It is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Shimon said to them: I am stating a traditional halakha, and furthermore a verse supports me, as the verse with regard to Egyptians and Edomites states: “The sons of the third generation that are born to them may enter into the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:9), teaching that the prohibition applies to their sons, but not to their daughters.8

The Sages taught a baraita that further clarifies the matter: The prohibition with regard to Egyptians and Edomites applies only to their sons, but not to their daughters; this is the statement of Rabbi Shimon. Rabbi Yehuda said: The verse states: “The sons of the third generation that are born to them may enter into the congregation of the Lord,” and the phrase “born to them” indicates that the verse made their prohibition dependent on birth, with regard to which there is no difference between males and females.

Rabbi Yohanan says: Had Rabbi Yehuda not said that the verse made their prohibition dependent on birth, so that females are also included in the prohibition, he would not have found his hands and feet in the study hall, i.e., he would have been caught in a self-contradiction. Why? Since the Master said that according to Rabbi Yehuda a congregation of converts is also called a congregation of the Lord,9

How could a second-generation Egyptian convert ever achieve purity,8 so that it is permitted for his offspring, the third generation, to enter into the congregation? He may marry neither a Jew nor a female Egyptian convert. The Gemara answers: Perhaps it means that if he transgressed and married a convert or a Jewish woman, his seed will be purified. The Gemara rejects this suggestion: A case of: That if, is not written in the verse. In other words, the Bible does not speak of situations that can arise only through the commission of a transgression.

The Gemara asks: But isn’t there the halakha of a mamzer, which is a case of that if, as a mamzer is the child of a forbidden union, and yet the verse writes it? The Gemara answers: A case of that if that results in a prohibition, the Torah writes, but a case of that if that leads to an allowance, the Torah does not write. The Torah teaches the halakha of a mamzer, whose very existence is the result of his parents having engaged in forbidden relations, in order to render it prohibited for him to enter into the congregation. However, it would not teach the halakha of a second-generation Egyptian convert who transgressed and married a woman who was forbidden to him, in order to permit his offspring to enter into the congregation.

The Gemara raises an objection: But isn’t there the halakha governing one who remarries his divorced wife after she had been married to another man? This is a case of that if that leads to an allowance, and yet the Torah writes it. The words “It is an abomination before the Lord” (Deuteronomy 24:4) stated with regard to this case teach that although the woman herself is forbidden to her first husband, if she nevertheless remarried him, their children are fit to enter into the congregation. The Gemara answers: There, the Torah writes that case due to the basic prohibition, i.e., that a man may not remarry his divorced wife after she has been married to another man, and the allowance with regard to their children is learned incidentally.

8 Sons but not daughters – מנה יהו לใด אלו הלנה לใด: The Riva points out that based on this verse one could just as easily claim that sons should be permitted after three generations, while daughters are disqualified forever. He explains that since the verse speaks of the prohibition proscribing Egyptian and Edomite males, and it limits the prohibition to three generations, the implication is that whoever is not in this category is permitted outright. The Arukh HaLevi answers that there is no reason to render females forbidden for any longer than males, as any justification for a permanent ban would apply more to sons than to daughters.

9 A congregation of converts – מנה יהו לדי כדי היה יד: A congregation of converts is not called a congregation of the Lord. Therefore, all those for whom it is prohibited to enter into the congregation, e.g., mamzerim, are permitted to female converts, and similarly, converts and emancipated slaves are permitted to mamzerot, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosef and against that of Rabbi Yehuda (Shulhan Arukh, Even HaZer 422).

How could a second-generation Egyptian achieve purity – מנה יהו לדי כדי היה יד: Many early authorities proposed various ways by which a second-generation Egyptian convert can achieve purity without entering into the congregation, even according to Rabbi Yehuda (see Tosafot, Ramban, Rashba, and Meiri). Some later authorities suggest that he may marry a mamzeret after ten generations, in accordance with the opinion of Reish Lakish, or that he may marry without a betrothal, or by means of levirate marriage (see Arukh HaLevi). In the Jerusalem Talmud it is stated that according to Rabbi Yehuda he may purify his seed by marrying an emancipated maid servant, who is not part of the congregation of converts, and therefore he is permitted to her, and their children will be fit from both sides.
The Sages taught in a baraita: The verse states with respect to Egyptian and Edomite converts that “the sons of the third generation that are born to them may enter to them, the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:3). If it is stated “sons” why is it also stated “generation,” and if it is stated “generation” why is it also stated “sons”? One of these terms seems superfluous. The baraita explains: If it had stated only “sons” and not stated “generation,” I would say that the prohibition depends on the number of the son, meaning that the first and second sons of an Egyptian convert are forbidden, whereas the third is permitted. Therefore, it is stated “generation” to indicate that the prohibition depends not on the number of the son but on his generation.

And conversely, if it had stated only “generation” and not stated “sons,” I would say that the generations are counted from those standing on Mount Sinai, so that any Egyptian born after three generations have passed from the time of the giving of the Torah would be permitted. Therefore, it is stated “sons” to indicate that certain sons are prohibited in later generations as well.

The verse states: “The sons of the third generation that are born to them may enter to them, the congregation of the Lord.” The Sages expounded each of the two instances of the words “to them”: The first mention of “to them” teaches that from them you should count. The count of generations begins with the converts themselves, as they are considered the first generation, and therefore their grandchildren are permitted. The second mention of “to them” teaches that you should follow their disqualification. If a male Egyptian convert married a Jewish woman, or if a female Egyptian convert married a Jewish man, the halakha with regard to the offspring born to them is that although one of the parents is not disqualified from entering into marriage, the status of the child follows the unfit parent, who disqualifies his or her offspring until the third generation.

The Gemara comments: And it is necessary to write “to them,” and it is also necessary to write “that are born.” As, if the Merciful One had written only “that are born,” I would say that one should count the generations from the converts’ sons. Therefore, the Merciful One writes “to them” to teach that the converts themselves are counted as the first generation. And if the Merciful One had written only “to them,” I would say that in the case of a pregnant Egyptian woman who converted, she and her child, i.e., the fetus, are considered one generation, as the fetus is deemed to be a part of its mother. Therefore, the Merciful One writes “that are born,” to indicate that each birth marks a new generation, and accordingly the fetus is regarded as a second-generation Egyptian convert.

The verse concerning a mamzer states: “A mamzer shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to the tenth generation shall none of his [lo] enter into the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:3). And it is necessary to write “to them” here, with regard to an Egyptian convert, to teach that the child’s status follows the disqualified parent in his case, and it is also necessary to write “to him [lo] with regard to a mamzer, to teach that a similar halakha applies to a mamzer. In the translation of the verse, lo is translated as: Of his, i.e., of his ilk. However, lo can also be translated as: To him.

Lo is written with regard to both the Egyptian and the mamzer, as, if the Merciful One had written it only here, with regard to an Egyptian, one might have said that only in this case does the child’s status follow the disqualified parent, because the Egyptian comes from an unfit drop of semen, that of a gentile. But as for a mamzer, who comes from a fit drop of semen, as his parents were proper Jews despite their grave sin, one might say that there is no room for such stringency. Therefore, the Torah teaches that the same halakha applies to a mamzer.
Her child is a third-generation convert – ינו糖פּה יַעַל שַׁלְיָה אֵל-

The early authorities explain that this does not contradict the teaching that the child's status is determined by the parent with the greater disqualification, as that principle applies only to a marriage that involves a transgression. If the marriage itself is permitted, the child's status follows that of the father. The Gemara therefore raises a difficulty from the statement of Rabbi Tarfon, whose example of the marriage of a mamzer and a maidservant constitutes a transgression, and even so the child's status is not affected by the parent's disqualification (Rashi).

And conversely, if the Merciful One had written this stringent halakha only with regard to a mamzer, one might have said that this is because he is forever unfit to enter into the congregation, but here, with regard to an Egyptian convert, I might say that this is not the case. Therefore, both verses are necessary.

Rabba bar Hana said that Rabbi Yohanan said: If a second-generation male Egyptian convert married a first-generation female Egyptian convert, her child is considered a third-generation convert to a marriage that involves a transgression. If the marriage itself is permitted, the child's status follows that of the father. The Gemara comments: Apparently Rabbi Yohanan maintains that we assign the child to the father, the mother, and not to the mother.

Rav Yosef raised an objection from the following mishna (Kiddushin 69a): Rabbi Tarfon says: Mamzerim can purify themselves over the course of the generations. How so? If a mamzer married his non-Jewish maidservant, the child born to them is a slave. If the slave's master, the mamzer who owns the maidservant, subsequently freed the child, he becomes a free man and is fit to enter into the congregation. Apparently we assign the child to the mother, and not to the father, as the child is deemed a slave only with regard to a mamzer. The Gemara answers: It is different there, in the case of the slave, as the verse states: “The wife and her children shall be her master’s” (Exodus 21:4). The words “her children” indicate that the children born to a non-Jewish maidservant are assigned to her.

Rava raised an objection from a previously mentioned baraita: Rabbi Yehuda said: Minyamin, an Egyptian convert, was a friend of mine from among the students of Rabbi Akiva, and he said: Following my conversion I was a first-generation Egyptian convert, and so I married another first-generation Egyptian convert. I will marry off my son, who is a second-generation Egyptian convert, to another second-generation Egyptian convert, so that my grandson will be fit to enter into the congregation. Now, if it enters your mind that we should assign the child to the father, even if he marries off his son to a first-generation Egyptian convert his grandson should be permitted. The Gemara answers: Didn’t Rabbi Yohanan already say to the tanna reciting the baraita: You should teach that Minyamin sought to marry off his son to a first-generation Egyptian convert.

When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said that Rabbi Yohanan said just the opposite: If a second-generation male Egyptian convert married a first-generation female Egyptian convert, her son is considered a second-generation convert who is prohibited from entering the congregation. Apparently, Rabbi Yohanan maintains that we assign the child to the mother and not to the father.

Abaye said to him: But what, then, will you say about that which Rabbi Yohanan said: If one set aside a pregnant animal as a sin-offering, and the animal later gave birth to a female, if he wishes he may gain atonement with the mother itself, in which case the young is left to graze until it develops a blemish that renders it unfit for sacrifice, whereupon it is sold and the proceeds are used for a gift offering; and if he wishes he may gain atonement with the animal’s young, and the mother is left to graze until it develops a blemish.

Notes:

1. See HALAKHA for the dispute among the halakhic authorities concerning the halakha in practice, whether the child's status is determined based on the mother, the father, or the more impaired partner. The Ramban maintains that the mother's status determines that of the child in all cases, but this gives rise to a difficulty: Why did Minyamin marry a first-generation Egyptian? Had he married a second-generation convert, it would have already been permitted for his own son to enter into the congregation. One answer is that Minyamin was essentially saying that he made a mistake when he married a first-generation Egyptian, but that he would take care not to repeat that error with his son.

2. Teach a first-generation convert – אֲכַל הַתְּנֵא הַיָּוָּא. This is precisely the Jerusalem Talmud’s version of the text. The Gemara there also quotes the continuation of the baraita that records the dissenting view of Rabbi Akiva that the third-generation Egyptian who is permitted is one who comes from three generations of Jews on both sides of his family.
One who sets aside two sin-offerings as a guarantee – שֶׁנִּתְגַּיְּירָה לְמָכָה שֶׁנִּתְגַּיְּירָה
If one set aside two sin-offerings for the same sin, as a guarantee in case one of the animals becomes unavailable for sacrifice, he may sacrifice either animal as he chooses. The other must be left to graze until it develops a blemish, after which it may be redeemed and the money used for gift offerings (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhos Pesu’ei HaMudkasim 4:5).

The young of a sin-offering – בִּטְבִילָה. If an animal that had been set aside for a sin-offering subsequently conceived and gave birth, the offspring goes to its death (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhos Pesu’ei HaMudkasim 4:1).

A pregnant gentle woman who converted – הַמַּפְרִישׁ לְמָכָה. If a pregnant gentle woman converted, her child does not require immersion. If the court that converted her did not know that she was pregnant, there is uncertainty as to whether her immersion counts for the fetus as well (Rambam Sefer Nedashu, Hilkhos Issurei Bi’ah 13:7, Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De’ah 268:6).

Interposition with regard to immersion – הלְפַת מַפְרִישׁ. Nothing may interpose between the object or individual requiring immersion and the water. If an interposition is present, the immersion is invalid. By Torah law, a substance is considered an interposition only if it covers the majority of one’s body and is a substance that he is particular about removing during immersion. If he is not particular about removing it, it is considered an interposition that disqualifies the immersion.

As for the immersion of a nidda, in practice women are stringent to remove all interpositions of any kind (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhos Milkaot 1:12, Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De’ah 198:1).

Notes

A fetus is the thigh of its mother – אִמּוֹ אִם מְנַעַר זַע וְרֹאֶה. The later authorities raise a basic question: What is the connection between these two issues? There seems to be no reason that one’s lineage should be affected by the ruling on whether or not a fetus is considered part of its mother. One answer is that this is a special case, as the question is not one of disqualification, with regard to which the status of both the father and the mother determines that of the child, but rather of the number of generations. If a fetus is part of its mother, the generations are counted only through her, but if it is considered a separate creature from the time of its conception, the generations can be assigned to the father’s side as well (Korem Ora).

Man of great skull – גִּלְגֵל יְבּוֹר. The Arukh cites two interpretations of this term, either a man with a large skull (see Rabbenu Hananel), or a great and important man, as explained by Rashi on Eruvin 22b. With regard to the issue itself, Tosafot explain that Raba, Abaye’s teacher or head, figuratively speaking, studied Torah with Rabbi Yohanan in Eretz Yisrael. However, there is no clear proof for this in the Talmud, and chroniclers of the generations maintain that Raba was never in Eretz Yisrael. If so, Rav Dimi was merely using a picturesque manner of speech (see Mahari).

Background

Between the pillars – כָּלָה קְפַלָה. Both from written sources and from the archaeological excavations conducted at the site, it seems that the synagogue and the study hall in Tiberias, where Rabbi Yohanan lived, were built in the form of a basilica, a building whose roof rests on a row of pillars. Consequently, Rav Dimi’s expression: Between the pillars, is essentially describing the structure of this study hall.

Grant, if you say that a fetus is not considered the thigh, i.e., a part of its mother but rather a separate creature, despite the fact that it is still attached to her, then an individual in this situation is like one who sets aside two sin-offerings as a guarantee, i.e., one who, owing to his concern that his sin-offering might become lost, sets aside two animals from the outset with the intention of using whichever one he chooses. And Rav Oshaya said with regard to such a case: If one set aside two sin-offerings as a guarantee, so that if one is lost he may gain atonement with the other, he gains atonement with one of them, and the second is left to graze until it develops a blemish and can be redeemed.

But if you say that a fetus is considered the thigh of its mother and is regarded as part of her, it is the young of a sin-offering, and the young of a sin-offering goes to its death. Such an animal is not left to graze. Rather, it is put into isolation and caused to die, as it has been sanctified as a sin-offering through its mother but cannot be sacrificed on the altar and used to gain atonement. In summary, it would appear that Rabbi Yohanan himself maintains that a fetus is not considered a part of its mother. Why, then, in the case of the Egyptian convert is the child assigned to the mother and not to the father?

Rav Dimi was silent, momentarily unable to find an answer. Abaye said to him: Perhaps it is different there, with regard to Egyptian converts, as it is written with regard to them: “The sons of the third generation that are born to them may enter to them, the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:9), indicating that the verse made their prohibition dependent on birth, and therefore the child of Egyptian converts is assigned to the mother. Rav Dimi said to him: Man of great skull, i.e., man of distinction, I saw your head between the pillars of the study hall when Rabbi Yohanan taught this halakha. In other words, you grasped the meaning as though you were actually present in the study hall and heard the statement from Rabbi Yohanan himself.

The Gemara draws an inference: The reason that the child is assigned to its Egyptian mother is that it is written: “That are born to them.” But generally, with regard to others for whom it is prohibited to enter into the congregation, we assign the child to the father. The Gemara asks: But what about that which Rava said: If a pregnant gentle woman converted, then her son, who was a fetus at the time of the conversion, does not require immersion after he is born. But if the child is not assigned to its mother, why should he not require immersion?

And if you would say that this is because of a statement of Rabbi Yitzhak, there is still a difficulty. As Rabbi Yitzhak said: By Torah law, if some substance is found on a person’s body during immersion, and it covers the majority of his body, and he is particular and wants the substance removed, only then is it considered an interposition that invalidates immersion in a ritual bath. If, however, the substance covers the majority of his body, but he is not particular about that substance, it is not considered an interposition. Accordingly, it may be argued that although the fetus is covered by its mother, since it is not particular about this necessary covering, the fetus itself is regarded as having undergone valid immersion.
An interposition involves an object or substance that serves as a barrier between the item or individual requiring immersion and the water. As stated above, for a substance to be considered an interposition, the one involved must be particular about it and desire its removal. However, this is difficult, as didn’t Rav Kahana say that they taught this halakha that if one is not particular about the substance it is not considered an interposition only when the substance covers just a majority of his body; but if it covers all of it, it is considered an interposition by Torah law, even if he is not particular about it. The Gemara answers: A fetus is different, as this is its natural manner of growth. Its mother’s womb cannot be considered an interposition, as it is the fetus’ natural place of development, and therefore the fetus itself is regarded as having undergone immersion.

When Ravina came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: With respect to lineage, among the other nations of the world, i.e., while they are still gentiles, follow the male, but if they married after they converted, follow the more flawed in lineage of the two. The Gemara explains: Among the nations, follow the male, as it is taught in a baraita: From where is it derived that if one from the other nations had relations with a Canaanite woman and had a son from her, you are permitted to purchase him as a slave, and he is not considered a Canaanite who may not be allowed to remain in Eretz Yisrael? As it is stated: “And also from the children of the strangers that dwell among you, of them may you buy, and of their families that are with you, which they have begotten in your land; and they may be your possession” (Leviticus 25:45).

One might have thought that even if one from the Canaanite nations had relations with a woman from one of the other nations and had a son from her, you are permitted to purchase him as a slave. Therefore, the same verse states: “Which they have begotten in your land,” which indicates that slaves may be bought only from those begotten in your land, i.e., from those whose father was a non-Canaanite and whose mother was a Canaanite. It is the way of women to remain in their own land, and so a child born in Eretz Yisrael was certainly born to a Canaanite mother. But slaves may not be bought from those dwelling in your land. If a child is born to a Canaanite man and a non-Canaanite woman outside of Eretz Yisrael, and that offspring later returns to dwell in Eretz Yisrael, the offspring may not be acquired as a slave, because his lineage follows his father. He is regarded as a Canaanite, who may not be allowed to remain in Eretz Yisrael.
It was taught above in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan that if they married after they converted, follow the more flawed in lineage of the two. The Gemara asks: To what circumstances is this referring? If we say it is referring to a male Egyptian convert who married a female Ammonite convert, what is the meaning of: More flawed in lineage of the two, in this case? The halakha is that an Ammonite man is barred from entering into the congregation, but not an Ammonite woman, and so she is not flawed at all. Rather, it must be referring to a male Ammonite convert who married a female Egyptian convert. If the child is male, assign him to his Ammonite father, so that he is permanently barred from entering the congregation. If it is a female, assign her to her Egyptian mother, so that she is treated like a second-generation Egyptian convert.

MISHNA

Mamzerim and the Gibeonites 7 who converted to Judaism in the days of Joshua are prohibited from entering into the congregation and marrying a woman who was born Jewish. Their prohibition is eternal, for all generations, and it applies to both males and females.

GEMARA

Reish Lakish said: A mamzeret, a female mamzer, is permitted after ten generations. 8 Why? He derived this halakha by way of a verbal analogy between the word “tenth” stated in relation to an Ammonite and a Moabite in the verse “An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to the tenth generation shall none of them enter into the congregation of the Lord forever” (Deuteronomy 23:4), and the word “tenth” stated in relation to a mamzer in the verse “A mamzer shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to the tenth generation shall none of his enter into the congregation of the Lord.” (Deuteronomy 23:3) He explained the analogy as follows: Just as below, with regard to an Ammonite and a Moabite, females are permitted, so too here, with regard to a mamzer, females are permitted.

The Gemara raises a difficulty: Or perhaps one should say that just as below, with regard to an Ammonite and a Moabite, their females are permitted immediately, so too here, a mamzeret is permitted immediately. The Gemara answers: The verbal analogy is effective only from the tenth generation and onward.

The Gemara raises another difficulty: But didn’t we learn in the mishna that mamzerim and Gibeonites are prohibited, and their prohibition is eternal for all generations, and it applies to both males and females? The Gemara answers: This is not difficult for Reish Lakish, as he understands that there is a dispute in this regard: This opinion, that of Reish Lakish, is in accordance with the tanna who said that the application of a verbal analogy is extended by way of the principle: Infer from it, and again from it. 9 In other words, after deducing case B from case A, all of the characteristics of case A are applied to case B. In the case discussed here, although the verbal analogy comes primarily to render a mamzer permanently forbidden, it is extended and understood to mean that a mamzeret is permitted after ten generations.

NOTES

A mamzeret…after ten generations – בכה אמה בברכת חכמי תורה. In the Jerusalem Talmud Reish Lakish’s opinion is attributed to a tanna. The Gemara here indicates likewise, as it does not rejects Reish Lakish’s opinion although it contradicts the mishna.

Infer from it, and again from it – בכה אמה בברכת חכמי תורה. Expositions based on verbal analogies raise many difficulties. Some of these difficulties stem from the fact that this mode of exegesis is not derived from logical reasoning but is a kind of biblical decree by which, in accordance with special indications and traditions, two verses and the halakhot derived from them are combined. It is an established principle that there cannot be half a verbal analogy, and so the inferences drawn with it must be bilateral, but there is disagreement as to the extent of the comparison between the different issues. Are they equated in all regards, based on the principle of: Infer from it, and again from it. Or perhaps the comparison extends only to one particular matter, based on the principle of: Infer from it, and leave it in its place, which means that the association between the two topics pertains only to the specific issue with regard to which there is a tradition.
A mamzer does not survive in Jerusalem Talmud this is explained slightly differently and in greater detail. Rav Huna states there that a mamzer cannot survive for longer than thirty days. As for the possibility of generations of mamzerim, it is mentioned there in the name of Rav Hanina that once every sixty or seventy years a plague strikes the world that wipes out, among others, the mamzerim among the Jews.

They examined but did not find – רבי א INTERNATIONAL NOTES

The The prohibition with regard to Gibeonites – לתועלת אשת אדניות. According to the Rambam, by Torah law it is not prohibited for a convert from one of the seven Canaanite nations to enter into the congregation. Rather, it was Joshua who issued a decree against the Gibeonites, and therefore the prohibition with regard to them is rabbinic. This is also the opinion of Rashi and the Razah. Others (Ramban, Rashba, Tur) maintain that first-generation Gibeonites are forbidden by Torah law, whereas their descendants are forbidden by decree of the Sages (Rambam Sefer Kedusha, Hilkhot Issurei Bi 12:22).

HALAKHA

A mamzer does not survive. In the Jerusalem Talmud this is explained slightly differently and in greater detail. Rav Huna states there that a mamzer cannot survive for longer than thirty days. As for the possibility of generations of mamzerim, it is mentioned there in the name of Rav Hanina that once every sixty or seventy years a plague strikes the world that wipes out, among others, the mamzerim among the Jews. They examined but did not find – רבי א

The Gemara relates that the students asked Rabbi Eliezer: With regard to a mamzerim after ten generations, what is: the halakha? He said to them: Who will give me a third-generation mamzer so that I will declare him pure? The Gemara comments: Apparently he maintains that a mamzer does not survive. Mazzerim perish at the hand of Heaven, and therefore this question is not a practical one. And similarly, Rav Huna said that a mamzer does not survive.

The Gemara raises a difficulty: But didn’t we learn in the mishna that mamzerim are prohibited from entering into the congregation, and their prohibition is eternal for all generations? How is this possible if they do not even live long enough to produce three generations? Rabbi Zeira said: This matter was explained to me by Rav Yehuda himself: One who is known to be a mamzer will survive, as there is no concern that there will be any mingling of his seed. On the other hand, one who is not known as a mamzer will not survive, as he will die at the hand of Heaven so that there will be no mingling of his seed. As for one who is known and not known, i.e., one who is under suspicion, but it is unclear whether or not he is actually a mamzer, his descendants will survive for three generations, but more than this they will not survive.

It is related that a certain person lived in Rabbi Ami’s neighborhood, and following an investigation Rabbi Ami declared him to be a mamzer. The man went about weeping until Rabbi Ami said to him: You should not be upset, as now I have given you life. As explained above, once one is publicly known as a mamzer, he and his descendants may survive.

Rav Hanina bar Adda said: As for the Gibeonites, it was King David who decreed that they may not enter into the congregation, as it is stated: “And the king called the Gibeonites and said to them: Now the Gibeonites are not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites” (1 Samuel 21:2). This verse indicates that it was David who ruled that they are not part of the Jewish people and that they are barred from the congregation even though they converted.

The Gemara asks: What is the reason that David decreed that they may not enter into the congregation? In order to answer this question, the Gemara recounts all the relevant background events. As it is written: “And there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year” (1 Samuel 21:1). In the first year David said to the Jewish people: Perhaps there are idol worshippers among you, this being a sin that can lead to drought, as it is written: “Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; and the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven, so that there shall be no rain, and the ground shall not yield her fruit” (Deuteronomy 11:16–17). They examined the matter but did not find sinners of this kind.

In the second year of the drought David said to them: Perhaps there are transgressors in sexual matters among you, as this too can lead to drought, as it is written: “Therefore the showers have been withheld, and there has been no latter rain; yet you had a harlot’s forehead, you refused to be ashamed” (Jeremiah 3:3), which indicates that licentious behavior can lead to a cessation of rainfall. Again they examined the matter, but did not find sinners of this kind either.
He killed Nob, the city of priests – the service of the king. Doeg the Edomite reported this.

The Gemara asks: From where may it be inferred that David's seeking was by way of the Urim, Vizanim? Rabbi Elazar said: Rabbi Elazar, the son of Natan, said in the name of the Holy One, blessed be He: "If the Lord does not speak through the mouth of His prophet, if the Lord does not speak through the mouth of His chosen one, if the Lord does not speak through the mouth of His prophet, who among the people is there who will believe us?" (Isaiah 8:20). (Olam Ha-Berit 13a:1) The Gemara asks: If the Lord does not speak through the mouth of His prophet, why does the verse continue, "And the Lord said, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he put to death the Gibeonites"? (Joshua 10:13) The Gemara answers: The verse continues, "And the Lord said, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he put to death the Gibeonites".

The Gemara asks: From among whom may it be inferred that Saul was the only king whose conduct can be inferred from the fact that David later brought the bones of Saul and his sons, and burnt them in a specified manner in their sight? There is an opinion that Saul was the only king whose conduct can be inferred from the fact that David later brought the bones of Saul and his sons, and burnt them in a specified manner in their sight. Why did David later bring the bones of Saul and his sons, and burnt them in a specified manner in their sight? Because Saul had killed the Gibeonites. The Gemara answers: The verse continues, "And the Lord said, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he put to death the Gibeonites".