

Sotah

2a1 - 27b1

18 Sotah Intro

Sotah discusses the laws concerning a married woman who is suspected of having committed adultery.

A sotah is a woman who is under legal suspicion of being an adulteress.

If evidence is confirmed by a court, on the basis of two witnesses, she is a confirmed sotah, 'sotah vadai'. If her actions meet certain criteria, but without two witnesses, she is termed a suspected sotah, 'sotah safek' (Chapter 5).

She is a confirmed sotah:

- a. If two witnesses see her and warn her saying, "Your act is prohibited and has a death penalty." She and the man are put to death.
- b. If two witnesses see her, but do not properly warn her, there is no death penalty. However, she can no longer live with her husband or the person with whom she sinned.
She must divorce, forfeit her kesubah and she cannot marry a Kohen or eat Terumah.

18 Sotah Intro

Suspected sotah.

If her fidelity has been questioned by her husband:

1. He must warn her not to seclude herself with a certain man.
2. She must seclude herself with the man.

Both acts must be witnessed by two witnesses. If there were witnesses, she is considered an adulteress, until her innocence is proven. She is forbidden to live with her husband and she may not eat Terumah.

Testing of a suspected Sotah (Bamidbar 5:11-3)

1. Husband and wife go to the Bais Din of their city. If she is subject to the sotah test, they then go to the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.
2. There, they try to get her to confess and take her to the eastern gate (read the Gemara for more details of this process).

שָׁכַל הָרוּאָה סוֹטָה בְּקִלְקוּלָהּ יִזִּיר עֲצָמוֹ מִן הַיַּיִן

Who ever sees a sotah in her disgrace, will separate himself from wine.

This is due to the fact that, often, poor judgment is related to alcohol intake.

If you are present to witness the disgrace of a sotah:

- Realize HaShem arranged for you to be there and you need to learn this lesson yourself!! Erect extra barriers!
- Realize that the experiences we have and the people we meet, does not occur merely by chance, there is a reason.
- These can impart important lessons to us to avoid bad and to choose good.

Life is a classroom and all of us are students.

אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם קוֹדֵם יֵצִיֵּרֶת הַנֶּלֶד בֵּת קוֹל יוֹצֵאת וְאוֹמֶרֶת בֵּת פְּלוֹנִי לְפְלוֹנִי

Forty days before the birth of a child, a voice goes out from heaven and proclaims that ‘the daughter of this person, is for this person’.

This applies only to a first marriage.

In a second marriage, a couple is paired by their deeds.

“Free will” is not taken out of the equation, however, it seems that it works as though this is the case.

The two are designated for each other, but people can and do choose to pass by the designated person and choose another.

You only know that later, if it is not a happy choice.

אִין אָדָם עוֹבֵר עֲבִירָה אֶלָּא אִם בֵּין נִכְנָס בּוֹ

A person does not commit a transgression, unless a spirit of folly enters into him.

If a man's wife goes astray, the word for astray is 'sisteh', but it can be read 'sishteh' (an act of folly) (Num 5:12) .

R M Schneerson - Every sin is an infidelity. Every sin is a betrayal of the covenant between himself and the bond forged at Mt. Sinai. He is guilty of unfaithfulness to his Divine partner.

Every moral lapse is at the same time a mental lapse.

לָהּ יִטְמָא רְשׁוּת

“He will make himself Tamei for her” - This is optional,

according to R Yishmael, but is considered obligatory, according to Rabbi Akiva.

A Kohen may become Tamei for his close relatives, in order to participate in their burial and in the mourning process.

If the Kohen is a bridegroom and cannot participate fully in mourning rituals, may he become Tamei?

Yes, because he will observe inconspicuous practices of mourning and that is sufficient to allow the Kohen to become Tamei.

A Kohen, who is a minor, will also not participate fully in the mourning practices, may he become Tamei?

Only if he is at the age of chinuch – learning and understanding.

מִים רֵאשׁוֹנִים צָרִיךְ שְׂיִגְבִּיהַ יָדָיו לְמַעַלָּה

When washing ‘first waters’, one must lift up his hands.

Hands to the wrist are considered Tamei. If you wash part of the hand, you must lift up your hands, so that water does not drip down to your fingers from your hand.

However, if you wash the entire hand, it is permissible for water from above your wrist and from your arm, to drip on to your fingers, since the forearm does not contract Tumah.

If you use a lot of water, you do not have to raise your hands.

Aruch HaShulchan and our Gemara, support the practice of raising one’s hands. It is not hard to do and we should follow that practice. Doctors do the same when they scrub for surgery.

כָּל אָדָם שֵׁשׁ בּוֹ גִּסּוֹת הָרוּחַ לְסוּף מִתְמַעֵט

Every person who is haughty, I and he cannot both dwell in the world.

Baal Shem Tov - Sinners who know they sin, are humble and God remains close to them. A person, even if not an evil doer, but arrogant, alienates the Lord.

Chozeh of Lublin - God prefers a sinner who knows he is a sinner, to a tzaddik who knows that he is a tzaddik. This is because there is never a righteous man who does only good and never sins (Eccl 7:20).

הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא הֵנִיחַ כָּל הָרִים וּגְבָעוֹת וְהִשְׁרָה שְׂכִינָתוֹ עַל הַר סִינַי

The Holy One, blessed be He, ignored all the mountains and heights and caused His Shechinah to abide on Mount Sinai.

R Menachem Mendel of Kotzk asks - If humility and loneliness are such great virtues, why did God not choose a valley in which to give the Torah?

Only if you possess some virtues and qualities, can you be humble about them, like a small mountain. But if you have no distinguished qualities, in fact, perhaps, negative ones, like a valley – not boasting about that, is reality, not humility.

18 Sotah 5a2 line 22 B3
Weiss #373

לְעוֹלָם יִלְמַד אָדָם מִדַּעַת קוֹנוֹ

A person should always strive to emulate the ways of his maker.

Notice! God chose a lowly, small mountain, “Sinai”, – not a large, imposing mountain, upon which to place his Shechinah.

We too, should be humble.

“I lift up my eyes on the mountains, from where my help will come”
(Psalms 121:1.2).

‘May-aiyn’, “from where” or from nothing - Only if I consider myself as ‘nothing’, ‘humble’, will I be assured of God’s help.

כָּל אָדָם שֵׁשׁ בּו גַּסוֹת הָרוּחַ אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
אֵין אָנִי וְהוּא יְכוּלִין לְדוֹר בְּעוֹלָם

Regarding a person who is haughty : God says, “There is no way he and I can live in the same world.”

What is better, to be a Tzaddik who knows he is a Tzaddik or to be a sinner who knows he is a sinner?

The Tzaddik believes in his own virtue and is wrong, because it states (in Koheles 7:20), “There is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.”

The sinner who knows what he is, realizes that he will have to answer to God and face the truth.

תְּלַמִּיד חָכָם צָרִיךְ שִׁיְהָא בּוּ אֶחָד מִשְׁמוּנָה בְּשִׁמְיָנִיה

A Torah scholar must possess on 1/8 of an 1/8 of haughtiness.

If a person receives blessings in life, he may ascribe them as coming to him, because of his personal merit, like Yaakov Avinu, who took credit for the blessings God gave him. This is haughty, but it causes humility, since the person realizes he has already been paid for his merits and no longer has credit. His merit may have now run out. This haughtiness that leads to humility, is good.

Blessings that you pray for, should be done on the merit of others.

The posuk that talks about '1/8 of an 1/8', is the 8th sentence of the 8th chapter of the Torah (Vayishlach 32:11).

Rambam: 1/8 of 1/8 is 1/64th- If haughtiness is divided into 64 parts, one should stand on the 63rd part.

18 Sotah 5a4 line 41

A13

Weiss #806

לֹא מִיִּנְהָ וְלֹא מִקְצָתָהּ

None of it (pride) and not part of it.

Rava - A sage should possess an eighth of an eighth of it (pride).

R Nachman bar Yitzchak - It (pride) should not exist even in the smallest degree.

Rosh - One should distance oneself from haughtiness.

Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev - How can a man be arrogant, when his fortune can change overnight.

אוֹנָס בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל שְׂרִי

A violated woman is permitted to her husband, who is a non-Kohen.

A woman who is forcibly violated against her will, or inadvertently (by mistake), whether the violator was a Jew or non Jew:

- Remains permitted to her husband (unless he is a Kohen).
- If her husband is a Kohen, she is prohibited to him.
- She may never marry a Kohen in the future.

What is the rule if she was coerced to save her life or the lives of members of her family?

- Her life-If she was coerced, it is permitted. Others say it is permitted, but she is prohibited to her husband.
- Life of others– She is permitted and may even be a mitzvah. But if not considered to be coerced-relations are not permitted.

Anytime you make a deal, it is no longer categorized as ‘coerced’.

זכות תולה במים המרים

Great merit protects the Sotah from punishment by the bitter waters.

For example, if she learned Torah.

It may be more likely that if she enabled another's learning; this protects her from the bad effects of the bitter waters.

However, the Gemara debates this concept, since it is actually counter productive. Knowing that prior good deeds might ameliorate the effects of the bitter waters, a woman might take the chance that her past good deeds will spare her and drink, rather than confess.

It also casts even a greater aspersion on those who drink. Not only did they commit adultery, but their good deeds were not worthy enough to help them. Also, those who survive the waters, perhaps they were adulterers, but only their good deeds saved them.

18 Sotah 7a4

line 41

A4

Weiss #656

הַרְבֵּה שְׂכָנִים הָרְעִים עוֹשִׂין

Bad neighbors do much (impropriety).

The Sanhedrin says to the suspect sotah, “My daughter, wine does much, frivolity does much, youth does much, bad neighbors do much and such there is some excuse for your behavior, confess and avoid the ordeal.”

Therefore, we must strive to avoid these bad influences. Associate with the righteous and wise, learn from good friends with good practices and shun others. Don't be corrupted by their practices.

רְאוּבֵן הוֹדָה וְלֹא בּוֹשׁ

Reuven confessed and was not embarrassed.

If the sotah admits her guilt, she does not die and we do not have to erase God's name in the waters.

We encourage her, by fatigue and psychological efforts, to admit her guilt without our need to erase God's name. This is done even to the point of misrepresenting Reuven's behavior with Bilhah (see Gen 35:22). We tell the woman, that even Reuven, committed adultery with Bilhah. Even though we know that the Gemara (in Shabbos 55b) absolves Reuven of any actual adultery, by saying, "Whoever declares that Reuven sinned is mistaken". How then, can we give a bad name to Reuven, just to try to save the life of an adulteress?

Because our effort is to get to the truth, create peace and resolve this problem (even if we have to erase God's name and even if we have to besmirch Reuven's name) and to finally make peace regarding this problem.

וְהָאָמַר רַב שֵׁשֶׁשׁ חָצִיף עָלָי (בַּר יִשְׂרָאֵל) [מֵאֵן] דְּמִפְּרִיט חֲטָאִיהּ

Rav Sheshesh said, “I consider one who confesses his sins (publically), to be ill mannered.”

Rashi: For doing so, he demonstrates that he is not embarrassed by his misconduct.

It is permitted to confess ones sins:

- To prevent others from being suspected of wrong doing.
- When the sin is well known anyway .
- If the sin is between man and man and not man and God.

Once there was a person who stole money. He now wanted to repay it, but was embarrassed to identify himself as the thief .

Rav Feinstein advised :

1. If the victim is unaware the money was stolen, the thief may return it without identifying himself.
2. If the victim knows the money was taken and who took it ,it is best to identify himself and that ends the matter.
- 3 If the victim knows the money was stolen, but not who stole it, the thief can return it with an anonymous letter asking forgiveness.

The only necessity for identifying himself, is to ask for forgiveness. This can be done anonymously.

לְפִי שְׂאִין עוֹשִׂין מִצְוֹת חֲבִילוֹת חֲבִילוֹת

We don't perform mitzvahs in bundles.

Two sotahs-need 1 Kohen-not 2 Kohanim

Two brisim (twins)-need 1 mohel - not two mohalim simultaneously

Two workers – need to give each worker his own coin

If two sotahs come, each with a Kohen, we could get them to drink the bitter waters simultaneously. However, this is considered, 'in bundles' and is not proper.

Rambam:

- It is better to do with one Kohen and then they can't be given to drink simultaneously.
- Twins –It is better to have one mohel perform the Bris, one after the other, rather than have both mitzvahs being done at the same moment.

A man tried to pay two workers with one large coin, worth their combined wages.

They objected. The Rabbi said the owner should divide the coin, get change, pay each man his wages and not fulfill two obligations with a simultaneous act.

שולט אלא במה שעיניו רואות

The evil inclination prevails only over what a person sees with his own eyes.

A woman singing.:

Berachot 24a – A woman’s voice is sexually provocative “For sweet is your voice, etc...” (Song of Songs 2:14). A woman should not sing in the company of men and a man may not listen. He may not pray, study Torah, or recite a blessing when the song of a woman, even his own wife, is audible to him.

What is the opinion regarding mixed singing? Some say, “Two voices cannot be heard”.

When two vocal sounds are heard simultaneously, neither is clearly audible. Therefore, mixed singing might be permitted, i.e., “Thus sang Deborah and Baruch ” (Judges 5:1).

What is the rule regarding Shabbos Zemiro? - Singing sacred songs is not likely to generate sexual arousal and is permitted. What is the rule regarding listening to women sing on the radio? Sexual desires are aroused by vocal stimuli only when accompanied by visual perception (8A4 line 40). Just as there is no restriction on viewing a woman’s hair when it is no longer attached to her body, so there is no problem in the disembodied singing voice on the radio.

בְּמִדָּה שֶׁאָדָם מוֹדֵד מוֹדֵד לוֹ בָּהּ

In the measure a man measures, so is it measured out to him.

‘Midah k’neged midah,’ “measure for measure”, good begets good, evil begets evil.

This is a standard universally applied throughout the Torah.

It is the language in which God speaks to man. The punishment is a reflection of the crime. It should be easy for the sinner to identify and recall his crime. It can be compared to prophecy.

In the measure with which a man measures, so it is meted out to him.

R Ch Alter – The stubborn sinner is punished in a manner as to illustrate to him the nature of his sin. However, if he remains unrepentant and claims the world functions in a haphazard fashion, his punishment will be meted out in a haphazard fashion.

Or Hachaim – Punishment is fashioned to fit the crime, in order to remind the sinner of his errors.

Torah values-R Saul Weiss – ‘Midah k’neged midah’, ‘quid pro quo’. HaShem rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked according to how they conduct themselves.

אֲנִי מִצְרִי רִאשׁוֹן

I am a first generation Egyptian convert.

Can an Egyptian marry a Jewish person?

Rashi - Yes, he may.	R Yehoshua in Berachos - No
R Akiva - Yes, he may.	Ramban - No
Rambam - Yes, he may.	

Gemara (Berachos 28a) tells us that Sanchriev exiled the original inhabitants of Egypt, Edom, Ammon and Moav and replanted them in other lands. Today, since we do not know who originated where, the restriction on marrying them no longer applies.

Shitah Mikubetzes states that Sanchriev moved the people around, but permitted the Egyptians to return to their original land. Therefore, it is not permitted to marry with an Egyptian.

18 Sotah 9a2
Weiss 528 p22

line 40

B18

אֵין הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא נִפְרָע מִן הָאָדָם עַד שֶׁתִּמְלֵא סָאָתוֹ

The Holy One, blessed be He, does not exact punishment from a person, until the full measure of his guilt has been completed.

The wicked may appear successful because they have not yet fulfilled their full measure of sin. However, once that occurs, they will get their just rewards.

אל תיקרי „ויקרא“

Don't read it as, “He called out”,

but rather, read it as, ‘He caused them to call out’.

(Gen 21:33) Abraham established an ‘Eishel’ in Beer Sheva and there he called out in the name of HaShem . The word for ‘established’ is the same as the word for ‘planted’- ‘Eishel’. The word ‘vyitah’, ‘planting’, could be a tree or could mean establishing a hotel used “for echilah, shetiah v’ levayah”, ‘eating, drinking and escorting’.

After enjoying such hospitality, the guests would rise to praise Abraham, but he would stop them and ask, “Was it my food you ate? No, you ate from the food of the Lord of the World, therefore, praise Him”, and they would do so.

18 Sotah 10b1 line 1 A2
Daf Digest

אֱלֹהֵי וַיִּקְרֵא מִלְּמֹד שֶׁהִקְרִיא אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ לְשֵׁמוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
בְּפִה כָּל עוֹבֵר וְשׁוֹב

This teaches that our forefather, Abraham, caused the name of God to be called in the mouth of every passerby.

Because HaShem himself is called Shalom.

Shalom is one of the names of God (BT Shabbos 10b). It is a nickname and may be erased, but not mentioned in a bathroom.

מִדָּה טוֹבָה מְרוּבָּה מִמִּדַּת פּוֹרְעָנוֹת

The measure of reward for a good deed, exceeds the measure of punishment for a bad deed.

When Cain killed Abel, he was held accountable not only for his brother's blood, but for the blood of all the descendants who would have been born from his brother. That's how severely the Torah deals with a transgressor.

Consequently, if you influence a single person to do good, to live a meritorious life, you get credit not only for that person's good, but all the good deeds of the generations that follow.

הוא אינו מביא אֶבֶל הֵן בָּאִין

He did not go, but they came.

At the time of Noah, God made a vow which he reminds us of with the rainbow, that he would not bring another flood on the earth to kill its people.

How then, could the Egyptians be killed by the catastrophic flood of water at the Reed Sea? The Egyptians had depended on God's promise, knowing He usually punishes measure for measure and believed it was safe to throw the Jewish male children into the water, since HaShem had promised not to bring another flood. The answer is that God does keep his promises. He did not bring a flood upon the Egyptians, they came to the flood.

We learn this from our Gemara.

18 Sotah 11a3 line 33
Ex 18:10

B1

בְּקִדְיָהּ שְׁבִישְׁלוֹ בָּהּ נִתְבְּשְׁלוּ

In the pot they (the Egyptians) cooked, they, themselves, were cooked.

Poetic Justice

Biblical Justice

Cooking is accomplished through the medium of water. Here, the Egyptians were punished in the same ‘pot of water’, the Reed Sea, in the same part of the Nile delta, in which they threw the Israelite children.

18 Sotah 11a3 line 35 B17
Weinbach 409

שְׁלֹשָׁה הָיוּ בְּאוֹתָהּ עֲצָה בְּלֵעָם וְאִיּוֹב וַיִּתְּרוּ

Three people advised Pharaoh: Bilam, Job and Yisro.

Bilam said to kill them, so he was killed.

Job was silent, so he suffered and he was forced to cry out.

Yisro ran away forgoing the many privileges he had at the Royal Court.

His reward was that his descendants had the privilege of sitting as judges in the most important royal palace, the Beis Hamikdash.

Measure for measure, each was rewarded = Biblical Justice.

וְלָמָּה נִקְרָא שְׁמָהּ רַעַמְסֵס שְׂרָאשׁוֹן רַאשׁוֹן מִתְרוֹסֵס

Within their very names we can see the cities were meant to crumble.

And why was the city called Raamses (Ex1:11)? Because “as each building was erected, one side would sink and fall”.

line 47

A15

וְלָמָּה נִקְרָא שְׁמָהּ פִּיתוֹם שְׂרָאשׁוֹן רַאשׁוֹן פִּי תְהוֹם בּוֹלְעוֹ

And why was it called Pison? Because “the depths of the earth would swallow it.”

No matter how degrading and lowly a person’s work may be, there is a fundamental degree of satisfaction knowing that he is accomplishing something that will last after him, or will contribute to mutual benefit. It is doubly demoralizing to perform useless effort – it adds immeasurably to the torture of the work itself.

When speaking of the midwives, the Torah states, “And God was good to the midwives and the people increased”. One of their main benefits was to see that their work had value and a successful outcome, i.e., the people increased.

אָמַר רַבָּא חוֹרְגוּ דְקִנְזוּ הוּהּ

Rava said that Caleb was the stepson of Kenaz.

The Gemara concludes that Caleb was the son of Chetzron and the stepson of Kenaz. This is suggested by the reference to Caleb as “The Kenazi”, rather than the son of Kenaz (Sefer Yehoshua 14:6)

If he wrote a document, i.e., a Kesubah or a Get, how should he be referred to, as Caleb, the son of Chetzron or Caleb, the son of Kenaz, his stepfather?

How do we designate the name on a Kesubah of a person who was adopted? And why is this important?

Ideally, we call him by the name of the biological parent. However, if this will create hardship, use wording that is acceptable, but indicates that the person is not the actual child of the person or his wife. For example, ‘Sarah, who is called, Sarah the daughter of (the adopted father’s name)’. It is important that she and her children not marry close relatives and to alert them, that if they are brothers, that they can’t do Yibum in the adopted father’s name.

וַיִּצַו פַּרְעֹה לְכָל-עַמּוּיָא

And Pharaoh commanded his entire people.

In response to his command, Amram divorced his wife and was then confronted by his daughter Miriam, who challenged him saying:

1. “Pharaoh condemned all the boys – you condemned both boys and girls”, by having no further children.
2. “Pharaoh denies them this world, you deny them both worlds” - because dead children do go to Heaven. - never conceived children do not go to Heaven.
3. “Your decree will occur – no children will be born and therefore, none will live. Pharaoh’s decree may not be fulfilled. His people may revolt against it and God may never permit it”. Amram was convinced and rescinded the divorce.

Pharaoh wanted to diminish the numbers of the Jewish population.

Pharaoh’s decree was foolish, even if it had succeeded. If all the male children had been thrown into the Nile and drowned, but the females survived – even a few males could repopulate the Jewish nation. But had he chosen to kill the females, leaving only a few – no matter how many were left, a woman can only produce a child every 9 months. This would certainly have resulted in fewer children being born.

עָמַד וְגִירָשׁ אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ

(Amram) rose up and divorced his wife.

History of the laws of marriage and divorce.

Rambam writes that prior to Mt. Sinai, certain laws were practiced by the Jews.

Divorce - Amram divorcing Yocheved in protest of Pharaoh's decree to kill the male children.

Marriage - Rashi (Vaychi Gen 48:9), Joseph gave his wife a Kesubah and performed Erusin (BT Sotah) both of which indicate a halachic marriage.

וְהָא הִנּוּת מֵעֵבֶרָא בֵּיהּ תְּלַתָּא יָרְחֵי מֵעִיקְרָא

Yocheved was three months pregnant with Moshe, when she was remarried.

When Amram remarried Yocheved, a chupah was part of that ceremony.

Rambam tells us that the mitzvah of Kiddushin was given with the rest of the Torah at Sinai.

This explains why in the bracha at a wedding, we turn around the order of the process. The sequence is first Kiddushin and then chupah - but because we celebrated chupah first with Amram and Yocheved (and some say with Joseph), we reflect that historical sequence in this bracha.

מִלְמַד שִׁירְדָה לְרַחוּץ מִגְלוּלֵי אָבִיהָ

It teaches us that she went to wash herself of the idolatry of her father's house.

A new king arose in Egypt who did not know Joseph.

One who did not recognize Joseph and Joseph's God as the source of Egypt's success.

He set himself up as a deity and claimed the Nile rose to irrigate the land through his powers and not because of the blessing of Yaakov, as Joseph had told the Pharaoh.

Pharaoh's daughter could not permit the Nile, that rose up to feed her people because it had been blessed by Yaakov and Joseph, to now cause the death of a Jewish child. And so she saved Moses and contradicted her father's decree and challenged his being a deity.

פֶּה שֶׁעֲתִיד לְדַבֵּר עִם הַשָּׁמַיִם יֵינֵק דְּבַר טָמֵא

The mouth that is destined to speak with God, should it nurse on a non-kosher breast?

On this daf we learn that Moshe refused to nurse from a non-Jewish wet nurse. The Shulchan Aruch tell us that one may not give his child to a non-Jewish wet nurse on the basis of this precedent.

From here we must learn to treat every child as though he/she is a potential Moses Rabbeinu, as though each has the potential to reach the highest places, no matter how modest the material or spiritual level of his/her surroundings.

אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ וּבִינָתָהּ

They said to him, “You sold it”!

Yaakov bought the rights of the first born from Esau – was the transaction valid? We have a principle. It is not possible to make a transaction on something that has not yet come into existence.

Rosh - Such a transaction could be strengthened by an oath. That is why Yaakov asked Esau to take an oath.

Rivash says –No, the oath binds the person to perform the transaction, but does not create a transaction from the time of the oath.

For example, if the person dies, according to the Rosh, the deal is effective.

According to Rivash, a valid transfer of the property has not yet been performed.

Mordechai - The transaction could be effective if one specified that it occurs only after the item comes into existence.

קָבְרוּ בְּשֵׁחֵם

And buried him in Shechem.

Why did Joseph merit being buried in Israel and Moses did not?!

Joseph, when in Egypt, did not hide his Jewishness. When asked, he said: “I have been stolen from the land of the Ivrim”.

Whereas Moses hid his Jewishness. That’s why when he saved the daughters of Yisro, they said to their father, “An Egyptian man saved us.” Therefore, he did not merit to be buried in Israel.

Daf Digest

כָּל הָעוֹשֶׂה דְבָר וְלֹא גָמְרוּ וּבֹא אַחֵר וּגְמְרוּ
מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכָּתוּב עַל שֶׁגְּמְרוּ כְּאִילוּ עָשָׂאוּ

If someone begins but does not finish and another comes and finishes, the Torah considers the one who completed the task, as if he did it all.

A man tried to sell his house without a broker and could not.

A broker brought a customer but the negotiations ended.

The man tried again to sell the house on his own and almost succeeded when the buyer backed out.

The first prospective customer came back on his own and offered a slightly higher amount and the seller accepted. The broker wants his commission. “I introduced you two.” “No, your deal fell through, I came back on my own!!”

R Moshe Feinstein: If all agree that the agent brought the two together, he should be paid his fee.

This ruling seems to differ from the above rule. What if the first buyer returns with a different broker, which broker would get the commission?

18 Sotah 13b3 line 26
Weiss #379

A43

לְפֹם גַּמְלָא שִׁיחָנָא

According to the camel, the load.

The greater the person, the greater is his responsibility; the more is expected of him.

(Yevamos 131b) The Holy one deals strictly with those around him.

(Psalms 50:3) God's gaze is fixed on the righteous, for they are closest to him.

18 Sotah 14a1 line 14&20 B10 and B23
Daf Digest

„אַחֲרֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם תֵּלְכוּ׃׃
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בִּיקָר חוֹלִים

You should walk after HaShem. He visits the sick.

Is it sufficient to call a sick person on the phone? ‘Halchu’, “You should walk to the sick person”, i.e., go to him physically, to assist in his needs and to learn what those needs are. And you are to pray for his ‘refuah shelemah’, “his complete recovery”, when you ‘daven’, ‘pray’.

R Moshe Feinstein - If you can't, i.e., it is not possible to visit personally, you could call, or write a letter to him.

But that is decidedly, second best.

„אַחֲרֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם תֵּלְכוּ“

Follow the Lord, your God.

This means emulate Him, do as He does, clothe the naked and visit the sick.

Imitatio Dei

This phrase is used as a support, for there being a medical profession.

The Torah gives the physician permission to heal, also it is a religious precept. If a physician holds back his/her treatment, it is considered as though he shed blood, i.e., killed the patient.

This is also used as an argument that the community is responsible for providing group homes for the elderly or mentally retarded persons.

18 Sotah 14a2 line 30 A22
Weiss #194 p126

תּוֹרָה תְּחִלָּתָהּ גְּמִילוֹת וְסוּפָהּ גְּמִילוֹת חֶסֶדִים

The Torah begins and ends with acts of loving kindness.

- Gen 3:21 - He clothed the naked.
- Gen 18:1 - He visited Abraham when he was ill from his circumcision.
- Deut 34:6 - He buried (Moshe) in the valley.

18 Sotah 15a2 line 33
1980 p209

A37

שְׁלֵא יְהֵא חוּטְא נְשָׁכָר

So that a sinner not profit.

Should a Rabbi offer Rabbinic supervision to a bakery which is open on Shabbos?
Or to bakeries closed on Shabbos, where it is known that the owners do not keep Shabbos?

After all, if the bakeries themselves were supervised as kosher, then a few hours after Shabbos (to give time so it looks as though items were not baked on Shabbos), could items properly be purchased? Is this permissible? No, a Jew should not benefit from his sins.

We must not be a party to a public ‘chillul Shabbos’, ‘violation of the Sabbath’, by making such a bakery certified kosher.

נָזִיר נִמְי חוֹטֵא הוּא

A Nazir is a sinner.

It is a sin to deny yourself.

But if he does so to become closer to God, he gains more than he loses. There is a relative value that needs to be assessed.

Usually we say, “To do that is a sin,” and don’t think to weigh the sin compared to the benefits, or the positives, that are achieved. Here we have that comparison.

שְׁלֹשָׁה צְרִיכִין שִׁירְאוּ

Three things must be seen.

Tzitzis must be seen (Num 15:39), “And you shall see the Tzitzis and remember all the mitzvahs of HaShem.”

The mitzvah of Tzitzis does not depend on seeing the Tzitzis. It is in wrapping oneself in a garment, that has four corners and have Tzitzis attached.

Some say there is no specific mitzvah to look at the Tzitzis. It is an elaboration on the mitzvah to wear them. By looking a person will remember the color of the sky and the ocean and think of the heavens where God dwells. Seeing the Tzitzis may not be a vital part of the mitzvah.

Whereas seeing the ashes of the Porah Aduma is vital to the Sotah and the spittle of the Yevama is vital to her Chalitzah. We recall that the Tzitzis Gematria is 600 and 5 knots + 8 strings = 613. This is to remind us of the 613 mitzvahs.

18 Sotah 17a2 line 27

B21

Weiss #56

אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה זָכוּ שְׂכִינָה בֵּינֵיהֶן לֹא זָכוּ אִשׁ אוֹכֵלֶתָן

When husband and wife are worthy, the Shechinah abides with them. When they are unworthy, fire consumes them.

The letter ‘yud’ from the word ‘ish’ (husband) and the letter ‘hey’ from the word ‘ishah’ (wife), form the Divine name. If these two letters are removed, only the letter ‘aleph’ and letter ‘shin’ are left. Forming the word ‘aish’ (fire).

Male and female are opposites and would naturally be antagonistic to each other. If they are worthy the almighty makes peace between them.

18 Sotah 17a2
Weiss #56

line 27

B21

אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה זָכוּ שְׁכִינָה בֵּינֵיהֶן לֹא זָכוּ אִשׁ אוֹכְלֶתָן

When a husband and wife are worthy the Shechinah lives with them. When they are unworthy, fire consumes them.

If two letters of the divine name (yud + hey) are removed from the words, 'ish' (man) and 'ishah' (woman), we are left with the words 'aish and aish', 'fire and fire'.
The marriage is consumed by the fires of domestic discord.

בְּעֵי רַבָּא הִשְׁקָה בְּסִיב מַהוּ

Rava asked, “Can a Sotah drink through a piece of bast?”

Is this a normal method of drinking or not? ‘Teiku’, “let the question stand unresolved as it is”, ‘Tishbi Yitareitz kushios V’havayos’.

- Can she drink the bitters water through a straw? ‘Teiku’, even if a straw is not a normal way of drinking?
- A person had a dental condition that made drinking wine on Pesach very painful, may he use a straw?
- A person should use a cup with a wide enough brim, so that he can consume the required Revii’s at once.
- ‘L’Chatchillah’, “in the first place”, it should not be done but ‘b’dieved’, “but if already done”, the mitzvah is fulfilled.

Rambam- Once the sotah scroll with God’s name on it is erased, we can force her to drink it.

This is not a normal way to drink and we see it is sanctioned . Therefore, we could extrapolate that using a straw should also be permissible.

בְּעֵי רַבָּא הִשְׁקָה בְּסִיב מְהוּ

Rava asked, “Can a Sotah drink through a piece of bast?”

Drinking through a straw, is it permissible?

Same question: Eating on Yom Kippur through a feeding tube:

- a. Through the nose to the stomach.
- b. Through a jejunostomy tube.
- c. Intravenously.
- d. Through a portacath.

Is sustenance via this tube prohibited or permitted? The palate receives absolutely no pleasure from eating. Some say if feeding is not a matter of life or death – avoid it.

If done it violates a Torah prohibition.

If done it violates only a Rabbinic prohibition since there is no pleasure.

It would be best to feed small amounts frequently at intervals that do not constitute a ‘shiur’, “an amount that would constitute a violation”. But, if this is not feasible, they may feed him regularly through any of the above methods.

וְכֹהֵן מְנִיחַ יָדוֹ מִתַּחַתֶּיהָ

And the Kohen places his hands under hers

to wave the barley (Minchah) offering.

Is it not unseemly for the Kohen to touch this woman?

Suggestions put forth:

- Choose an elderly Kohen.
- Choose even a young Kohen but have the touch be brief – momentary.
(The Yetzer Hara is not to be found in a momentary touch.)
- Have a cloth separate their hands.

צָרִיךְ שִׁיתֵן מֶרַח

We have to put something bitter into the water,

because the Torah says, ‘The bitter waters.’

In the Chumash, Rashi says - The waters of the Sotah are called bitter because of their effect on the woman. If she is guilty, she will face a bitter fate.

Our Gemara gives a different explanation. The father of Shmuel says that it is necessary for us to actually place a bitter-tasting agent into the water.

Rashi, in his comments in the Gemara, also explains that the water is to be bitter due to some additive. HaShem's name is not yet in it. So far, the water does not have the power to test the woman and yet, it is already called bitter.

Rashi understood that the verse could have said, ‘may marim’ not ‘may hamarim’. The extra letter that is added, ‘heh’, teaches us that an additive is needed in the water – a bitter agent.

Why does Rashi vary in his explanation? In the Chumash, he explains why it is bitter. In the Gemara, he explains how it becomes bitter.

אם יש לה זכות היתה תולה לה

If she has merit, the effect of the bitter waters will be delayed.

This delay of the effects is considered a benefit. On the basis of her merit, the process of dying will be prolonged and the suffering extended, but the person lives longer. This teaches us that, despite suffering, it is considered a benefit to live longer.

This approach rejects the notion of euthanasia. One who assists a person in taking the life of a person who is ill, or helps the patient take his own life, is considered a murderer.

R Chananya ben Tradyon, while being burned alive, was advised by his students to open his mouth to hasten his death. He refused, stating that he preferred to die by the hands of God, rather than to do something that hastens his own death.

It is not possible for us to make a calculation that it is better for someone to die rather than to live and therefore, we may not choose an act of euthanasia.

18 Sotah 20a3 line 22 A2
Daf Digest

אם יש לה זכות היתה תולה לה

If she has merit, it will delay the full effects of the bitter waters.

See how fair the Talmud is, even though this woman may have sinned and warrants the death penalty, we do not demonize her and make her out to be worse than she is. No, we take cognizance of her good deeds and good qualities and expect her to benefit from them.

How easy it is to exaggerate the bad actions of a person and fail to take into account their good qualities. That is not the way of the Torah.

חַיִּיב אָדָם לְלַמֵּד אֶת בִּתּוֹ תּוֹרָה

A man is obligated to teach Torah to his daughter.

If a woman has merit, that merit may delay her punishment of suffering the effects of the sotah waters for 1, 2 or 3 years. Therefore, teach your daughter Torah so she has such merit!!

R Eliezar says – Whoever teaches his daughter Torah, it is as though he teaches her physical intimacy! Why? The Gemara does not say.

Perhaps we could suggest that the daughter may know she has merit, in that she studied Torah. She may believe that that merit will protect her from the waters of the sotah and they will not harm her. This belief may make her more willing to engage in an affair, thinking she is protected by her merit!!

הוּי זְהִיר שְׂמֵלֶאכֶתְךָ מִלְּאֲכֶת שָׁמַיִם הִיא

Be careful , your work is work of Heaven.

Should you omit or add one letter, you could result in destroying the entire world.

For example, consider the sentence, ‘v’chai elokim emes’, “the life of God is truth”. If you omit the letter ‘aleph’ from ‘emet’, it translates “the life of God is dead”, ‘mes’. (Jeremiah 10:10) In the sentence, ‘Bereshis barah elokim,’ “in the beginning God created”, if you add a ‘vov’ to the word ‘barah’, “he created”, the word changes to ‘baru’, which means, “they created”, suggesting multiple Gods, i.e., polytheism and this contradicts a basic tenet of Judaism.

This is the power and obligation of a scribe. Each of our lives and activities hold the same power over the world.

If we think about it

- a. If cook adds too much or a wrong ingredient and a person may be made sick or suffer an allergic reaction .
- b. If an engineer makes a mistake, a bridge or building may collapse.
- c. A doctor, or lawyer ,or teacher, or parent ,each, can adversely affect a human being.

„וְהַקִּיצוֹת הִיא תְּשִׁיחָהּ“ לְעֵתִיד לָבָא „בְּשִׁבְבָהּ תִּשְׁמַר עֲלֶיךָ“

When you lie down, it will watch over you.

When you wake up, it will advocate for you.

The defending power of mitzvahs and Torah.

Body

Mitzvah observance

Physical protects preserves

Avoids war famine illness

Avoids thistles, and thorns

Avoids falls and stumbles

Lightens darkness like a candle or a torch

Deflects injury when one unknowingly
steps close to them.

Mitzvahs

Protects you on your way = a Torah scholar has a fear of sin. Torah gives you direction, i.e., which way to take. How do you know if you have arrived at your destination? When you reach the crossroads on the day of death, you can assess if you have successfully negotiated the perilous journey and controlled your desires, so they have not deflected you from your effort to arrive at your destination.

Soul – mind

Torah study improves ones

mental, emotional,

intellectual, and character traits.

Torah: Avoids Yetzer Hara, evil company and
bad influences.

Deflects evil even when you are standing still.

תּוֹרָה בֵּין בְּעִידָנָא דְעָסִיק בָּהּ וּבֵין בְּעִידָנָא דְלֹא עָסִיק בָּהּ מְגַנָּא וּמַצְלָא

Torah study, while one is engaged in it, protects and rescues.

What do we mean by this?

Obviously, while we are busy with Torah study, we aren't doing other things that might be bad, i.e., Lashon Hara, etc. Elevating ideas keep us thinking of the basic good and positive elements of life; logic, learning from precedent, charity, prayer, thankfulness, tradition, respect for our ancestors and their way of life.

All this protects and rescues.

תּוֹרָה בֵּין בְּעִידָנָא דְעָסִיק בָּהּ וּבֵין בְּעִידָנָא דְלֹא עָסִיק בָּהּ מַגְנָא וּמַצְלָא

Regarding the study of Torah, while one is engaged in it, it protects and rescues.

A husband's Torah study provides merit for his wife and children who encourage him.

Rambam (Hil Isurei Beah Fah 22:21)- Unchaste thoughts do not occur to a heart full of Torah wisdom.

R Eliyahu E Dessler - The intellectual pursuit and sanctity of Torah will preserve the student from defiling thought and activities.

R Yisroel Salanter and the Vilna Gaon- Words of Torah will displace the tendency toward idle talk, gossip or Lashon Hara (evil speech).

דָּקָא טְבַעָה אִיתָתָא בְּנַהֲרָא וְאָמַר לֹא אֹרַח אֶרְעָא לְאִיסְתְּכוּלֵי בָּהּ וְאֶצוּלָהּ

A woman is drowning in a river and he said it is improper to look upon her, to save her.

There is a leniency for him to save her, even if there are other people available to save her. If he does not do so, the Gemara calls him a ‘Chassid shoteh,’ a “foolishly pious person”.

It is assumed that while in the throes of the effort to save her, there will not be any improper thoughts or behavior.

Historical Note: On this daf of Daf Yomi in 1926, Rav Meir Shapiro spoke about supporting scholars. He was given a big donation and Daf Yomi world wide projects began. His yeshiva Chachmei Lublin was founded.

חסיד שוטה

Other examples of foolish piety.

Yerushalmi - A person who refuses to jump in the water to save a drowning child, without first removing his Tefillin because he fears the water will erase the parchment, while the child drowns in the meantime.

Radbaz - One who refuses to violate the Sabbath to save a person's life.

This idea is used in the discussion regarding if it our obligation to donate an organ to save the life of another?"

If an evil authority says to you, "I will kill so and so unless you permit me to cut off one of your limbs," must you do so to save his life?

You are permitted, but not mandated.

If there is even a slight chance of endangering your life and you choose to do so, you are considered pious, but a foolish, pious person.

18 Sotah 21b2 line 20 A10
Weiss #627

הַיּוֹכֵי דְמִי רָשָׁע עָרוּם

What is the case of a cunning evildoer?

Who is a cunning rogue? One who explains his case to the judge before the other party to the controversy arrives.

This is due to the fact that once a person hears one side, it is very hard to be open minded to new information. This is the same with most people, once you have an opinion, it is difficult for a person to admit otherwise.

18 Sotah 22a1 line 1 A2
Bleich 5: p. X11

וְלֹא שִׁימַשׁ תַּלְמִידֵי חֻכְמִים

But has not served Torah scholars.

We have stressed that the Gemara that we review here is not halachah. For halachah, one must ask their Rabbi. A person who looks for halachah in the Shulchan Aruch or Mishnah Berura, as though it reflects a more contemporary halachic decision or any even more recent compendium, is still not considered a proper method, unless that person also studies the Talmudic analysis of every point. Skipping the Talmud analysis will produce errors in their decision. Therefore, ask your Rabbi.

וְלֹא שָׂכָר פְּסִיעוֹת יֵשׁ לִי

Don't I get a reward for every step?

A person was asked, “Why do you walk so far to go to shul when there are other synagogues closer to you?” He answered, “Don't I get credit for every effort I expend (i.e., for every step I take)?”

Extra effort, expended to do a mitzvah, is rewarded only when justified. Otherwise, we are advised not to delay the performance of a mitzvah, unless by that delay, you enhance the mitzvah. For example, waiting for a special person to come to a Bris, walking farther to a shul where you believe the atmosphere best enhances your prayers.

In such a case, he is correct and his reward is greater.

18 Sotah 23b3 line 31 B13
Daf Digest

בְּגֵיבָתוֹ וְלֹא בְּגֵיבָתָהּ

For his theft, not for her theft.

A man, who can't pay back that which he stole, can be sold as a Jewish slave. However, not the case regarding a woman. This is learned from the verse (Ex22:2) "He shall be sold for his theft"; but only for the amount he stole, not the interest or 'double penalty', 'kefel'. He can only be sold for funds he stole, not other debts.

Can we learn all these laws from the same word in the Torah? Yes, if all the lessons are basically parallel, as in this case.

בְּגֵיבֶתוֹ וְלֹא בְּגֵיבֶתָּהּ

For his theft, not for her theft.

A widow stole merchandise. The owner found the clothing in the widow's home and wished to reclaim it. The widow claimed that it is a clear Torah prohibition to take possession of the garment of a widow, even though she knows she should not have stolen them, two wrongs don't make a right!

The Rabbi said the prohibition to taking a widow's clothes is related to forcing her to repay a loan, but to reclaim stolen property, there is no such prohibition (Rashi – Bava Metzia 115).

Seizing any property as security to pay for stolen goods is permitted.

בְּגֵיבָתוֹ וְלֹא בְּגֵיבָתָהּ

For his theft, not for hers.

A woman is not eligible to have her ear pierced in order to remain as a maid servant until Yovel (Jubilee). This is derived from the verse, ‘azno’ “his ear”, or from ‘Ha eved’, “the masculine slave” and not the feminine slave.

In reality, this teaching is not necessary. The only slave who is able to remain past the initial six years of service, is one who is sold by the court for not being able to repay a theft. This does not apply to a slave who sells himself because of poverty. A woman is never sold under such circumstances. Therefore, she can't stay more than six years and never would be considered for ear piercing.

Tosophos says it teaches us also that a girl, sold by her father into slavery, is not to have her ear pierced either.

הַאֹמֶרֶת טְמֵאָה אֲנִי

One who says, “I am defiled”.

Why is a married woman believed, when she claims that she is prohibited to her husband because she committed adultery? This is a self incriminating remark and as a result of it, she will have to be divorced from her husband and forfeit her kesubah. Perhaps, we should suggest she is lying, in order to exit the marriage. This would be a strategic move, which she cannot normally initiate.

The fact is, it takes two parts, one to weaken the marriage bond and another to cause dissolution:

- (1.) Warning and seclusion with another man, is not enough alone. But with (2.) her admission, the two together can cause divorce.

Because we know, warning and seclusion is followed by the sotah trial.

However, if she is found innocent, she returns to her husband.

Here, where she admits her guilt, there is no sotah trial.

לֹא יִשָּׂא אָדָם מְעוּבָרָת חֵבִירוֹ וּמִיִּנְקַת חֵבִירוֹ

You may not marry a divorced woman who is pregnant, or who is still nursing her previous husband's child.

He must wait for 24 months from the date of the divorce.

A person did marry a divorcee who had a new baby exactly 24 months after her divorce. They had a lively joyous wedding, until one of their learned guests told them, “Of the two years you waited, one year was a leap year and therefore, the two years will not have elapsed for another month. You must divorce your new bride and marry her later!!”

This is not true. The rule is 24 months, not two years, so he waited the correct amount of time.

וְנִקְתָּהּ וְנִזְרְעָה

Then she shall be proven innocent and she shall bear seed.

What effect does the potion have on a woman who is innocent of adultery?
“She will be exonerated and be enriched in childbirth (Num 5:28)”.

R Akiva – If she was previously barren, she will now be blessed with children.

R Elazar (Berachos 31b)- The vow of Channah, “If God will see the plight of your maid and give me seed, I will dedicate him to HaShem. But if You don’t, I will make a pretense of being unfaithful to my husband, Elkanan and be compelled to drink the bitter waters. Since I am innocent, the Torah promises me to have children”.

Perhaps all barren women would try the same tactic. If not previously barren, the innocent Sotah would experience comfortable childbirth, boys instead of girls, and children of better size and complexion.

אִשָּׁה מְזוּנָה בְּנֵיהָ כְּשָׂרִין

The children of an adulterous woman are eligible (for marriage to a regular person).

Even if a woman was known to carry on an extra marital affair, any child born may be presumed to be from her husband. Because most of her sexual unions are presumed to be lawful. Even if the husband was overseas when she conceived, the Talmud postulates that a “speedy camel” could have brought him back to the proximity of his wife at the time of conception.

We even postulate (in B.T. Yevamos 80b) that a child born, even though the father was overseas for 12 months, is declared Kosher – stating, “perhaps the pregnancy was prolonged for an extra three months.”

Why is this important? We see that much effort is made not to permit the designation of ‘mamzer’!

אִשָּׁה מְזוֹנָה בְּנֵיהָ בְּשָׂרִין

The children of an adulterous woman are eligible...,

A woman is married in an orthodox wedding and had three children. They were civilly divorced, but she never got a 'get'. She remarried and raised three more children. All went to orthodox day schools and were observant Jews. One of the children from her second relationship wanted to marry, but the above was found out. The child was suspected of being a mamzer, who is not permitted to marry into the Israelite nation.

The case came to Bais Din.

1. The original Kesubah could not be found and therefore, the first marriage could not be verified. It could be postulated that this may not be the child of a married woman by another, but merely a child out of wedlock – which does not make the child a mamzer .
2. The first man continued to visit her after their divorce and we can question that perhaps, the child is the child of the first man. So we have a double doubt: Doubt regarding the validity of the first marriage and doubts that the second man is the biological father. This is a 'safek sefekus', a double doubt. Therefore, the child may marry.

Tractate

18 Sotah

27b2 - 49b6

כָּשֶׁם שֶׁהַמַּיִם בּוֹדְקִין אוֹתָהּ כֵּן הַמַּיִם בּוֹדְקִין אוֹתוֹ

Just as the waters test her, so do the waters test him.

(Who is tested? The alleged adulterer).

This is suggested by the word ‘hameorrim’. In Gematria this word equals the number 496 (248 limbs of the woman and 248 limbs of the man).

Krias Shema has 245 words. Therefore, the shaliach tzibur repeats the last three words, or a single person starts with ‘el melech ne’eman’, making it 248 words to match the 248 limbs of the body.

אין האיש מנוקה מעון אין המים בודקין את אשתו

If a husband is not free of sin the waters, he will not judge his wife.

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a baker who bought his daily products from a local middleman. The baker sensed, however, that the weight of the butter he bought, seemed lighter than the kilogram, he paid for. This went on for a few days and then he confronted the dairy man, who insisted the weight was correct. The baker took him to the Beis Din, brought a scale and proved that the butter only weighed 800 grams. The dairy man said, “Let me get what I have been using as my counter weight to judge a full kilo”. He quickly returned with a large bread. “I buy this kilogram bread every day from my friend, this baker, and I balance my scale against it – and he has the chutzpah to say my weight is wrong!!?”

לְעוֹלָם לְבוֹעַל

HEBREW!

The Mishnah actually refers to the adulterer.

The waters can be ingested by one and cause another to suffer.

This tells us that another person can cause harm to someone else. It is also logical to state that someone can cause good to someone else.

Authorities cite this concept of our Gemara as the origin of the custom to wish each other, 'l'chaim', "to life". We direct salvation and good health to others by wishing them well.

בְּשִׁעָה שָׁעְלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הַיָּם

When Yisroel ascended from the sea,
they set their eyes on reciting a song.

We have a principle, ‘shomea keoneh,’ “listening is equivalent to reciting”. It would be possible if Moshe did the singing (or reading) and the people listened to fully participate. Here we see that both sang. R Akiva uses this information to state that the people were not considered Jews until they received the Torah. Therefore, this principle would not have been in effect. Other Tannayim state that they were Jews even before ‘Matan Torah’ “the giving of the Torah”. **However, since this is not an obligatory prayer or reading and their hearts filled with gratitude when the principle could apply desired to sing God’s praises.** We cannot use this episode to intimate that they were not yet considered to be Jews.

בְּשֶׁעָה שָׁעָלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הַיָּם

When Yisroel ascended from the sea.

It is customary to sing ‘Shiras Hayam’, “song of the sea”, on the second day of Pesach.

But at the Seder we read in the Haggadah that we should feel as though we, ourselves, left Egypt and splitting of the sea is part of that experience. **Why isn’t said on the seventh day of Pesach, when it historically, actually occurred?**

Technically, we should say the Shirah every day of our lives, to recall God’s miracle to us. **So it is not inappropriate to say it on the seventh day of Pesach.**

כָּרִס נַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶן כְּאַסְפִּקְלָרְיָא הַמְאִירָה וְרָאוּ

The mother's abdomen became like clear glass for them and they could see.

Chalitzah cannot be performed by a judge who is blind, because the Torah requires that, “**she shall spit before the judge's eyes**”. If the judge's vision is poor, he might not see this action.

A certain judge could not see well unless he wore his glasses. However, there were no glasses when these rules were created. The question came up as to whether seeing with glasses is acceptable, if without glasses, a judge could not adequately see.

The verse says, “she must spit before the **eyes of the elders**”, and most elderly people would have poor eyesight. No. Poor eyesight is no barrier and certainly is no barrier, if it can be improved with glasses.

אִפִּילוּ שָׁמַע מֵעוֹף הַפּוֹרֵחַ

Even if heard from a bird in flight.

Approaches to a wife who has been warned by her husband ,in front of two witnesses ,not to be in seclusion.

Rashi – Any information can incriminate her – even from one witness (a maid servant or a slave or a bird that flies). The statement, ‘bird that flies’ refers to the lack of need for the standard testimony of two witnesses.

Rashi – He brings her to drink. If he does not wish to bring her to drink, he must divorce her and give her kesubah money back to her.

R Yehoshua says , ‘No, we do need two witnesses to the seclusion also. If women of the neighborhood are speaking about it – he must divorce.

Tosophos – Without witnesses, it is mere rumor. They must divorce but with kesubah.

Keren Ohr - Mere rumor -divorce ,but no kesubah payment.

18 Sotah 32a2 line 12
Daf Digest

A1

אלו נאמרין בכל לשון

These can be recited in any language.

In which language can you pray Shema, tefillah, birkas hamazon?

Certainly in Hebrew everywhere, even if no one in that locale understands it.
It is our original and basic language.

Any other language that is the speaker's language, that is accepted and agreed upon as a standard means of communication in that particular locale, can also be used.

מִפְּנֵי מָה תִּקְנוּ תְּפִלָּה בְּלֶחֶשׁ

Why did Chazal ordain certain prayers to be said silently?

If you hear a person pray Shemoneh Esrei out loud or loud enough for you to hear, should you answer ‘amen’?

No, he is doing it wrong.

Best response – move farther away, so as not to hear and not feel you are required to answer ‘amen’.

כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹא לְבַיֵּשׁ אֶת עוֹבְרֵי עֲבִירָה

So as not to embarrass those who perform a sin.

A story is told of R Akiva Eiger, who, before being engaged to be married, was tested by his future father-in-law to be certain that R Eiger was as brilliant as the bride's father had been told. He invited two older learned men and they each asked R Eiger a question. The young student stayed silent and the prospective father-in-law decided to leave. R Akiva Eiger's father asked to speak to his son privately, since his son's behavior was strange. The boy told his father, "The questions asked were based on a mistaken understanding of the Gemara. If I would answer, I would show these two elders to not be very knowledgeable and it would shame them. Therefore, I decided it was best to stay silent and let them think I did not know the answer."

וּתְפִלָּה בְּכָל לְשׁוֹן

And you can pray in any language.

The Gemara says a person discharges his obligation to pray if he prays in any language. However, the Chasam Sofer writes that one should not make a regular habit of this.

Prayers said in Hebrew are very powerful. They were written with ‘Ruach Hakodesh’, “holy spirit”. One who prays in Hebrew accesses the highest realms of Heaven, even if he does not know what he is saying. A person who prays regularly will gradually become familiar with and will understand the prayers in Hebrew. Start little by little; the most vital are the Shemoneh Esrei, the first paragraph of the Shema, Boruch She’omar, Ashrei and Yishtabach.

כָּל הַשּׁוֹאֵל עֲרָבֵי בִלְשׁוֹן אַרְמִי אֵין מְלַאכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת נוֹקְקִין לוֹ

Whoever requests in Aramaic, the ministering angels do not pay attention to him.

The ministering angels do not understand Aramaic and won't know to take these prayers to HaShem.

So why are some prayers written in Aramaic? The Rabbis, knowing that those prayers would be said by a 'tzibur,' "a congregation", wanted to show that a tzibur has great power and does not need ministering angels to take their prayers up to heaven.

If an individual davens in Aramaic, it is as though he says, "I don't need the angels to take my prayers, since I am a great tzaddik, I can go to God directly!!"

His deeds are scrutinized to determine if he is, indeed, such a great tzaddik.

To have your deeds scrutinized, is dangerous.

אָבוֹתַי בִּקְשׁוּ עָלַי רַחֲמִים

My fathers plead for mercy for me.

It is an ancient tradition to visit the graves of one's ancestors and the graves of tzaddikim. A cemetery is likened to a shul, since the living often pray there.

What should one say?

The Maharil- says you may petition HaShem in the merit of the departed, but not that they serve as intercessors for you.

Rav Yonasan Eibeshitz – told his congregation that he was late because he visited his ancestors graves and “they will surely petition HaShem for mercy on my behalf”.

Here we see clearly, that Caleb asked the ancestors to plead for mercy for him. We can ask a tzaddik to daven on our behalf, as Caleb did. If this was not proper, the Gemara would have mentioned it.

„וַיִּקְרָא מֹשֶׁה לְהוֹשֵׁעַ בֶּן נֹון יְהוֹשֻׁעַ“

And Moses called Joshua son of Nun, ‘Yehoshua’ (Bamidbar 13:16)

Moses prayed that Yehoshua would not be influenced by the counsel of the spies. Why didn't Moses also pray for Caleb or others in the group, as well?

Yehoshua was Moses' main pupil and learned his teacher's most powerful quality of humility and tolerance. Moses understood that such a person might follow along with the suggestions of others. However, Caleb (as the posuk 14:24 states), “has a different spirit in him”, and therefore, was not likely to be so easily swayed. Therefore, Moses did not need a special prayer to protect Caleb.

וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ

As they went, so they came.

As they came with evil intent, so they came back with evil intent.

When these leaders came to Eretz Yisroel, a spirit of prophecy visited upon them and they saw the future and all the generations that would sin there. That's what they meant when they said, "It is a land that consumes its inhabitants." Knowing that Am Yisroel would sin in the future, and because the land is holy and will expel those who sin; it is better to not even enter in the first place.

Joshua and Caleb felt they should go in any way.

The sin of the spies is that they contradicted God's command and promise.

נָשָׂא אֲרוֹן אֶת וְעָבַר

The Aron (the holy ark) carried those who carried it.

He placed the Testimony in the Aron and placed the poles on the Aron (Shemos 40:20).

Earlier we learned:

The poles were placed on the Aron and then the Tablets were placed in the Ark
(Shemos 25:15-16).

Why the difference?

The poles were loose in the rings, but could not slip out (Yoma 72b).

Rashi explains:

1. The ends of the poles were thick and had to be squeezed through the rings.
2. The rings would stretch to allow the poles to enter and then return to their normal size. However, after the sin of the Golden Calf, the rings would not expand until after the tablets were placed inside.

וְאַחַר כֵּן סָדְדוּ אוֹתָן בְּסִיד

And afterwards, they covered it with plaster.

The Torah was written on stones and afterwards, they covered it with plaster.

We know that we are not allowed to erase the name of God. There was a Shul that needed new paint, but there were prayers stenciled onto the walls, which included God's name. What could they do?

From this Gemara, we learn that while you can't paint over God's name, you can apply plaster over it. Presumably, if you later remove the plaster, the letters will still be there and not be destroyed – as this was done in our Gemara.

יְקַלְפוּ אֶת הַסֵּיד וְהַשִּׂאוּהָ

Uncovering the words of the Torah and carried them away.

In Devarim 27:2-3-Upon entering Eretz Yisroel, the Jews were commanded to write the Torah on stones in 70 languages. Then, according to Rabbi Yehudah, the Jews should cover them with plaster.

Why cover the writings with plaster?

This was done so that when the other nations of the world came, they would have to invest some effort in removing the plaster, in order to learn Torah.

Torah can only be acquired, if a person puts forth effort to do so.

בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה בָּאֵתָהּ דִּיּוֹקְנֹוּ שֶׁל אָבִיו וְנִרְאָתָהּ לוֹ בַּחֲלוֹן

At that moment, he saw the image of his father in the window.

Whenever a person makes a decision, they invariably think to themselves what others might think of that decision. Therefore, a person who weights his action as though a person or persons of high moral integrity were scrutinizing his actions, or perhaps, even God himself, he will exercise utmost care in doing only what is proper and correct at all times.

Even as with Joseph, in a foreign land, away from the eyes of family or friends, a person can find strength to act properly, by relying on his education and the examples of family, friends and teachers in his life.

אָמַר לִיה זַיִל אִיתְּשִׁיל אֲשִׁבוּעַתְךָ

If not, I might go and annul my vow to you.

In our Gemara, Pharaoh made Joseph swear that he would not reveal that Pharaoh did not understand Hebrew. When Joseph told Pharaoh that he had to leave Egypt to bury his father, Pharaoh told him to break his oath to his father. Joseph told the King, “If you see I could do that, then you would know that I could break my oath to you as well and you would not trust me.” Pharaoh let him go.

How could Joseph annul his vow? He promised not to tell that Pharaoh did not understand Hebrew; yet to annul a vow, he has to tell a Chacham, who authorizes the annulment. This is a catch 22.

The answer is: If there is a compelling reason, one can tell the Chacham afterward. First say, “I need you to annul this vow.” After the vow is annulled, tell the Chacham the details.

דְּהַיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנָּס׃

“The sea saw and fled” (Gen 39:12).

What did the sea observe? It saw the casket of Joseph, about whom it is written, “He fled and he went outside” (Gen 39:12).

The generation that left Egypt was saved from drowning in the Reed Sea by merit of Joseph’s self restraint at his encounter with the wife of Potiphar. However, when the Egyptians approached the Reed Sea, they did not merit that benefit and the sea came crushing down on them.

לְלַמֵּד וּלְלַמְּדוֹת לְשָׂמֹר וּלְעָשׂוֹת הֵרִי אַרְבַּע

To learn, to teach, to guard and to observe. There are four duties

associated with each commandment.

To guard is not easily understood.

The Brisker Rav, Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik,- says it means that when we teach and observe the commandments , we do so in a way that preserves the purity of the mesorah. The tradition sustains its purity.

One of the reasons to read the Torah publically, is not merely to have a format for teaching the Torah, but to let everyone hear – to hear that it is accurately conveyed, so as to preserve it for future generations.

„בה תברכו" בלשון הקודש

So shall you bless the Jewish people everyday in Hebrew (Bamidbar 6:23).

Do not say, “If HaShem wanted the people to be blessed, let Him command that the people be blessed and there would be no need for the blessings of the Kohanim”.

No, this is the way God wants His blessings to be conveyed to us.

He wants to bless us, but He asks us to arrange our life and activity (through Mitzvahs) properly.

- Entreat Him for blessings.
- Beseech it through the ministering angels.
- Receive the blessings from the Kohanim.

That is the way God wants it to be done.

,, כֹּהֵן תְּבָרְכוּ בְּקוֹל רָם

The Kohen must offer his daily bracha out loud.

What if he has laryngitis and/or must whisper?

Shulchan Aruch: He must, at least, speak with a volume that one would use for conversation.

Mishnah Berura- rules that a Kohen, with a sore throat, should not stand before the congregation to give blessings – because the entire congregation must hear him.

This is the rule for a lone Kohen, but if he is in a group and the combined voices are loud enough to be heard, even though he is hoarse, he may join with the group.

עַם שְׂאֲחוֹרֵי כְהָנִים אֵינָן בְּכֹלֵל בְּרָכָה

The people standing behind the Kohanim are not included in the blessing.

Shulchan Aruch- Unless they stand behind, or are not present due to circumstances beyond their control, i.e., work in the field. This applies even to people who live in the Diaspora.

It is recommended that if the stage where the Kohanim stand protrudes into the sanctuary and there are people who sit right up to the Eastern wall; they should move, so as to have the Kohanim in front of them, not at their sides, or behind them.

R Moshe Shternbuch: The people in the Diaspora support the people in Israel and therefore, are blessed by the daily bracha of the Israeli Kohanim.

אֲפִילוּ מְחִיצָה שֶׁל בְּרוֹזַל אֵינָהּ מַפְסֶקֶת בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֲבִיהֶם שְׁבַשְׁמִים

Even an iron curtain cannot stand between Jews and their Heavenly Father.

The Kohanim bless, but does their blessing reach:

1. Those who stand in front of them?
2. Short people who are blocked from seeing the Kohanim?
3. People whose occupations prevent them from being in Shul?
4. People out in the field, far away?
5. People behind an iron barrier in the Shul?
6. People who stand on the side or behind the Kohanim?

Yes, to all these situations.

This demonstrates that the Rabbis attach no significance to the requirement that the Kohen's blessing must be face to face.

כִּיּוֹן שְׁנֵפֶתַח סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה אָסוּר לְסַפֵּר אֶפְיָלוּ בְּדַבַּר הַלְכָה

Once the Torah is opened, it is forbidden to speak, even a matter of Halachah.

Paying attention when the Torah is being read:

Rav Sheishes turned away during the public reading of the Torah, to continue his personal studies (Berachos 8a) .

However, we learn from Tosophos, that during the reading of the Torah, we must be attentive and not deal, even in Halachah.

However, a blind person is not obligated in reading the Torah in public and Rav Sheishes was blind. Therefore. He was exempt. Study quietly – don't disturb.

We are only prohibited from inattention, if there are 10 others who listen attentively, if so, you can study.

Rav Sheishes turned away to indicate that he should not be counted among the 10 who are supposed to listen.

בֵּינּוֹן שְׁנֵפֶתַח סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה אָסוּר לְסַפֵּר אֶפְיָלוּ בְּדַבַּר הַלְכָּה

Once the Sefer Torah is opened, it is prohibited for a person to talk, even Halacha.

Nehemiah 8:5- “And when he began to read the Torah, the entire nation stood.”

It is therefore, also appropriate to stand when the Sefer Torah is being read and especially when ‘Borechu’ is said.

Some people have a principle to stand for ‘Borechu’, and being fearful that they may forget to stand for ‘Borechu’, they stand throughout the entire Torah reading.

Shulchan Aruch says the only requirement for standing is on the person reading and the one having the Aliyah. However, when the Torah is being read, we should consider that we are there receiving the Torah, as on Mt. Sinai, where all the people stood to receive the Torah.

18 Sotah 39a2 line 17 A10
Weinbach p419

וְצִוָּנוּ לְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַהֲבָה

And commanded us to bless your people, Israel, with love.

Before they bless the congregation, the Kohanim make a blessing thanking HaShem for commanding us to bless his people, Israel, with love.

Why is it only in regards to this blessing, that there is a prerequisite of love?

The word “say” is written within a ‘vov’ making it “full”, ‘maleh’ (See Bamidbar 6:23). The Kohanim are to bless us, not half heartedly, but with whole-hearted sincerity.

A Kohen who does not love the people, or is not loved by them, should not lift up his hands in blessing.

There must be a genuine desire to bless and a genuine desire to be blessed (not just a mere formality), for the Kohanim to raise their hands.

וּמְאִי עֵינֵינוּ תְּנוּתֶיהָ דְּרַבִּי אֲבָהוּ

The humility of Rav Abahu.

Humility is a trait highly praised amongst our people.

Yet, in the Birkas Hachodesh, we pray that God should give us a “life of wealth and honor.” Yet, we know we should flee from honor. This is solved in the same prayer: “A life of love of Torah and Yiras Shamayim”, ‘fear of heaven’.

Through the honor accorded our truly wise teachers, we increase the love of Torah and the fear of heaven. So to honor them has a broad value to the community. This is the argument we use to convince the scholars, that they should accept the honor which we bestow upon them.

דַּאִין הַכֹּהֲנִים רִשְׁאִין לַעֲלוֹת בְּסַנְדְּלֵיהֶן לְדוּכָן

The Kohanim are not permitted to ascend the platform with their sandals.

Patients come to daven in hospitals, nursing homes and synagogues with slippers and/or socks. May the Kohanim among them ‘duchin’, since these are not shoes or sandals?

Only shoes or sandals were prohibited. These other foot coverings are not part of the original enactment. Also, if they don’t ascend onto a platform, but recite Birkas Kohanim from the same level as the congregation, they may wear their slippers and/or socks.

כְּדֵי לְהַרְאוֹת חֲזוֹתוֹ לְרַבִּים

In order to show its beauty to the public.

It is permissible to show others your mitzvah objects, with the hope that will inspire others to enhance their mitzvahs also.

It is not permissible to publicize that you donated to Tzedakah. If you do, you lose the reward for the mitzvah. Unless by so doing, you inspire others to do so. But, if you donate something to the Shul, you can even put your name on it, as long as the purpose is to have others do likewise and not merely an expression of haughtiness.

כָּל הַמַּחְנִיף לְחֵבִירוֹ סוֹף נוֹפֵל בְּיָדוֹ

Whoever flatters another, will ultimately fall into his hands.

- Love not accompanied by reproof, is not love.
- Compromise with people or ideas that are wrong, will weaken the principles you stand for. Believing you can give in a little to attract people to your movement, sets you up to be called 'hypocrite' and to lose those you sought to attract.
- Hold onto your principles.
- Don't flatter - be honest.

A person once wrote a letter of recommendation that was quite complementary and did not stress the negatives. When that same person applied for a job in his own institution, he did not want him. He then realized the truth of this statement.

חֹרְגַת אֲחֵיהֶּן בֵּין הָאָחִין אֲסוּרָה לִינָשָׂא לְאָחִין דְּמִתְחַזְּקִיא בִּי אֶחָתִייהוּ

A stepdaughter who was raised amongst brothers may not marry any of her stepbrothers, because they appear like siblings.

Is it permissible for a step-father to be secluded with his stepdaughter?

R Moshe Feinstein learns from this Gemara – Yes.

She may not marry any brother, because people will believe that she is marrying a real brother. Why would people think that they are real brothers and sisters?

Because the parents treat them all alike. If the father would treat a stepdaughter differently than his own daughter, people would know she is a stepdaughter .

Since the people don't see that, just as a father may be alone with his biologic daughter, so may the father be alone with his stepdaughter.

„הִירָא וְרַף הַלֵּב” שְׂבִיחוֹ זֶה הַמְתִּירָא מֵעֲבִירוֹת

“Fearful and faint hearted” (Deut 20:8) alludes to one who is afraid of the transgression he has committed.

R Akiva - Afraid of going to battle, in that he might be injured or killed.

R Yosi Haglili- One who fears he is unworthy to be saved, because of his transgressions.

Those who were fearful that their transgressions made them unworthy to be saved, went home with the others, i.e., those who had built a new home, planted a vineyard, betrothed a wife, or were recently married. No one would know that he had sinned. Remarkably, many people went home to spare the transgressor shame.

Those who feared their transgressions made them unworthy, were actually very virtuous people. Their only fault was their obsession with guilt feelings for their sins. Such a dispirited person cannot go to war.

„לא יצא בפְּבָא“

A groom may not go out to battle ...

...for the first year after marriage.

Also, he may not prepare weapons, or arrange supplies of water and food for the soldiers.

These are to be considered two commandments.

This pertains only to a war of aggression that we initiate, but for a war of defense grooms, have no such restrictions.

The Philistines did not know this. After David married, they thought he could not go to battle for one year, but this is only the rule for a war of aggression, for a war of defense, a groom may serve. David went to battle and defeated the Philistines.

אָבֵל בְּמִלְחָמוֹת חוּבָה הַכֹּל יוֹצֵאִין אֶפְיֵלוֹ חֵתָן מִחֲדָרָו וְכֵלָה מִחוּפָּתָהּ

However, for a war of Mitzvah, everyone goes out, even a bridegroom from his room and a bride from her Chupah.

Rambam: It appears that even women are required to go out to fight in a war of Mitzvah.

Radbaz: No, only as support, to cook and clean for the soldiers.

What does the above quote mean there? The bride leaves the Chupah, because the groom is off to war. There is no sense staying there alone.

שח בין תפילה לתפילה עבירה היא בידו חוזר עליה מעורכי המלחמה

He who talks between placing the Tefillin on his hand and the Tefillin on his head, has committed a transgression and returns home on its account, from the war regiments.

The Tefillin on the arm suggests action. The Tefillin of the head suggests thought, belief or intention. Just as a man in battle must have complete harmony between his thought and action, so must a person donning Tefillin. There must be no dichotomy, no interruption, no division, between belief and action.

בְּמָה דְּבָרִים אֲמֹרִים בְּמִלְחָמוֹת הַרְשׁוּת

When are these words spoken? In regards to a discretionary war.

Preemptive war:

1. War – To deliver Israel from the enemy, is not only legitimate, but mandatory.
2. A permissible war - To diminish the enemy so that they will not march against you.
3. Self defense- Milchemes Mitzvah and Milchemes Chovah:
4. Milchemes Mitzvah- is commanded by the Torah (see Deut 20:5-7). No one is exempt from going to war.
5. Milchemes Chovah- is obligatory wars. All go to war, even a bride and groom. There are no exemptions.
6. Milchemes Reshus-Wars waged by David to expand Israel's territory were discretionary.

The wars waged by Joshua to conquer the land, were obligatory and the exemptions do not apply.

While engaged in one mitzvah, you are exempt from other mitzvahs.

A 'Milchemes Reshus, a discretionary war, does not qualify as a mitzvah.

אֲבָל לְעֵינַיִן חַיּוֹתָא דְכוּלֵי עֲלָמָא בְּאַפֵּיהּ הוּא

But when it comes to life, all agree that it is his nose, not the center of the belly.

How to determine if a person has died? Check his pulse? Yes, but his pulse might be too weak to feel, or the person examining may not know how to check the pulse. Place a feather or piece of paper by his nose, to see if he is breathing.

R Moshe Feinstein: One may need to do this several times for accuracy. This test is not appropriate if the patient had a head injury, or is sedated, or unresponsive. Such a patient may improve with treatment.

וְכִי עַל דַּעְתֵּינוּ עָלְתָה שׁוֹקֵנֵי בֵּית דִּין שׁוֹפְכֵי דָמִים הֵן

Did it enter our minds that the elders of the court are spillers of blood?

The elders must declare, “Our hands did not shed this blood” (Dev 21:1-9).

The mitzvah of ‘Eglah Arufah’, pertains when a body is found between two cities.

No one would suspect that the elders had a hand in committing the crime, but the elders accept upon themselves, a higher level of responsibility. They state that they did not fail to provide the victim with food, or the shelter that he needed in their city, which may have forced him to endanger himself to go elsewhere for those necessities.

בּוֹפִין לְלוֹנֵה שְׂשׂוּבָה הַלּוֹנֵה אֵין לָהּ שִׁיעוּר

We force a person to fulfill the mitzvah of accompanying a visitor, because the reward is without limit.

- Visit the sick
- Escort visitors at least 4 amos. There is more reward for greater distances.
- Raise money for Tzedakah.

The Kenani were spared and lived without fear of the Angel of Death, merely because they pointed the Jewish people in the right direction.

Story: A woman and her friend made a pact that whoever died first, would come back to tell the other person how it is in Heaven. One died and came to the other in a dream. “Remember the day we went to collect Tzedakah and I pointed out a person whom we could ask? You have no idea the great reward I received for the pointing motion alone!!”

כּוֹפִין לְלוֹנֵה שְׂשׂוּבָה הַלּוֹנֵה אֵין לָהּ שִׁיעוּר

We force a person to accompany a visitor, for the reward for accompanying is without limit.

The minimum requirement is to accompany a guest 4 amos, which is 6 feet. Additional distances are optional, but laudatory, How far you accompany may relate to the importance of the visitor and how much honor you wish to convey.

Pharaoh and his men accompanied Abraham and his family and received a great reward for doing so. Even if your visitor is traveling with others, you should briefly accompany him.

But do not endanger your life, if he is going to a dangerous place.

18 Sotah 47a2 line 25

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לְעוֹלָם תְּהֵא שְׂמַאל דּוֹחָה וְיָמִין מְקַרְבֵּת

Always, the left hand should push away, but the right should draw close.

The proper way to rebuke is to do so gently (i.e., with the less strong hand, the left), but draw him close with the strong, right hand. The result is, on balance, to befriend that person.

This quote is used in the conservative response, as to how to deal with a non-Jewish father at a Bar Mitzvah, or a Bris, or whether a child, whose mother is not Jewish, is to be enrolled in Hebrew School.

Our interpretation of the sentence is not to simply let everything happen, as if the father was Jewish; but extend to the non-Jewish parent, the option to become Jewish, so our rituals are not diminished in value and our community will not be confused.

יִצֹר תִּינוּק וְאִשָּׁה תֵּהֵא שְׂמַאל דּוּחָה וְיִמִּין מְקַרְבָּת

The evil impulse tells the scholar, “You should not study so much, you have obligations to your children and your wife”.

That does make sense. We see that even the evil impulse’s suggestion to study less, has value and should not be pushed away entirely.

To a child or a wife, a harsh rebuke may lead to despair. A person must be “careful” not to ‘push away’, but to encourage proper behavior.

מִשְׁרְבוּ הַרוֹצְחִין בְּגֵלוֹי בְּטֵלָה עִגְלָה עֲרוּפָה

The ceremony of Eglah Arufah stopped being performed in our era, since cases of murder increased.

It is only performed when the murderer is not known.

Why? Even if we know who the murderer is, the city fathers could still be responsible for facilitating the crimes by not being sufficiently hospitable, as is their obligation. Why not still hold them accountable, at least at this level?

Also, if murders increase, publicizing murders is even more necessary. In both cases, we should continue the Eglah Arufah ceremony!!

Meiri: However, the ceremony of Eglah Arufah requires the condition of complete uncertainty, “It was not known who smote him” (Num 35:33).

מִשְׂרָבוֹ מְקַבְּלֵי מַתָּנוֹת נִתְמַעְטוּ הַיָּמִים וְנִתְקַצְרוּ הַשָּׁנִים

When the number of people who accepted gifts increased, their days decreased and their years become shorter.

A person who despises (refuses) gifts, will live (long).

So then, is it not permitted to give gifts? No, you are only discouraged from accepting them.

What is the rule regarding a wedding gift? That is permitted. It is not an actual gift. If you give gift to your friend, you expect him to gift to you, so it is an exchange and that is permitted.

Some say that is permitted to accept gifts that will honor Shabbos.

Some say it is permitted to accept gifts that will support the needs of a Torah scholar.

Most say those are the people we expect to be most likely to refuse a gift. Why?

Because we should rely on HaShem for our needs, not gifts.

18 Sotah 47b6 line 47
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מִשְׂרָבוֹ מְקַבְּלֵי מַתָּנוֹת נִתְמַעְטוּ הַיָּמִים וְנִתְקַצְרוּ הַשָּׁנִים

When the number of people who accepted gifts increased, their days decreased and their years become shorter.

Whoever receives many gifts, his days become fewer and the years shorter.

God is the ultimate giver – he takes nothing. So as to be more like God, we, too, should be self sufficient.. Since God is the source of all life, if we are more like Him, we have more life. If we are less like Him, we have less life.

זְמַרְי גְבַרְי וְעַנִּי נָשִׁי פְרִיצוּתָא זְמַרְי נָשִׁי וְעַנִּי גְבַרְי כְּאֵשׁ בְּנִעוּרָתָא

When men sing and women join in, it is licentiousness. When women sing and men join in, it is like fire in flax.

If both are objectionable, why mention both? The Gemara could mention the less objectionable and it would be clear that the other was to be avoided also. It is mentioned to abolish the latter, before the former.

When asked which is worse, slacks or mini skirts? Rabbi Yosef said, “Miniskirts”, and quoted this Talmudic passage.

If the people will not obey abolishing both objectionable behaviors, it is best to try to abolish the worst first.

Daf Digest

אינו אלא מקטני אמנה ואומר מה אוכל למחר כל מי שישי לו פת בקלו

Whoever has bread in his pack and says, “What will I eat tomorrow?” He has a paucity of faith.

In the Warsaw Ghetto, if a person had any food, he would eat his fill and save some for the next day, like so many others did. The Brisker Rav worked constantly on faith, “bitachon” and felt that for him to be an example, he could not leave food over for the next day. However, his son, Rav Yosef Dov ate virtually nothing. His father chided him, “If you would eat more, HaShem would provide you with more!!” The power of faith would cause the production of ‘more’. Rav Yosef Dov explained, “I did not want to benefit from my father’s faith; to be a ‘Bal Bitachon’ on my father’s ‘cheshbon’, ‘account’”.

Hagar is an example of one who is lacking in faith. She worried about her supply of water.

This dictum applies only to your own needs. However, for the needs of others, you should be concerned about what they will eat tomorrow and into the future