Increases the upright boards – 

Stable (sahar) – The Arukh explains that the term sahar is based on the root saĥar, which means to go around, i.e., something that is surrounded by a fence for the purpose of residence.

The Gemara suggests: Let us say that the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Hananya, as it was taught in a baraita: One may arrange upright boards around a water cistern and ropes around a caravan. Hananya disagrees and says: One may set up ropes for a cistern, but not upright boards.

Some say a different version of the previous passage: From the fact that the baraita does not teach: Hananya says: One may set up ropes around a water cistern and boards around a well, by inference, according to the opinion of Hananya, there is no difference between a cistern and a well. In both cases, ropes are indeed permitted, whereas upright boards are not. Let us say the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Hananya.

The Gemara rejects this argument: Even if you say that the mishna was taught in accordance with the opinion of Hananya, a cistern of collected rain water has a discrete law, as the water will eventually be consumed and the upright boards will become unnecessary; and a well of spring water has a discrete law, as the water is constantly renewed and the upright boards will remain useful.

The Gemara further suggests: Let us say the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva. As we learned in a mishna: In each of the cases of a public well, a public cistern, and a private well, one may arrange upright boards for them, but in the case of a private cistern, one must establish a proper partition for it ten handbreadths high; this is the statement of Rabbi Akiva.

Whereas here in the mishna it teaches: One may arrange upright boards for a well, from which one may infer that for a well, yes, it is permitted to use posts, but for a cistern, no, it is not permitted. This is opposed to Rabbi Akiva’s opinion, which maintains that posts may be arranged for a public cistern.
The Gemara rejects this argument as well: Even if you say that the mishna is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva, the tanna of the mishna teaches the case of a well of spring water, which he could not teach categorically because there is no difference whether it belongs to the public and there is no difference whether it belongs to an individual, as it is always permitted. However, he did not teach the case of a cistern containing collected rain water, which he could not teach categorically because there is a difference between a public cistern and a private one. However, it cannot be proven from here that he disagrees with Rabbi Akiva.

The Gemara further suggests: Let us say the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda ben Bava, as we learned in a mishna: Rabbi Yehuda ben Bava says: One may only arrange upright boards for a public well, whereas here the mishna states: For wells. The plural term implies that there is no difference if the well belongs to the public, and there is no difference if the well belongs to an individual.

The Gemara also rejects this line of reasoning: Even if you say that the mishna is in accordance with Rabbi Yehuda ben Bava, to what is the mishna referring when it says wells? It is referring to wells in general, but the tanna means only public wells.

The mishna had mentioned double posts [deyomadin]: The Gemara asks: What are deyomadin? Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar said: Two [deyo] posts [amudin], which are put together to create a single corner piece.

Having cited Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar’s statement with reference to the prefix deyo, the Gemara cites other statements of his. Two, to one who was ostracized, praise, nourishment, ruin, attribute, three, are mnemonics for the following statements by Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar.

We learned there in a mishna: Rabbi Yehuda says: All inferior figs are exempt from being tithed, even if they are of doubtfully tithed produce [demai], as even if the seller is an am haaretz, he must certainly have already separated tithes from them, since the loss incurred by tithing is negligible, except for deyufra. The Gemara asks: What is deyufra? Ulla said: A tree that yields two [deyo] harvests of fruit [peirot] each year.6

Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar also said: Adam was first created with two [deyo] faces, one male and the other female. As it is stated: “You have formed me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me” (Psalms 139:5). Similarly, it is written: “And the tzela, which the Lord, God, had taken from the man, He made a woman, and brought her unto the man” (Genesis 2:22). Rav and Shmuel disagree over the meaning of the word tzela: One said: It means a female face, from which God created Eve; and one said: Adam was created with a tail [zanav],7 which God removed from him and from which He created Eve.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who says that tzela means face; it is understandable that it is written: “You have formed me [tzartani] behind and before.”8 However, according to the one who says that tzela means tail, what is meant by the verse: “You have formed me [tzartani] behind and before”?

The Gemara answers that this verse is to be understood as bearing a moral message, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Ami, as Rabbi Ami said: Behind means Adam was created at the end of the act of creation; and before means that he was first for punishment.
The Gemara asks: Granted, it is understandable that Adam was behind, or last, in the act of creation, meaning that he was not created until the sixth day, Shabbat eve. However, before, or first, for punishment, what does this mean? If you say that he was punished first because of the curse pronounced in the wake of the sin involving the Tree of Knowledge, there is a difficulty. Wasn’t the snake was cursed first, and afterward Eve was cursed, and only at the end was Adam cursed?

Rather, this refers to the punishment of the Flood, as it is written: “And He blotted out every living substance which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, creeping things and fowl of the heaven” (Genesis 7:23). This indicates that the punishment began with man.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who said that Eve was originally a face or side of Adam; it is understandable that it is written: “Then the Lord God formed [vayyitzer] man” (Genesis 2:7). Vayyitzer is written with a double yod, one for Adam and one for Eve. However, according to the one who said that Eve was created from a tail, what is conveyed by spelling vayyitzer with a double yod?

The Gemara responds: This is interpreted homiletically, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi, as Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi said: This comes to emphasize that which one says to himself in every circumstance: Woe unto me from my evil inclination [yetzer] if I perform the will of my Maker, and woe to me from my Maker [Yotzer] if I perform the will of my inclination.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who said that Eve was a face, it is understandable that it is written: “Male and female, He created them,” in the plural, and on the other hand it is written: “So God created man in His own image, for in the image of God He created him” (Genesis 1:27), in the singular. At first, the thought entered God’s mind to create two, and ultimately, only one was actually created.

The Gemara answers: It can be explained in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Abbahu, as Rabbi Abbahu raised a contradiction between the verses: On the one hand it is written: “Male and female, He created them,” in the plural, and on the other hand it is written: “So God created man in His own image, for in the image of God He created him” (Genesis 1:27), in the singular. At first, the thought entered God’s mind to create two, and ultimately, only one was actually created.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who said that Eve was a face, it is understandable that it is written: “And He took one of his sides and closed up the flesh in its place” (Genesis 2:21). However, according to the one who said that Eve was created from a tail, what is meant by the verse: “And He closed up the flesh in its place”?

Rav Zevid said, and some say it was Rabbi Yirmeya, and some say it was Rav Nahman bar Yitzḥak: It was necessary to say that the flesh was closed up only with regard to the place of the incision.

The Gemara challenges the other opinion: Granted, according to the one who said that Eve was created from a tail; it is understandable that it is written: “And the Lord God built the tzela” (Genesis 2:22), as it was a completely new building. However, according to the one who said that Eve was a complete face or side, what is the meaning of: “And He built”? What needed to be built?

The Gemara responds: This must be interpreted homiletically, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya, as Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya interpreted homiletically the verse: “And the Lord God built the tzela.” This verse teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, braided Eve her hair, and then brought her to Adam, as in the coastal towns, they call braiding hair building.

Alternatively, the verse: “And the Lord God built,” can be understood as a description of Eve’s basic shape, as Rav Hisda said, and some say it is taught in a baraita: This verse teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, built Eve like the structure
A man should not walk behind a woman. Anyone who walks behind a woman—רַבָּנַן קְרַא לָהוּ: מִיָּדוֹ לְיָדוֹ בִּשְׁבִיל שֶׁיִּסְתַּכֵּל בָּהּ, אֲ׳ִילּוּ דּוֹמֶה וּלְמַאן דְּאָמַר ״רַצוּב״—נַמִי? וְגַבֵּי אֱלִישָׁע דִּכְתִיב: ״וַיָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרֶיהָ״ לֹא יִנָּה בַּדֶּרֶךְ, וַאֲ׳ִילּוּ הִיא אִשְׁתּוֹד נִזְדַּמְּנָה עַל הַגֶּשֶׁר—הָאָרֶץ הָיָה, אֲ׳ִילּוּ בֵּי רַב נַמִי לֹא רָאד דִּכְתִיב: אָמַר רַב אַשִּי: וּלְמַאי דְּאָמַר רַב נַחְמָן, מָנוֹחַ עַם אֹצָר, מָה אוֹצָר זֶה רָחָב מִלְּמַטָּה וְצָר מִלְּמַעְלָה אֶל נָה דִּכְתִיב: ״וַיֵּלֵךְ אֶל נָה אַחֲרֵי אִשָּׁה״ הָכִי יְסַלְּנָה לַצְּדָדִין וְכָל הָעוֹבֵר אֲחוֹרֵי אִשָּׁה בַּנָּהָר—רַב נַחְמָן said: It is reasonable to say that the male walked in front, as this is proper behavior, as it was taught in a baraita: A man should not walk behind a woman in a path, even if she is his wife. If she happens upon him on a bridge, he should walk quickly in order to catch up to her and consequently move her to his side, so that she will not walk before him. And anyone who walks behind a woman in a river, where she has to lift up her skirt in order to cross, has no share in the World-to-Come.

The Sages taught: With regard to one who counts out money for a woman from his hand into her hand or from her hand into his hand, in order to look upon her, even if in other matters he is like Moses our teacher, who received the Torah from Mount Sinai, he will not be absolved from the punishment of Gehenna. The verse says about him: “Hand to hand, the evil man shall not go unpunished” (Proverbs 11:21). One who hands money from his hand to her hand, even if he received the Torah from God’s hand to his own, like Moses, he will not be absolved from the punishment of Gehenna, which is called evil.

Rav Naĥman said: From the following verse, it is known that Samson’s father, Manoah, was an ignoramus, as it is stated: “And Manoah arose, and went after his wife” (Judges 13:11), which shows that he was unfamiliar with the principle that one must not walk behind a woman.

Rav Naĥman bar Yitzḥak strongly objects to this: If that is so, if the verse relating to Manoah is understood literally, what will one say about the verse with regard to Elkana, the father of the prophet Samuel, as it is written: “And Elkana walked after his wife” (1 Kings 4:30). Does this verse mean that Elkana was also an ignorant person? And what of the verse with regard to the prophet Elisha, as it is written: “And the mother of the child said: As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you; and he arose and followed her” (1 Kings 4:30). Does this verse mean that Elisha was also an uneducated person?

Rather, certainly each of these verses means that he followed her words and advice. If so, here too, the verse concerning Manoah may be similarly interpreted. He did not literally walk behind his wife, but rather he followed her words and advice.

Rav Ashi said: And according to what Rav Naĥman said, that Manoah was an ignoramus, he did not even read the basic Torah stories that children learn in school. As it is written: “Rebecca arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man” (Genesis 24:61); they followed him and did not walk before the man.
Behind a synagogue – It is prohibited to walk past the entrance of a synagogue while the congregation is praying. If one is carrying a load or wearing phylacteries, if there is another synagogue in the city, if the synagogue has an additional entrance on another side of the building, or if one is riding an animal (Bava Kamma), he is permitted to do so (Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 908).

Bore spirits, demons, and female demons – Rav Hai Gaon teaches: As explained in the Gemara, semen released by a man even accidentally, such as by a nocturnal emission or through illness, is used by various spirits to form different creatures in a process resembling conception and birth. These creatures are not people but rather destructive angels of various types.

Belts (zarzei) of fig leaves – The gemara explain that the word zarzei means straps, similar to those used to tie a saddle to a donkey.

It is enough for the world to use only two letters – Rav Hai Gaon teaches that during the Temple period, the priests in the Temple would pronounce the Tetragrammaton, that name of God that consists of four letters. After the destruction of the Temple, it became prohibited to pronounce this name, so that nowadays only the first half of the name may be uttered.

HALAKHA

On this topic, Rabbi Yohanan said: It is preferable to walk behind a lion, and not behind a woman. And it is preferable to walk behind a woman and not behind idolatry. When a procession honoring idolatry is passing in the street, it is better to walk behind a woman than appear to be accompanying the idolatry. It is preferable to walk behind idolatry and not behind a synagogue at a time of prayer. By walking behind a synagogue at a time of prayer and not entering, one appears as though he were denying the God to Whom the congregation is directing its prayers.

Having cited an aggadic statement of Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar, the Gemara cites other statements of his: Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar said: All those years during which Adam was ostracized for the sin involving the Tree of Knowledge, he bore spirits, demons, and female demons, as it is stated: “And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth” (Genesis 5:3). By inference, until now, the age of one hundred thirty, he did not bear after his image, but rather bore other creatures.

The Gemara raises an objection from a baraita: Rabbi Meir would say: Adam the first man was very pious. When he saw that death was imposed as a punishment because of him, he observed a fast for a hundred thirty years, and he separated from his wife for a hundred thirty years, and wore belts (zarzei) of fig leaves on his body as his only garment for a hundred thirty years. If so, how did he father demons into the world?

The Gemara answers: When Rabbi Yirmeya made his statement, he meant that those destructive creatures were formed from the semen that Adam accidentally emitted, which brought the destructive creatures into being.

And Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar further said: Only some of a person’s praise should be said in his presence, and all of it may be said not in his presence. Only some of his praise should be said in his presence, as it is written: “And the Lord said to Noah, come, you and all your house into the ark, for you have I seen righteous before Me in this generation” (Genesis 7:1). And all of it may be said not in his presence, as it is written: “These are the generations of Noah; Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:9). When not referring to him in his presence, God refers to Noah as a righteous and perfect man.

And Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar also said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “And the dove came in to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf, plucked off [taraf]; so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth” (Genesis 8:1)? The dove said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, let my food be bitter as an olive but given into Your hand, and let it not be sweet as honey but dependent upon flesh and blood. He adds this explanation: Here it is written: Taraf. And there it is written: “Remove far from me falsehood and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me [hatrifeni] my allotted portion” (Proverbs 30:8).

And Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar also said: Any house in which the words of Torah are heard at night will never be destroyed, as it is stated: “But none says: Where is God my Maker, Who gives songs in the night” (Job 35:10). The verse implies that one who sings songs of Torah in his house at night will not need to lament the destruction of his home.

And Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar further said: From the day that the Temple was destroyed, it is enough for the world to use in its praise of God, or in greeting one another with the name of God, only two letters of the Tetragrammaton, namely yod and heh, as it is stated: “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord [Yah]. Halleluya” (Psalms 150:6), without mentioning the full name of God, comprised of four letters.
And Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar also said: When Babylonia was cursed, its neighbors were cursed along with it. When Samaria was cursed, its neighbors were blessed. He explains: When Babylonia was cursed, its neighbors were cursed, as it is written: “I will also make it a possession for wild birds, and pools of water” (Isaiah 14:23), and the arrival of predatory animals brings harm to the surrounding neighbors as well. When Samaria was cursed, its neighbors were blessed, as it is written: “Therefore I will turn Samaria into a heap of rubble in the field.”

And Rabbi Yirmeya ben Elazar also said: Come and see that the attribute of flesh and blood is unlike the attribute of the Holy One, Blessed be He. For the attribute of flesh and blood is to place an iron or wooden hook in the mouth of a person who was sentenced to death by the government, so that he should not be able to curse the king when he is taken away for execution.

But the attribute of the Holy One, Blessed be He is that one is willingly silent when he is sentenced to death by the Omnipresent, as it is stated: “For You silence is praise, O God in Zion, and to You shall the vow be performed” (Psalms 65:9). And what is more, he praises God for his sufferings, as it is stated: “Praise.” And what is more, it appears to him as though he were offering a sacrifice in atonement for his sin, as it is stated: “And to You shall the vow be performed.”

And this is what Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “Those who pass through the valley of weeping turn it into a water spring; moreover, the early rain covers it with blessings” (Psalms 84:7)?

“Those who pass through [overin],” these are people who transgress [overin] the will of the Holy One, Blessed be He. “Valley [mekuk]” indicates that their punishment is that Gehenna is deepened [ma'amikin] for them. “Of weeping [hakka]” and “turn it into a water spring [ma'ayan yeishitku],” indicates that they weep [bokhin] and make tears flow like a spring [ma'ayan] of the foundations [shittin], meaning like a spring that descends to the foundations of the earth. “Moreover, the early rain covers it with blessings,” indicates that they accept the justice of God's judgment, and say before Him: Master of the Universe, You have judged properly, You have acquitted properly, and it is befitting that You have prepared Gehenna for the wicked and the Garden of Eden for the righteous.

The Gemara raises a difficulty: Is that so? Didn't Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish say: The wicked do not repent, even at the entrance to Gehenna,” as it is stated: “And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men who rebel against Me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh” (Isaiah 66:24)? The verse does not say: Who rebelled, but rather: “Who rebel,” in the present tense, meaning they continue rebelling forever.

The Gemara answers: This is not difficult; here, i.e., where it is said that they accept God's judgment, it is referring to the sinners of the Jewish people; there, i.e., where it is said that they do not recant, it is referring to the rebels among the nations of the world.

HALAKHA

The attribute of the Holy One, Blessed be He – פְּאָר הַבָּרֻוכְּרָה בַּּאֵלָם

There are two reasons for the distinction between the human and divine attributes:

One may think that a judgment of a human king is unfair, but he will know that God's judgment is always fair. Furthermore, when one is about to die, he is no longer afraid of a human king and feels free to curse him, since the king cannot punish him after death. However, God can punish a person even after his death (Riva: Mahara). As though he were offering a sacrifice – בַּּאֵלָם פְּאָר הַבָּרֻוכְּרָה

When one offers a sacrifice, it is as though he were sacrificing himself to atone for his sins. Therefore, when one is punished and sentenced to Gehenna, it is considered as though he were offering a sacrifice (Mahara).

Even at the entrance to Gehenna – בַּּאֵלָם פְּאָר הַבָּרֻוכְּרָה

Since the verse indicates that it is possible to go out and see the carcases, it implies that they are not actually in Gehenna but only at its entrance. Nevertheless, they continue to sin.