְאִם עָבְרוּ אֵינָם לוֹקִין׃

And if they transgressed a prohibition that only applies to one gender, **they are not lashed** because of the doubt.

הֲלָכָה ה

Halacha 5 · A Woman Shaving the Corners of a Man's Head

אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהָאִשָּׁה מֻתֶּרֶת לְגַלֵּחַ פְּאַת רֹאשָׁהּ

Even though a woman is permitted to shave the corner of her head, since the Torah only prohibited this to those who are commanded in the prohibition of rounding the head, and women are exempt,

הֲרֵי הִיא אֲסוּרָה לְגַלֵּחַ פְּאַת רֹאשׁ הָאִישׁ.

behold she is forbidden to shave the corner of the head of a man, because a man is subject to the prohibition, and she may not assist him in transgressing.

וַאֲפִלּוּ קָטָן אָסוּר לָהּ לְגַלֵּחַ לוֹ פֵּאָה:

And even for **a child, it is forbidden for her to shave for him a corner** of his head, as we do not feed or cause a child to do a prohibition directly.

הֲלָכָה ו

Halacha 6 · The Measure of the Corners of the Head and the Permission of Scissors

וּפֵאָה זוֹ שֶׁמַּנִּיחִים בַּצִּדָּעִים

And regarding **this corner** of the head **that we leave at the temples**,

לֹא נָתְנוּ בּוֹ חֲכָמִים שִׁעוּר

the Sages did not give a specific minimum **measure for it** in the Torah's law;

וְשָׁמַעְנוּ מִזְּקֵנֵינוּ שֶׁאֵינוֹ מַנִּיחַ פָּחוֹת מֵאַרְבָּעִים שְׂעָרוֹת.

and we heard from our elders that one should not leave less than forty hairs for each corner.

וּמֻתָּר לְלַקֵּט הַפֵּאוֹת בְּמִסְפָּרַיִם

And it is permitted to remove the corners with scissors,

לֹא נֶאֱסַר אֶלָּא הַשְׁחָתָה בְּתַעַר:

as it **was not forbidden** by the Torah **except** for **destruction** of the hair **with a razor**.

הֲלָכָה ז

Halacha 7 · The Prohibition of Shaving the Corners of the Beard with a Razor

דֶּרֶךְ כֹּהֲנֵי עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים הָיָה לְהַשְׁחִית זְקָנָם.

The way of the priests of idolaters was to destroy their beard as part of their pagan worship.

לְפִיכָךְ אָסְרָה תּוֹרָה לְהַשְׁחִית הַזָּקָן.

Therefore, the Torah forbade destroying the beard entirely.

וְחָמֵשׁ פֵּאוֹת יֵשׁ בּוֹ.

And there are five corners in it, in the beard, which are forbidden to destroy.

לְחִי הָעֶלְיוֹן וּלְחִי הַתַּחְתּוֹן מִיָּמִין וְכֵן מִשְּׂמֹאל וְשִׁבְלֶת הַזָּקָן.

These are: **the upper cheek and the lower cheek on the right, and likewise on the left, and the pit of the beard** where the chin meets the neck.

וְלוֹקֶה עַל כָּל פֵּאָה וּפֵאָה.

And a person **is lashed for each and every corner** that he shaves off individually.

וְאִם נְטָלָן כֻּלָּן כְּאַחַת לוֹקֶה חָמֵשׁ.

And if he removed all of them as one, in a single shaving session, **he is lashed five** times, once for each corner.

וְאֵינוֹ חַיָּב עַד שֶׁיְּגַלְּחֶנּוּ בְּתַעַר

And he is not liable to be lashed **until he shaves it with a razor**,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וְלֹא תַשְׁחִית אֵת פְּאַת זְקָנֶךָ"

as it is said in the Torah, **"And you shall not destroy the corner of your beard,"** which refers to a manner of

גִּלּוּחַ שֶׁיֵּשׁ בּוֹ הַשְׁחָתָה.

shaving that has destruction in it, meaning the hair is cut off completely at the roots.

לְפִיכָךְ אִם גִּלַּח זְקָנוֹ בְּמִסְפָּרַיִם פָּטוּר.

Therefore, if he shaved his beard with scissors, he is exempt from lashes, even if he cut it very close to the skin.

וְאֵין הַמִּתְגַּלֵּחַ לוֹקֶה עַד שֶׁיְּסַיֵּעַ.

And the one being shaved by another person **is not lashed unless he assists** the barber in some active way.

וְאִשָּׁה מֻתֶּרֶת לְהַשְׁחִית זְקָנָהּ אִם יֵשׁ לָהּ שֵׂעָר בַּזָּקָן.

And a woman is permitted to destroy her beard if she has hair in the beard area, as the prohibition only applies to men.

וְאִם הִשְׁחִיתָה זְקַן הָאִישׁ פְּטוּרָה:

And if she destroyed the beard of a man by shaving him with a razor, **she is exempt** from lashes, though it is forbidden for her to do so.

הֲלָכָה ח

Halacha 8 · Shaving the Mustache and the Hanging Hair of the Lip

הַשָּׂפָה מֻתָּר לְגַלְּחוֹ בְּתַעַר

The mustache is permitted to shave with a razor,

וְהוּא הַשֵּׂעָר שֶׁעַל גַּב הַשָּׂפָה הָעֶלְיוֹנָה

and that is the hair that is on top of the upper lip,

וְכֵן הַשֵּׂעָר הַמְדֻלְדָּל מִן הַשָּׂפָה הַתַּחְתּוֹנָה.

and likewise the hair that hangs from the lower lip.

וְאַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהוּא מֻתָּר

And even though it is permitted to shave it completely,

לֹא נָהֲגוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַשְׁחִיתוֹ

Israel did not practice to destroy it entirely with a razor;

אֶלָּא יְגַלַּח קְצָתוֹ

rather, he may shave its ends

עַד שֶׁלֹּא יְעַכֵּב אֲכִילָה וּשְׁתִיָּה:

until the point **that it will not interfere with eating and drinking**.

הֲלָכָה ט

Halacha 9 · The Prohibition of Removing Armpit and Pubic Hair for Men

הַעֲבָרַת הַשֵּׂעָר מִשְּׁאָר הַגּוּף

Removal of the hair from the rest of the body

כְּגוֹן בֵּית הַשָּׁחִי וּבֵית הָעֶרְוָה

such as the house of the armpit and the house of the genitalia

אֵינוֹ אָסוּר מִן הַתּוֹרָה אֶלָּא מִדִּבְרֵי סוֹפְרִים

is not forbidden from the Torah, but from the words of the Sages mid'Rabbanan,

וְהַמַּעֲבִירוֹ מַכִּין אוֹתוֹ מַכַּת מַרְדוּת.

and one who removes it, they strike him stripes of rebelliousness as a Rabbinic disciplinary measure.

בַּמֶּה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים

In what circumstances **are** these **words said?**

בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁאֵין מַעֲבִירִין אוֹתוֹ אֶלָּא נָשִׁים

In a place where they do not remove it except for **women,**

כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יְתַקֵּן עַצְמוֹ תִּקּוּן נָשִׁים.

in order that he will not adorn himself with **the adornment of women,** which is a Torah prohibition.

אֲבָל בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁמַּעֲבִירִין הַשֵּׂעָר הַנָּשִׁים וַאֲנָשִׁים

But in a place where they remove the hair, both **the women and the men,**

אִם הֶעֱבִיר אֵין מַכִּין אוֹתוֹ.

if he removed it, **they do not strike him** at all.

וּמֻתָּר לְהַעֲבִיר שְׂעַר שְׁאָר אֵיבָרִים בְּמִסְפָּרַיִם בְּכָל מָקוֹם:

And it is permitted to remove the hair of the rest of the limbs with scissors in every place, as this is not the typical way of women's grooming.

הֲלָכָה י

Halacha 10 · The Prohibition of Wearing Garments of the Opposite Gender and Removing White Hair

לֹא תַּעֲדֶה אִשָּׁה עֲדִי הָאִישׁ

A woman shall not adorn herself with **the adornment of a man,**

כְּגוֹן שֶׁתָּשִׂים בְּרֹאשָׁהּ מִצְנֶפֶת אוֹ כּוֹבַע

such as that she places on her head a turban or a hat that is uniquely worn by men,

אוֹ תִּלְבַּשׁ שִׁרְיוֹן וְכַיּוֹצֵא בּוֹ

or she wears armor and the like of it,

אוֹ שֶׁתְּגַלַּח רֹאשָׁהּ כְּאִישׁ.

or that she cuts her head short **like a man.**

וְלֹא יַעֲדֶה אִישׁ עֲדִי אִשָּׁה

And a man shall not adorn himself with **the adornment of a woman,**

כְּגוֹן שֶׁיִּלְבַּשׁ בִּגְדֵי צִבְעוֹנִין וַחֲלִי זָהָב

such as that he wears garments of colors and jewelry of gold

בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁאֵין לוֹבְשִׁין אוֹתָן הַכֵּלִים

in a place where they do not wear those garments

וְאֵין מְשִׂימִים אוֹתוֹ הַחֲלִי אֶלָּא נָשִׁים

and they do not place that jewelry except women;

הַכֹּל כְּמִנְהַג הַמְּדִינָה.

everything is according to the custom of the province.

אִישׁ שֶׁעָדָה עֲדִי אִשָּׁה

A man who adorned himself with the adornment of a woman,

וְאִשָּׁה שֶׁעָדְתָה עֲדִי אִישׁ

and a woman who adorned herself with the adornment of a man,

לוֹקִין.

receive lashes.

הַמְלַקֵּט שְׂעָרוֹת לְבָנוֹת מִתּוֹךְ הַשְּׁחוֹרוֹת

One who plucks white hairs from among the black ones

מֵרֹאשׁוֹ אוֹ מִזְקָנוֹ

from his head or from his beard,

מִשֶּׁיְּלַקֵּט שַׂעֲרָה אַחַת לוֹקֶה

from when he plucks a single hair, receives lashes,

מִפְּנֵי שֶׁעָדָה עֲדִי אִשָּׁה.

because he adorned himself with the adornment of a woman who is accustomed to remove gray hairs.

וְכֵן אִם צָבַע שְׂעָרוֹ שָׁחוֹר

And likewise, if he dyed his hair black,

מִשֶּׁיְּצַבַּע שֵׂעָר לְבָנָה אַחַת לוֹקֶה.

from when he dyes a single white hair, he receives lashes.

טֻמְטוּם וְאַנְדְּרוֹגִינוּס

A tumtum whose gender is hidden **and an androgynus** who has both male and female characteristics

אֵינוֹ עוֹטֵף כְּאִשָּׁה

shall not wrap his head **like a woman,**

וְלֹא מְגַלֵּחַ רֹאשׁוֹ כְּאִישׁ

and not cut his head like a man, so as to avoid any doubt;

וְאִם עָשָׂה כֵּן אֵינוֹ לוֹקֶה:

and if he did so, he does not receive lashes because of the doubt.

הֲלָכָה יא

Halacha 11 · The Prohibition of Tattooing and Its Specific Requirements

כְּתֹבֶת קַעֲקַע הָאֲמוּרָה בַּתּוֹרָה

The writing of tattooing which is spoken of in the Torah

הוּא שֶׁיִּשְׂרֹט עַל בְּשָׂרוֹ

it is that he scratches upon his flesh

וְיִמַּלֵּא מְקוֹם הַשְּׂרִיטָה כָּחֹל אוֹ דְיוֹ

and fills the place of the scratch with eye-paint or ink

אוֹ שְׁאָר צִבְעוֹנִים הָרוֹשְׁמִים.

or other dyes that leave a mark.

וְזֶה הָיָה מִנְהַג הָעַכּוּ"ם

And this was the custom of the idolaters

שֶׁרוֹשְׁמִין עַצְמָן לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

who would mark themselves for the service of idols

כְּלוֹמַר שֶׁהוּא עֶבֶד מָכוּר לָהּ

as if to say that he is a servant sold to it

וּמֻרְשָׁם לַעֲבוֹדָתָהּ.

and marked for its service.

וּמֵעֵת שֶׁיִּרְשֹׁם בְּאֶחָד מִדְּבָרִים הָרוֹשְׁמִין

And from the time that he marks with one of the things that leave a mark

אַחַר שֶׁיִּשְׂרֹט בְּאֵי זֶה מָקוֹם מִן הַגּוּף

after he scratches in any place of the body,

בֵּין אִישׁ בֵּין אִשָּׁה לוֹקֶה.

whether a man or a woman, he receives lashes.

כָּתַב וְלֹא רָשַׁם בְּצֶבַע

If he wrote and did not mark with dye,

אוֹ שֶׁרָשַׁם בְּצֶבַע וְלֹא כָּתַב בִּשְׂרִיטָה

or if he marked with dye and did not write with a scratch,

פָּטוּר עַד שֶׁיִּכְתֹּב וִיקַעֲקֵעַ

he is exempt until he writes and tattoos,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וּכְתֹבֶת קַעֲקַע".

as it is said, "and a writing of tattoo."

בַּמֶּה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים בְּכוֹתֵב

In what words are said? Regarding the writer.

אֲבָל זֶה שֶׁכָּתְבוּ בִּבְשָׂרוֹ וְקִעְקְעוּ בּוֹ

But this one whom they wrote in his flesh and tattooed on him

אֵינוֹ חַיָּב אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן סִיֵּעַ

is not liable unless he assisted,

כְּדֵי שֶׁיַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂה.

so that he did an action.

אֲבָל אִם לֹא עָשָׂה כְּלוּם אֵינוֹ לוֹקֶה:

But if he did not do anything, he does not receive lashes.

הֲלָכָה יב

Halacha 12 · The Prohibition of Gouging the Flesh for the Dead

הַשּׂוֹרֵט שְׂרִיטָה אַחַת עַל הַמֵּת

One who gouges a single gouge for the dead

לוֹקֶה

is lashed,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ויקרא יט כח "וְשֶׂרֶט לָנֶפֶשׁ לֹא תִתְּנוּ בִּבְשַׂרְכֶם".

as it is said in the Torah in Vayikra 19:28, "and a gouge for a soul do not place in your flesh."

אֶחָד כֹּהֵן וְאֶחָד יִשְׂרָאֵל.

This prohibition applies equally, whether to a Kohen or whether to an Israelite.

שָׂרַט שְׂרִיטָה אַחַת עַל חֲמִשָּׁה מֵתִים

If he gouged a single gouge for five dead people,

אוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה שְׂרִיטוֹת עַל מֵת אֶחָד

or if he gouged five gouges for one dead person,

לוֹקֶה חָמֵשׁ.

he is lashed five times.

וְהוּא שֶׁהִתְרוּ בּוֹ עַל כָּל אַחַת וְאַחַת:

And this is provided that they warned him for each one and every one of the violations.

הֲלָכָה יג

Halacha 13 · The Prohibition of Gashing and Gouging for the Dead and for Idolatry

גְּדִידָה וּשְׂרִיטָה אַחַת הִיא.

Gashing and gouging are one and the same prohibition.

וּכְשֵׁם שֶׁהָיוּ הָעַכּוּ"ם שׂוֹרְטִים בִּבְשָׂרָם עַל מֵתֵיהֶם מִפְּנֵי הַצַּעַר

And just as the idolaters would gouge in their flesh over their dead because of the grief,

כָּךְ הָיוּ חוֹבְלִין בְּעַצְמָם לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

so they would wound themselves for the sake of **worship of stars,**

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וַיִּתְגֹּדְדוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּטָם".

as it is said regarding the prophets of Baal, **"and they gashed themselves according to their custom."**

גַּם זֶה אָסְרָה תּוֹרָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "לֹא תִתְגֹּדְדוּ".

Also this act of gashing for idolatry **the Torah forbade, as it is said, "do not gash yourselves."**

אֶלָּא שֶׁעַל מֵת בֵּין שָׂרַט בְּיָדוֹ בֵּין שָׂרַט בִּכְלִי לוֹקֶה.

Except that regarding gashing **over a dead person, whether he gouged with his hand or whether he gouged with an instrument, he receives lashes.**

לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים בִּכְלִי חַיָּב מַלְקוּת בְּיָדוֹ פָּטוּר:

But if he did so **for worship of stars,** if he did it **with an instrument he is liable for lashes,** but if he did it **with his hand he is exempt** from lashes, though it is still forbidden.

הֲלָכָה יד

Halacha 14 · The Prohibition Against Forming Separate Factions and Courts in One City

וּבִכְלַל אַזְהָרָה זֶה

And in the category of this prohibition of "do not gash yourselves" is a Rabbinic warning

שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוּ שְׁנֵי בָּתֵּי דִינִין בְּעִיר אַחַת

that there shall not be two courts of law in one city where

זֶה נוֹהֵג כְּמִנְהָג זֶה וְזֶה נוֹהֵג כְּמִנְהָג אַחֵר.

this court **behaves according to the custom of this** authority **and this** other court **behaves according to the custom of another** authority,

שֶׁדָּבָר זֶה גּוֹרֵם לְמַחְלוֹקוֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת

for this thing causes great disputes and division among the Jewish people,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דברים יד א "לֹא תִתְגֹּדְדוּ"

as it is said in the Torah in Devarim 14:1, **"Do not gash yourselves,"**

לֹא תֵעָשׂוּ אֲגֻדּוֹת אֲגֻדּוֹת:

which the Sages expounded homiletically to mean: **do not become groups groups**, meaning do not split into opposing factions.

הֲלָכָה טו

Halacha 15 · The Prohibition of Making a Bald Spot for the Dead and Its Measure

הַקֹּרֵחַ קָרְחָה עַל הַמֵּת לוֹקֶה

One who makes a bald spot for the dead is lashed mid'Oraisa,

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר דברים יד א "וְלֹא תָשִׂימוּ קָרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לָמֵת".

as it is said in the Torah, **"And you shall not place a bald spot between your eyes for the dead."**

אֶחָד יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶחָד כֹּהֵן שֶׁשָּׂרַט עַל הַמֵּת אֵינוֹ לוֹקֶה אֶלָּא אַחַת.

Whether **an Israelite or a priest who made a bald spot for the dead, he does not receive lashes except once** for a single act of balding.

הַקֹּרֵחַ אַרְבַּע אוֹ חָמֵשׁ קָרְחוֹת עַל מֵת אֶחָד לוֹקֶה כְּמִנְיַן הַקָּרְחוֹת

One who makes four or five bald spots for one dead person **is lashed according to the number of the bald spots** he made,

וְהוּא שֶׁהִתְרוּ בּוֹ עַל כָּל קָרְחָה וְקָרְחָה.

and this is provided they warned him for every bald spot and bald spot before he made it.

אֶחָד הַקֹּרֵחַ בְּיָדוֹ אוֹ בְּסַם

It is **the same** whether **one makes a bald spot with his hand** by pulling out the hair, **or with a potion** that destroys the hair,

אוֹ הִטְבִּיל אֶצְבְּעוֹתָיו בְּסַם וְהִנִּיחָם בַּחֲמִשָּׁה מְקוֹמוֹת בְּרֹאשׁוֹ בְּבַת אַחַת

or if **he dipped his fingers in a potion and placed them on five places on his head at one time;**

הוֹאִיל וְקָרַח חָמֵשׁ קָרְחוֹת אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהִיא הַתְרָאָה אַחַת לוֹקֶה חָמֵשׁ

since he made five bald spots, even though it is only **one warning, he is lashed five** times,

שֶׁהֲרֵי כֻּלָּן בָּאִין כְּאַחַת.

for behold, all of them come as one and are created simultaneously.

וְחַיָּב עַל כָּל הָרֹאשׁ כְּבֵין הָעֵינַיִם

And he is liable for making a bald spot on **all of the head just as** he is for making one **between the eyes,**

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר ויקרא כא ה "לֹא יִקְרְחוּ קָרְחָה בְּרֹאשָׁם".

as it is said, "They shall not make a bald spot on their head."

וְכַמָּה שִׁעוּר הַקָּרְחָה

And how much is the measure of the bald spot to make him liable?

כְּדֵי שֶׁיֵּרָאֶה מֵרֹאשׁוֹ כְּגְרִיס פָּנוּי בְּלִי שֵׂעָר:

It must be **enough that there will be seen from his head** an area **like a gris** bean, **clear without hair.**

הֲלָכָה טז

Halacha 16 · Laws of Bald Spots Gashes and Tattoos with a Colleague's Assistance

הַקֹּרֵחַ רֹאשׁוֹ אוֹ הַשּׂוֹרֵט בִּבְשָׂרוֹ

One who makes a bald spot on his head or one who gashes in his flesh

עַל בֵּיתוֹ שֶׁנָּפַל וְעַל סְפִינָתוֹ שֶׁנִּטְבְּעָה בַּיָּם

grieving **over his house that fell or over his ship that sank in the sea**

פָּטוּר וְאֵינוֹ לוֹקֶה

is exempt from the Torah prohibition **and is not lashed**

אֶלָּא עַל הַמֵּת בִּלְבַד

except when doing so **over the deceased only**

אוֹ הַשּׂוֹרֵט לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים.

or if he is **one who gashes** as a ritual **for worship of stars**.

הַקֹּרֵחַ קָרְחָה בְּרֹאשׁוֹ שֶׁל חֲבֵרוֹ

Regarding **one who makes a bald spot on the head of his colleague**

וְהַשּׂוֹרֵט שְׂרִיטָה בִּבְשַׂר חֲבֵרוֹ

and one who gashes a gash in the flesh of his colleague

וְהַכּוֹתֵב כְּתֹבֶת קַעֲקַע בִּבְשָׂרוֹ שֶׁל חֲבֵרוֹ

and one who writes a tattooed writing in the flesh of his colleague

וְהָיָה חֲבֵרוֹ מְסַיֵּעַ.

and his colleague was assisting in the act

בִּזְמַן שֶׁשְּׁנֵיהֶן מְזִידִין שְׁנֵיהֶן לוֹקִין.

at a time that both of them are intentional, both of them are lashed.

אֶחָד שׁוֹגֵג וְאֶחָד מֵזִיד

If **one** was **unintentional and one** was **intentional**

הַמֵּזִיד מִשְּׁנֵיהֶם לוֹקֶה וְהַשּׁוֹגֵג פָּטוּר׃

the intentional one of both of them is lashed and the unintentional one is exempt.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter begins by defining the prohibition of shaving the corners of the head (pe'os ha-rosh), explaining that there are two corners and that both the one who shaves and, under certain conditions, the one who is shaven can be liable. The Rambam clarifies that women are exempt from this prohibition because they do not have beards, while slaves, who do have beards, remain obligated. This leads into a broader discussion of the mitzvos from which women are exempt, including time-bound positive commandments, and the status of a tumtum and an androgynous who must follow the stringencies of both men and women. Finally, the halachos address the prohibition of destroying the corners of the beard (pe'os ha-zakan) with a razor, the prohibition against tattooing (kesoves ka'aka), and the prohibitions against making gashes in one's flesh or tearing out hair in grief over the deceased.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Torah warns us against shaving the corners of our head and beard, or tattooing our skin, because these were the ways of the idolaters who marked their bodies to show they were 'sold' as servants to their false gods. Hashem wants us to know that a Yid's body is not a blank canvas for the trends of the world; it is a holy vessel, a sanctuary for the neshama. When we guard the boundaries of our appearance, we are declaring that we belong to Hashem alone.

This is also why the Torah commands 'lo tisgodedu', not to cut ourselves in grief, which Chazal teach also means we must not split into opposing factions, 'agudos agudos.' Just as we must not damage the physical vessel of our own body, we must not tear apart the collective body of the Jewish people through division and machlokes. Our external boundaries and our internal unity both stem from the same truth: we are one holy nation, dedicated to one Creator.

Today, pay attention to how you carry yourself in the physical world. Before you adopt a style, a look, or a harsh way of speaking to another Yid, remember who you belong to. Take one small, conscious action to show respect for your body or to bring peace between people, showing that you are a proud servant of the King.

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.'