

**Mad dog – כְּלָב שׁוֹטֵה**: A mad dog may reach a state of partial paralysis, which is why it displays the symptoms mentioned by the Sages: Its tail is tucked between its legs, its tongue hangs out of its mouth, and it drools. This partial paralysis also affects the dog's vocal cords, which leads to a drastic change in the sound of its barking to the point where it can no longer bark audibly.

LANGUAGE

**Kelirus** – קְלִירוּס: Possibly from the Greek κλήρος, klēros, meaning destiny or lottery.

NOTES

**Copper tube – בְּגִבְתָּא דְנִחְשָׂא**: One approach suggests that since one of the effects of this sickness is that the ill person cannot abide the sight of water, he must drink it through a tube so he will not see what he is drinking (*Arukh*).

מִי שֶׁנִּשְׁכַּח בְּלֶב שׁוֹטֵה וְכוּ'. תַּנּוּ רַבָּנַן: חֲמִשָּׁה דְּבָרִים נֶאֱמָרוּ בְּכָלֵב שׁוֹטֵה: פִּי פְתוּחַ וְרִירוּ נוֹטֵף, וְאָזְנוֹ סְרוּחוֹת, וְזָנְבוֹ מוֹנַח עַל יְרֵכּוֹתָיו וּמְהַלֵּךְ בְּצִדֵי דְרָכִים וְיֵשׁ אֹמְרִים אִף נוֹבַח וְאִין קוֹלוֹ נִשְׁמָע, מִמָּאֵי הוּי? רַב אָמַר: נְשִׂים בְּשַׁפְּנוּת מִשְׁחָקוֹת בּוּ, וְשְׂמוּאֵל אָמַר: רוּחַ רָעָה שׁוֹרָה עָלָיו.

It was taught that in the case of **one whom a mad dog<sup>b</sup> bit**, one does not feed him the lobe of its liver. The Gemara clarifies the concept of the mad dog. **The Sages taught in a baraita: Five signs were said about a mad dog: Its mouth is always open; and its saliva drips; and its ears are floppy and do not stand up; and its tail rests on its legs; and it walks on the edges of roads. And some say it also barks and its voice is not heard.** The Gemara asks: **From where did the dog become mad? Rav said: Witches play with it and practice their magic on it, causing it to become mad. And Shmuel said: An evil spirit rests upon it.**

מִאֵי בִּינְיָהוּ? אִכָּפָּא בִּינְיָהוּ,

The Gemara asks: **What is the practical difference between these two opinions?** The Gemara answers: **There is a practical difference between them with regard to**

Perek VIII

Daf 84 Amud a

לְמַקְטִילָהּ בְּדָבָר הַנּוֹרֵק.

**kill**ing it with an object that is thrown from a distance like an arrow rather than with one's hands. If the dog is possessed by an evil spirit, one should avoid direct contact with it.

תַּנּוּ מִן חֲמִשָּׁה בְּשֵׁהוֹרְגִין אוֹתוֹ אִין הוֹרְגִין אוֹתוֹ אֶלָּא בְּדָבָר הַנּוֹרֵק. דְּחִיף בֵּיהּ – מִסְתַּבֵּן, דְּנִבְתִּית לִיהּ – מֵיִית. דְּחִיף בֵּיהּ מִסְתַּבֵּן, מֵאֵי תַקְנִיתָהּ? נִשְׁלַח מְאִיָּה וְנִירְהִיט. רַב הוּנָא בְּרִיהּ דְּרַב יְהוֹשֻׁעַ חָף בֵּיהּ חַד מִיִּנְיָהוּ בְּשׁוּקָא, שְׁלַחֲנִיהוּ לְמֵאִיָּה וְרַהֲיט. אָמַר: קִימִיתִי בְּעַצְמֵי "הַחֲכָמָה תַּחֲפֶיָהּ בְּעָלֶיהָ".

The Gemara comments: **This was taught in a baraita in accordance with the opinion of Shmuel: When one kills a mad dog, he should kill it only with a thrown object.** Furthermore, **one who is rubbed by mad dog will become dangerously ill, while one bitten by the dog will die.** The Gemara asks: **What is the remedy for one who is rubbed by mad dog and becomes dangerously ill?** The Gemara answers: **Let him take off his clothing and run.** The Gemara relates: **Rav Huna, son of Rav Yehoshua, was rubbed by one of these mad dogs in the market, whereupon he took off his clothing and ran. He said: I have fulfilled the verse: "Wisdom preserves the lives of those who have it" (Ecclesiastes 7:12).**

דְּנִבְתִּית לִיהּ מֵיִית, מֵאֵי תַקְנִיתָהּ? אָמַר אַבְיִ: נִיתִי מִשְׁכָּא דְּאֶפָּא דְּדִיכְרָא, וְנִכְתוּב עָלֶיהָ: אֶנָּא פְּלִנְיָא בְּרַ פְּלִנְיָתָא אֲמִשְׁכָּא דְּאֶפָּא דְּיִכְרָא כְּתִיבְנָא עַלְךָ בְּנָתִי בְּנָתִי קְלִירוּס. וְאָמְרִי לָהּ: קְנִדִי קְנִדִי קְלִירוּס יְהִי יְהִי ד' צְבָאוֹת, אָמֵן אָמֵן סְלָה. וְנִשְׁלַחֲנִיהוּ לְמֵאִיָּה וְלִקְבְּרִינְהוּ בִּי קְבָרֵי עַד תְּרִיסֵי יְרֵחֵי שְׁתָּא, וְנִפְקִינְהוּ וְנִקְלִינְהוּ בְּתַנּוּרָא, וְנִבְדְּרִינְהוּ לְקַטְמִיָּה אַפְרִשֵׁת דְּרָכִים, וְהִנֵּךְ תְּרִיסֵי יְרֵחֵי שְׁתָּא, כִּי שְׁתֵּי מֵאִי – לֹא לִישׁוּתִי אֶלָּא בְּגוּבְתָא דְּנִחְשָׂא, דִּילְמָא חָזִי בְּבוּאָה דְּשִׂידָא וְלִיסְתַּבֵּן. כִּי הָא דְּאֶבָּא בְּרַ מְרִתָּא, הוּא אֶבָּא בְּרַ מְנִיּוּמִי, עֲבָדָא לִיהּ אִימִיָּה גוּבְתָא דְּדִהָבָא:

The Gemara continues to discuss the *baraita*: **One bitten by a mad dog will die.<sup>b</sup>** The Gemara asks: **What is the remedy?** Abaye said: **Let him bring the skin of a male hyena and write on it: I, so-and-so, son of so-and-so, am writing this spell about you upon the skin of a male hyena: Kanti kanti kelirus.<sup>l</sup>** And some say he should write: *Kandi kandi keloros*.<sup>l</sup> And some say he should write: *Kandi kandi keloros*.<sup>l</sup> He then writes names of God, *Yah, Yah, Lord of Hosts, amen amen Selah*. **And let him take off his clothes and bury them in a cemetery for twelve months of the year, after which he should take them out, and burn them in an oven, and scatter the ashes at a crossroads. And during those twelve months of the year, when his clothes are buried, when he drinks water, let him drink only from a copper tube<sup>n</sup> and not from a spring, lest he see the image of the demon in the water and be endangered, like the case of Abba bar Marta, who is also called Abba bar Manyumi, whose mother made him a gold tube for this purpose.**

BACKGROUND

**Rabies in humans – כְּלָבָת בְּאָדָם**: Untreated rabies in humans is fatal in the vast majority of cases. One of the symptoms of the disease is a painful constricting of the throat muscles when the ill person tries to swallow anything. Apparently, due to

the associative connection with drinking, the mere sight of water causes this physical response. This is why the ancients referred to this disease as hydrophobia, meaning fear of water.

LANGUAGE

Tzefidna – צִפִּידְנָא: Some authorities maintain that the origin of this word is the Greek σπεδών, *sepedon*, meaning rot. Others suggest its origin is in the Semitic root *tzfd*, meaning shrinkage.

Matron [matronita] – מַטְרוֹנִיתָא: From the Latin *matrona*, meaning woman, with the Aramaic feminine suffix *-ita*.

BACKGROUND

Tzefidna – צִפִּידְנָא: From the descriptions in the Talmud, it seems that this is referring to the disease scurvy, which is caused by vitamin C deficiency. The symptoms of the disease include teeth loosening and falling out, internal bleeding, and anemia. The treatments described in the Talmud are various attempts to fill this vitamin C deficiency in a concentrated form.

NOTES

What shall I do on Shabbat – בְּשַׁבַּת מַאי: Rabbi Yohanan was apparently busy on Shabbat with his lectures and lessons and could not visit the woman. He therefore asked what he should do on Shabbat (*Siah Yitzhak*).

A vow to a gentile – שְׁבוּעָה לְגוֹי: A vow to a gentile such as the matron in this episode is as valid as any other vow, and it is prohibited to break it. However, a vow made under duress is not binding. It was that clause which Rabbi Yohanan took advantage of in tricking the healer. Furthermore, the Gemara explains that he did not truly break his vow because he never really vowed to keep silent about the remedy in the first place. Consequently, he did not desecrate God's name, which would have been the case had he broken his vow. This is especially true because he was an important person (see *Me'iri*).

וְעוֹד אָמַר רַבִּי מַתְיָא. רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן חָשׁ בְּצִפִּידְנָא. אֲוֹל גְּבַהּ דְּהֵי יָא מַטְרוֹנִיתָא. עֲבָדָא לִיהּ מִלְתָּא חֲמִשָּׁא וּמַעְלֵי שַׁבְּתָא. אָמַר לָהּ: בְּשַׁבַּת מַאי? אָמְרָה לִיהּ: לֹא צְרִיכָת. אִי מַצְטְרִיכְנָא מַאי? אָמְרָה לִיהּ: אִישְׁתַּבַּע לִי דְלָא מְגַלִּית. אִישְׁתַּבַּע: לֹא לְאִלְהָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל לֹא מְגַלִּינָא. נִפְק דְרִשָּׁה בְּפִירְקָא.

וְהָא אִישְׁתַּבַּע לָהּ! לֹא לְאִלְהָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל לֹא מְגַלִּינָא. הָא לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְגַלִּינָא. וְהָא אִיבָא חֲלוּל הַשֵּׁם! דְּמַגְלִי לָהּ מַעֲיָקָא.

מַאי עֲבָדָא לִיהּ? אָמַר רַב אֲחָא בְרִיהּ דְרַב אֲמִי: מִי שְׂאוֹר, שְׂמֵן זֵית, וּמִלַּח. רַב יֵימָר אָמַר: שְׂאוֹר גּוֹפִיָה, שְׂמֵן זֵית, וּמִלַּח. רַב אֲשִׁי אָמַר: מִשְׁחָא דְגַדְפָּא דְאוּוּזָא. אָמַר אֲבִינִי: אֲנָא עֲבָדִי לְכוּלְהוּ, וְלֹא אִישְׁתַּפְּסִי, עַד דְאָמַר לִי הֵהוּא טִייעָא: אִייתִי קְשִׁייתָא דְזֵיתָא דְלֹא מְלוּ תִילְתָא וּקְלִינְהוּ בְנוּרָא אָמְרָא חֲדָתָא, וְאֲדַבֵּיק בְּכַי דְרִיָה. עֲבָדִי הָכִי וְאִישְׁתַּפְּסִי.

מִמַּאי הוּדָה? מִחֲמִימִי חֲמִימִי דְחִיטִי וּמִשְׁוֹרֵי כְּפָא דְהֶרְסָנָא. וּמַאי סִימְנִיה? כַּד רָמִי מִיָּדִי בְּכִבְיָהּ וְאֲתָא דְמָא מִבֵּי דְרִי. רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן כִּי חָשׁ בְּצִפִּידְנָא עֲבָד הָכִי בְשַׁבְּתָא, וְאִישְׁתַּפְּסִי. וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן הֵיכִי עֲבִיד הָכִי? אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק: שְׂאֵנִי צִפִּידְנָא. הוּאִיל וּמִתְחִיל בְּפִהּ וְגוֹמֵר בְּבִנֵי מַעֲיָם.

אָמַר לִיהּ רַב חֲיִיא בַר אֲבָא לְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כְּמָאן – כְּרַבִּי מַתְיָא בֶן חֲרָשׁ, דְאָמַר: הַחוּשׁ שׁ בְּפִי מְטִילִין לוֹ סַם בְּשַׁבְּתָא? אָמַר לִיהּ: שְׂאֵנִי אֹמֵר: בּוֹז, וְלֹא בְאַחֲרֵת.

The mishna said: **And furthermore, Rabbi Matya ben Harash said:** With regard to one who suffers pain in his throat, one may place medicine inside his mouth on Shabbat, although administering a remedy is prohibited on Shabbat. The Gemara discusses a related incident: **Rabbi Yohanan suffered from the illness *tzefidna*,**<sup>1b</sup> which first affects the teeth and gums and then the intestines. **He went to a certain gentile matron [matronita]<sup>1</sup> who was a well-known healer. She prepared a medicine for him on Thursday and Friday. He said to her: What shall I do on Shabbat,**<sup>N</sup> when I cannot come to collect the medicine from you? **She said to him: You will not need it.** He asked her: **If I do need it, what shall I do?** **She said to him: Swear to me that you will not reveal the remedy;** then I will tell you, and you can prepare it yourself should you need it. **He swore: To the God of the Jews, I will not reveal it.** She told him the remedy. Rabbi Yohanan then **went out and taught it publicly,** revealing the secret of the remedy.

The Gemara is surprised at this: **But he swore to her** that he would not reveal it. The Gemara answers that in his vow he declared: **I will not reveal it to the God of the Jews.** However, his words imply: **I will reveal it to His people, the Jews.** The Gemara asks: **Still, there is a desecration of God's name,** as the matron now thinks that a great man of Rabbi Yohanan's stature broke his vow.<sup>N</sup> The Gemara answers: **He revealed it to her at the outset.** As soon as she revealed the remedy to him, he told her that his vow would not prevent him from publicizing the remedy.

The Gemara asks: **What was the medicine that she prepared for him?** Rav Aḥa, son of Rav Ami, said: It was water in which leaven was steeped, olive oil, and salt. Rav Yeimar said: It was leaven itself, olive oil, and salt. Rav Ashi said: The remedy was fat from the bone marrow of a goose's wing. **Abaye said: I made all of these medicines and was not cured from this ailment, until a certain Arab told me the remedy for it: Take olive seeds that are less than one-third ripe, and burn them in a fire on top of a new hoe, and stick them along the row of gums. I did this and was cured.**

The Gemara asks: **From where does this disease *tzefidna* come?** It is from eating wheat bread that is too hot and fish remains fried in oil. **What is the sign of this sickness?** **When one puts something between his teeth, blood comes out from his gums. When Rabbi Yohanan suffered from *tzefidna*, he prepared this medicine described above on Shabbat and was cured.** The Gemara asks: **And how did Rabbi Yohanan prepare this medicine on Shabbat for an ailment which affects only the gums but is not life-threatening?** Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: ***Tzefidna* is different, since it does indeed begin in the mouth and appears to be an illness of the teeth, but it ends up in the intestines and is dangerous.**<sup>H</sup>

Rav Hiyya bar Abba said to Rabbi Yohanan: **In accordance with whose opinion did he do this?** Was it not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Matya ben Harash, who said: **In the case of one who suffers pain in his mouth, one puts medicine in his mouth on Shabbat,** which is a minority opinion? **Rabbi Yohanan said to him: It is so, but I say the Sages agreed with him about taking medicine in this case alone, but no other.** If so, with regard to medicine on Shabbat, the view of Rabbi Matya ben Harash is not a minority opinion.

HALAKHA

An illness that may be healed on Shabbat – מַחֲלָה שְׂאֵפְסָר – Shabbat, including any injury, wound, or abscess of the teeth, but not merely a toothache (*Shulḥan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 328:3*). **לְרַפָּא בְּשַׁבְּתָא:** Any potentially fatal injury may be healed on

**Yerakon** – יִרְקוֹן: Yerakon seems to refer to hepatitis. The Rabbis maintained that the suggestion of Rabbi Matya ben Harash was only an untested, auspicious practice, not a true remedy. Consequently, they did not allow it on Shabbat.

**One feeds him the lobe of its liver** – מַאֲכִילִין אוֹתוֹ מִחֶצֶר: Some commentaries see this as akin to the modern healing method of using serums of animals that were injected with rabies.

**Bloodletting** – מִקְיוּזֵן דָּם: Bloodletting was a standard medical practice throughout the ancient world. The letting of small quantities of blood was considered an effective way to cure illness.



Bloodletting depicted on an ancient Greek urn

## LANGUAGE

**Serunkhi** – סְרוּנְכִי: This apparently refers to diphtheria, as it seems to be derived from an Aramaic word meaning strangling. In cases of diphtheria, the saliva that fills the ill person's throat can lead to suffocation.

לִימָא מְסִיעָה לֵיהּ: מִי שְׂאֲחֹזוּ יִרְקוֹן – מַאֲכִילִין אוֹתוֹ בְּשֵׁר חֲמוֹר, מִי שְׂנָשְׁכוּ בְּלֶב שׁוּטָה – מַאֲכִילִין אוֹתוֹ מִחֶצֶר כְּבֵד שְׁלוֹ, וְהַחֹשֵׁשׁ בְּפִיו – מְטִילִין לוֹ סֶם בְּשַׁבָּת, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מַתְיָא בֶן חֲרָשׁ, וְחֻכְמֵי אוּמְרַיִם: בְּאֵילוֹ אֵין בְּהֶם מְשׁוּם רְפוּאָה. בְּאֵילוֹ לְמַעוּטֵי מַאי – מַאי לָאוּ לְמַעוּטֵי סֶם?

לֹא, לְמַעוּטֵי מְקִיּוּזֵן דָּם לְסְרוּנְכִי. הֲכִי נִמְי מְסַתְבְּרָא, דְּתַנְיָא: שְׁלִשָּׁה דְּבָרִים אָמַר רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל בְּרַבִּי יוֹסִי שְׂשֻׁמַע מְשׁוּם רַבִּי מַתְיָא בֶן חֲרָשׁ: מְקִיּוּזֵן דָּם לְסְרוּנְכִי בְּשַׁבָּת, וּמִי שְׂנָשְׁכוּ בְּלֶב שׁוּטָה מַאֲכִילִין אוֹתוֹ מִחֶצֶר כְּבֵד שְׁלוֹ, וְהַחֹשֵׁשׁ בְּפִיו מְטִילִין לוֹ סֶם בְּשַׁבָּת.

וְחֻכְמֵי אוּמְרַיִם: בְּאֵילוֹ אֵין בְּהֶם מְשׁוּם רְפוּאָה. בְּאֵילוֹ לְמַעוּטֵי מַאי – מַאי לָאוּ אֶתְרֵיתִי בְּתַרְיִיתָא, וְלְמַעוּטֵי דְרִישָׁא? לֹא, אֶתְרֵיתִי דְרִישָׁא קַמִּיתָא, וְלְמַעוּטֵי דְסִיפָא.

Let us say that this *baraita* supports him: With regard to one who is seized with *yerakon*,<sup>8</sup> one feeds him donkey meat as medicine; with regard to one whom a mad dog bit, one feeds him the lobe of its liver;<sup>9</sup> in the case of one who has pain in his mouth, one puts medicine in his mouth on Shabbat; this is the statement of Rabbi Matya ben Harash. And the Rabbis say: These have no value as a remedy. The Rabbis used the term these, to exclude what? What, is it not to exclude this medicine for *tzefidna*, which the Rabbis agree is permitted on Shabbat?

The Gemara rejects this: No, it excludes a different remedy, which Rabbi Matya suggests: Bloodletting<sup>8</sup> to heal the ailment *serunkhi*<sup>9</sup> is permitted on Shabbat. The Gemara comments: So too, this is reasonable to say, as it was taught in a *baraita*: Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Yosei, said three things that he heard in the name of Rabbi Matya ben Harash: One may let blood for *serunkhi* on Shabbat; and in the case of one whom a mad dog bit, one feeds him the lobe of its liver; and in the case of one who has pain in his mouth, one puts medicine in his mouth on Shabbat.

And the Rabbis say: These have no value as a remedy. The Rabbis used the term these to exclude what? What, is it not to limit their argument only to the latter two items, which do not cure anything, and to exclude the first item, bloodletting for *serunkhi*, which everyone agrees is an effective remedy? The Gemara rejects this: No, there is no proof from here, since it is possible to say that it is referring to the first two items of the first *baraita* and excludes the latter clause with regard to medicine on Shabbat, which they agree with.

## Perek VIII

## Daf 84 Amud b

תָּא שְׂמַע, דְּתַנִּי רַבָּה בַר שְׁמוּאֵל: עוֹבְרָה שְׁהִרְיָחָה – מַאֲכִילִין אוֹתָהּ עַד שֶׁתִּשׁוּב נַפְשָׁהּ, וּמִי שְׂנָשְׁכוּ בְּלֶב שׁוּטָה – מַאֲכִילִין אוֹתוֹ מִחֶצֶר כְּבֵד שְׁלוֹ, וְהַחֹשֵׁשׁ בְּפִיו – מְטִילִין לוֹ סֶם בְּשַׁבָּת, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בְּרַבִּי יוֹסִי שְׂאֲמַר מְשׁוּם רַבִּי מַתְיָא בֶן חֲרָשׁ. וְחֻכְמֵי אוּמְרַיִם: בּוֹז וְלֹא בְּאַחֲרֵיתָא. בּוֹז אֶהְיִיא? אֵילִימָא אַעוֹבְרָה – פְּשִׁיטָא! עוֹבְרָה מִי אֵיבָא לְמַאן דְּאָמַר דְּלֹא? אֶלָּא לָאוּ – אֶסַם, שְׂמַע מִינָהּ.

רַב אֲשִׁי אָמַר: מִתְּנִיתִין נִמְי דִּיקָא "וְעוֹד אָמַר רַבִּי מַתְיָא בֶן חֲרָשׁ הַחֹשֵׁשׁ בְּפִיו מְטִילִין לוֹ סֶם בְּשַׁבָּת" וְלֹא פְּלִיגִי רַבְּנָן עֲלֵיהּ. וְאִם אֵיתָא דְּפְּלִיגִי רַבְּנָן עֲלֵיהּ – לֵיעֲרַבְנֵיהּ וְלִיתְנִינְהוּ, וְלִפְּלִיגִי רַבְּנָן בְּסִיפָא – שְׂמַע מִינָהּ.

Come and hear a proof for the matter, as Rabba bar Shmuel taught in the following *baraita*: With regard to a pregnant woman who smells and craves food, one feeds her until she is satisfied, even on Yom Kippur; and in the case of one whom a mad dog bit, one feeds him from the lobe of its liver; and in the case of one who has pain in his mouth, one places medicine in his mouth on Shabbat; this is the statement of Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yosei, who said it in the name of Rabbi Matya ben Harash. And the Rabbis say: In this case and no other. The Gemara clarifies: To which case is this one referring? If we say they said this about a pregnant woman, it is obvious; is there anyone who says one should not give a pregnant woman food? Rather, is it not referring to the *halakha* pertaining to medicine on Shabbat, which they agree is permitted? Learn from this that the Rabbis did not disagree about this.

Rav Ashi said: The wording of the mishna is also precise in accordance with this approach, as it was taught in the mishna: And furthermore, Rabbi Matya ben Harash said: In the case of one who suffers pain in his mouth, one places medicine in his mouth on Shabbat, and the Rabbis do not disagree with him and say otherwise. And if it is so that the Rabbis disagree with him, then let the mishna combine the two *halakhot* and teach them together, and let the Rabbis disagree with both points in the latter clause. Since the mishna was not written this way, but instead the dispute of the Rabbis appears after Rabbi Matya's statement about the mad dog, learn from here that the Rabbis did not disagree with him about the *halakha* with regard to medicine.

Let us wait and perform this labor for him after Shabbat, perhaps he will get well – יבִּיאָ לוֹ שְׂמָא יְבָרִיא – גְּמַתִּין לוֹ שְׂמָא יְבָרִיא: The commentaries have explained this according to Rashi: One does not delay treatment, even if it seems that the ill person's condition is improving, unless he is certainly healthy. If any uncertainty remains, one does not wait for the matter to become clear.

These acts should not be performed by gentiles – אֵין עוֹשִׂין דְּבָרִים הַלְלוּ לֹא עַל יְדֵי גוֹיִם: Commentaries have given various reasons for this. The main reason is that it should be done immediately by those present, before the ill person's condition deteriorates, rather than waiting for a gentile to arrive. Authorities debate whether gentiles should perform the treatment if they are already present (*Tosefot Rid; Me'iri*).

The greatest of [gedolei] the Jewish people – גְּדוּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל – Alternative versions of the text suggest that this is referring to adults [gedolim] rather than scholars. Another approach argues that it is a mitzva for the greatest scholars to act because they are meticulous in observance of Shabbat and in saving lives (Rambam).

Based on the advice of women – עַל פִּי נְשִׁים – One explanation suggests that women might err in the future and compare one situation to another to reach a halakhic conclusion, leading to desecration of Shabbat in situations that are not emergencies. Another explanation is that there may be a concern that once a woman has received a stringent ruling in this matter, in the future she may not act correctly and a life will be put at risk (*Me'iri; Rosh*). Alternatively, perhaps there is concern that they will become lax in their general Shabbat observance.

Although he catches fish – דְּקָא צִיד בְּוֵרִי – Some commentaries write that he is not liable even if he intends to catch fish during his rescue. Since he is occupied with saving a life, he is not held accountable for any prohibited labors that he performs (see *Me'iri*).

”מִפְּנֵי שְׂפֵפֶק נַפְשׁוֹת הוּא” וכו’. לָמָּה לִי תוֹ לְמִימַר וְכָל סֵפֶק נַפְשׁוֹת דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת? אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: לֹא סֵפֶק שַׁבָּת זוֹ בְּלִבְדָּא אָמְרוּ, אֲלֵא אֶפְיִלוּ סֵפֶק שַׁבָּת אַחֲרָת.

הֵיכִי דְמִי? בְּגוֹן דְּאִמְדוּדָה לְתַמְנִיָּא יוֹמֵי, וְיִזְמָא קָמָא שַׁבָּתָא. מַהוּ דְתִימָא: לֵיעֵבֵב עַד לְאִוְרָתָא כִּי הֵיכִי דְלֵא נִחְוֹל עֲלֵיהּ תִּרִי שַׁבָּתָא, קָא מְשַׁמְעֵ לָן.

תִּנְיָא נְמִי הֵכִי: מְחַמֵּין חֲמִין לְחוּלָה בְּשַׁבָּת בֵּין לְהַשְׁקוֹתוֹ בֵּין לְהַבְרֹתוֹ. וְלֹא שַׁבָּת זוֹ בְּלִבְדָּא אָמְרוּ אֲלֵא לְשַׁבָּת אַחֲרָת. וְאֵין אִוְרָתָא: נְמַתִּין לוֹ שְׂמָא יְבָרִיא, אֲלֵא מְחַמֵּין לוֹ מִיָּד, מִפְּנֵי שְׂפֵפֶק נַפְשׁוֹת דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת וְלֹא סֵפֶק שַׁבָּת זוֹ אֲלֵא אֶפְיִלוּ סֵפֶק שַׁבָּת אַחֲרָת.

וְאֵין עוֹשִׂין דְּבָרִים הַלְלוּ לֹא עַל יְדֵי גוֹיִם וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי בּוֹתְיִים, אֲלֵא עַל יְדֵי גְּדוּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאֵין אִוְרָתָא יַעֲשׂוּ דְבָרִים הַלְלוּ לֹא עַל פִּי נְשִׁים וְלֹא עַל פִּי בּוֹתְיִים, אֲבָל מְצַטְרְפִין לְדַעַת אַחֲרָת.

תָּנוּ רַבֵּנּוּ: מִפְּקָחִין פְּקוּחַ נֶפֶשׁ בְּשַׁבָּת וְהוֹרִין הָרִי זֶה מְשׁוּבָח, וְאֵין צְרִיךְ לִישׁוֹל רְשׁוֹת מִבַּיִת דִּין. הָא בִּי צִיד? רָאָה תִּנְנוּק שְׁנָפֵל לָיִם – פּוֹרֵשׁ מִצּוּדָה וּמַעֲלָהוּ. וְהוֹרִין הָרִי זֶה מְשׁוּבָח וְאֵין צְרִיךְ לִישׁוֹל רְשׁוֹת מִבַּיִת דִּין – וְאֵין עַל גַּב דְּקָא צִיד בְּוֵרִי. רָאָה תִּנְנוּק שְׁנָפֵל לְבוֹר – עוֹקֵר חוּלְיָא וּמַעֲלָהוּ. וְהוֹרִין הָרִי זֶה מְשׁוּבָח וְאֵין צְרִיךְ לִישׁוֹל רְשׁוֹת מִבַּיִת דִּין – אֵין עַל גַּב דְּמַתְקֵן דְּרָגָא.

§ The mishna states that one with pain in his throat should be given medicine on Shabbat because it is a case of uncertainty concerning a life-threatening situation. The Gemara asks: Why do I need to say furthermore: And any case of uncertainty concerning a life-threatening situation overrides Shabbat? Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: They stated this not only in a case where there is uncertainty with regard to this Shabbat,<sup>h</sup> but even if the uncertainty is with regard to a different future Shabbat.

What are the circumstances in which uncertainty would arise as to whether or not his life will be in danger in the future? They are a case where doctors assess that an ill person needs a certain treatment for eight days, and the first day of his illness is Shabbat. Lest you say: He should wait until evening and begin his treatment after Shabbat so they will not need to desecrate two Shabbatot for his sake, therefore it teaches us that one must immediately desecrate Shabbat for his sake. This is the halakha, despite the fact that an additional Shabbat will be desecrated as a result, because there is uncertainty about whether his life is in danger.

That was also taught in a baraita: One heats water for an ill person on Shabbat, whether to give him to drink or to wash him, since it might help him recover. And they did not say it is permitted to desecrate only the current Shabbat for him, but even a different, future Shabbat. And one must not say: Let us wait and perform this labor for him after Shabbat, perhaps he will get well<sup>n</sup> in the meantime. Rather, one heats it for him immediately because any case of uncertainty concerning a life-threatening situation overrides Shabbat. And this is so not only with regard to uncertainty whether his life is in danger on the current Shabbat, but even in a case of uncertainty with regard to danger on a different Shabbat.

And these acts should not be performed by gentiles<sup>nh</sup> or Samaritans but should be done by the greatest of the Jewish people,<sup>n</sup> i.e., their scholars, who know how to act properly. And one does not say: These actions may be performed based on the advice of women<sup>n</sup> or Samaritans, since they are not considered experts able to declare a person ill enough to override Shabbat. However, the opinions of these people do combine with an additional opinion, meaning that if there is a dispute, their opinions may be considered when coming to a decision.

§ The Sages taught in a baraita: One engages in saving a life on Shabbat,<sup>h</sup> and one who is vigilant to do so is praiseworthy. And one need not take permission from a court but hurries to act on his own. How so? If one sees a child who fell into the sea, he spreads a fisherman's net and raises him from the water. And one who is vigilant and acts quickly is praiseworthy, and one need not seek permission from a court, although in doing so he catches fish<sup>n</sup> in the net as well. Similarly, if one sees a child fall into a pit and the child cannot get out, he digs part of the ground out around the edge of the pit to create a makeshift step and raises him out. And one who is vigilant and acts quickly is praiseworthy, and one need not seek permission from a court, although in doing so he fashions a step.

#### HALAKHA

לא ספק – Not only uncertainty with regard to this Shabbat – שַׁבָּת זוֹ בְּלִבְדָּא: In a situation where one may desecrate Shabbat to save a life, more than one Shabbat may be desecrated. One does not delay medical treatment to avoid desecrating Shabbat twice (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 328:11*).

אין – These acts should not be performed by gentiles, etc. – עוֹשִׂין דְּבָרִים הַלְלוּ לֹא עַל יְדֵי גוֹיִם וְכוּ: When Shabbat must be desecrated for the sake of an ill person who is in danger, one should attempt to ensure that this is not done by gentiles,

minors, or women, but by educated adult Jews. The Rema cites an opinion that one should try to perform the action in an unusual way in order to avoid violating a prohibition by Torah law. Similarly, if the act can be performed by a gentile with no prohibition violated at all, the gentile should be employed (*Or Zarua; Tosefot; Ran*). In the *Taz* and the *Arukh HaShulhan* it is written that one should not act in accordance with the opinion of the Rema, and in all situations the actions should preferably be performed by Jews on Shabbat (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 328:12*).

Saving a life on Shabbat – פְּקוּחַ נֶפֶשׁ בְּשַׁבָּת – If a child falls into a pit, one should dig around its edge to bring the child up, even if in so doing a step is built, which is a prohibited labor on Shabbat. Similarly, one may break down a locked door to release a child, although in doing so he prepares the wood for further use. If a fire breaks out and there is potential danger to human life, the fire should be extinguished, even if a path is cleared at the same time. One need not ask the permission of the court during moments of danger but should hurry and act (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim 328:13*).

One may extinguish a fire by placing a barrier – **מְכַבֵּין** – **וּמְפַסְיָקִין בְּדִלְיָקָה**: If a fire breaks out in a courtyard and one fears it will cross to another courtyard, endangering the people there, it may be extinguished to prevent it from spreading (*Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 329:1*). Nowadays, the custom is to extinguish any life-threatening fire, even in the house of a gentile (Rema), since in any city there are certainly elderly people and children who are unable to escape (*Mishna Berura; Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 334:26*).

With regard to saving a life the Sages did not follow the majority – **לֹא הֵלְכוּ בְּפִיקוּחַ נַפְשׁ אַחַר הָרֹב** – With regard to saving a life, the principle of majority does not apply. If there are nine gentiles and one Jew in a courtyard and one individual leaves for another courtyard where a building falls on him, such that from a normal halakhic perspective he would be considered to be one of the majority, in a case of uncertainty concerning a life-threatening situation he is considered to be part of the fixed group and there is considered to be a fifty-fifty chance that he is Jewish. Therefore, one acts in order to save him. However, if all the members of a courtyard leave their fixed place, whereupon a building collapses on one of them, the principle of majority does apply. If the majority were gentiles, one does not rescue the person trapped under the building. This is how the Rambam, Rif, and Rosh interpret this passage (*Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 329:2*).

רָאָה שֶׁנִּנְעָלָה דֶּלֶת בְּפִנֵּי תַיִנוּק – שׁוֹבְרָה וּמוֹצִיאָא, וְהִזְרִין הָרִי זֶה מִשׁוֹבֵחַ וְאִין צְרִיךְ לִיטוֹל רְשׁוּת מִבֵּית דִּין – וְאִף עַל גַּב דְּקָא מִכּוּיִן לְמִיתְבַּר בְּשִׂיפֵי. מְכַבֵּין וּמְפַסְיָקִין מִפְּנֵי הַדְּלִיקָה בְּשַׁבָּת וְהִזְרִין הָרִי זֶה מִשׁוֹבֵחַ וְאִין צְרִיךְ לִיטוֹל רְשׁוּת מִבֵּית דִּין – וְאִף עַל גַּב דְּקָא מִמְּכִיךְ מְכּוּכִי.

וְצְרִיכָא, דְּאִי אֲשַׁמְוּעִינן יָם – מִשׁוּם דְּקָא דְּאִדְהֵכִי וְהֵכִי אֶזְלָא לִיה, אֲבָל בּוֹר דְּקָא יִתֵּיב – אֵימָא לָא. צְרִיכָא.

וְאִי אֲשַׁמְוּעִינן בּוֹר – מִשׁוּם דְּקָא מִבְּעֵיתֵי, אֲבָל נִנְעָלָה דֶּלֶת – אֲפֹשֶׁר דִּיתֵיב בְּהַאי גִּיסָא וּמְשַׁבֵּישׁ לִיה בְּאִמְגוּזֵי צְרִיכָא.

“מְכַבֵּין וּמְפַסְיָקִין”. לְמָה לִּי? דְּאִפִּילוּ לְחִצְרֵי אַחֲרֵי.

אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל. לֹא הֵלְכוּ בְּפִיקוּחַ נַפְשׁ אַחַר הָרֹב. הֵיכִי דְמִי? אִי נִימָא דְאֵיכָא תִּשְׁעָה יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹי אֶחָד בֵּינֵיהוּ – רַבָּא יִשְׂרָאֵל נִינְהוּ! (אֵלָא) פְּלַגָּא וּפְלַגָּא – סַפֵּק נַפְשׁוֹת לְהַקֵּל.

אֵלָא דְאֵיכָא תִּשְׁעָה גּוֹיִם וְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֶחָד – הָא נְמִי פְּשִׁיטָא, דְּהוּהָ לִיה קְבוּעַ, וְכָל קְבוּעַ כְּמַחְצָה עַל מַחְצָה דְּמִי!

Similarly, if one sees that a door is locked before a child and the child is scared and crying, he breaks the door and takes the child out. And one who is vigilant and acts quickly is praiseworthy, and one need not seek permission from a court, although he intends to break it into boards to be used later. Similarly, one may extinguish a fire by placing a barrier<sup>H</sup> of metal or clay vessels filled with water in front of it on Shabbat when life is endangered. And one who is vigilant and acts quickly is praiseworthy, and one need not seek permission from a court, although he leaves the coals,<sup>N</sup> which can be used for cooking after Shabbat.

The Gemara comments: And it is necessary to teach these examples, since each one suggests an original idea. As, had it taught us the *halakha* of the child who fell into the sea, we would have said: He must act quickly in that case because in the meantime, if he delays, the child will be swept away by the waves and disappear, and therefore the rescuer need not seek permission; but in the case of a child who fell into a pit, who remains there and is in no further danger, one might say the rescuer need not hurry but should request permission from the court first. Therefore, the *baraita* explains: No, it is necessary to tell us that case, too.

And if it had taught us the case of the pit, one might have thought it is because the child is scared at being trapped; but when a door is locked before a child, it is possible to sit on the other side of the door and amuse him with the sound of nuts until Shabbat is over. Therefore, it is necessary to teach that in this case, too, one does not delay but acts immediately because a life is possibly in danger.

It was taught in a *baraita* that one may extinguish a fire by placing a barrier in front of it on Shabbat. The Gemara asks: Why do I need this? What new point is taught by this additional case of a life-endangering situation? The Gemara answers: This *halakha* applies even if the fire is spreading toward another courtyard. Not only may this be done to save the lives of people in the courtyard on fire; it may also be done to prevent the fire from spreading to an adjacent courtyard.

§ Rav Yosef said that Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: With regard to saving a life, the Sages did not follow the majority<sup>H</sup> as they do in other areas of *halakha*. The Gemara asks: What are the circumstances? When does one not follow the majority? If we say that one does not follow the majority in a case where there are nine Jews and one gentile among them and a building collapses on one of them, then in that case the majority of people are Jews and yet one desecrates Shabbat to save the trapped person. In such a case one is in fact following the majority. Alternatively, if the group is half Jews and half gentiles, the ruling is lenient with regard to a case of uncertainty concerning a life-threatening situation. But this, too, is not a case where one follows the minority, as there is an even chance that the victim is a Jew.<sup>N</sup>

Rather, it is referring to a case where there are nine gentiles and one Jew. However, this too is obvious. One saves the trapped individual because the group is in a fixed location, and there is a principle that whenever a group is in a fixed location it is considered as though it were evenly divided. In this case, despite the fact that the group's majority is gentile, it is considered as though it were composed half of Jews and half of gentiles.<sup>N</sup>

## NOTES

He leaves the coals – **מְכּוּכִי מְכַבֵּין**: The Rambam translates these unusual Aramaic words to mean that he clears a path at the same time as he is occupied with extinguishing the fire.

Jews and gentiles with regard to saving a life – **יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹיִם** – **בְּהִצְלָה**: The reason that the Gemara permits violating Shabbat

only to save Jewish lives is explained later. According to the *Me'iri*, anything stated about gentiles in this text is referring strictly to idolaters. Gentiles who believe in the unity of God are treated like Jews with respect to this issue.

Majority and fixed location – **רֹב וְקְבוּעַ**: When various items

are mixed together, one follows the majority, as it is likely that a random sample will come from the largest group. However, when objects are permanently fixed, the sample is distorted and one can no longer rely on statistics. In such a case, any individual is considered to have an even chance of belonging to either group.

NOTES

Most of the them left or some of them left – פְּרָשׁוּ רַבִּים – ומקצתם: The Rambam and other commentaries reason as follows: If all the individuals leave for another courtyard, they lose their status of being in a fixed location. Therefore, the principle of majority applies, and one does not desecrate Shabbat for any of them. But if only some people leave, the status of being in a fixed location still applies. Rashi takes the opposite approach. Rabbeinu Efrayim explains that if some of them leave, there are two uncertainties: Uncertainty as to whether the Jew remained in his original place or whether he left, and uncertainty as to whether the building fell on him or not. However, the Ra'avad and many others maintain that, with regard to saving a life, the ruling is lenient even when there are several uncertainties.

HALAKHA

Lineage of a child found in a city – יחוס תינוק שנמצא בעיר – If a baby is found in a city in which both Jews and gentiles live, its status is that of an uncertain gentile, regardless of which group is the majority. If such an individual later marries a Jewish woman, he must divorce her due to the chance that he is not Jewish. If he immerses for the sake of conversion, he is considered a Jew (Shulhan Arukh, Even HaEzer 4:33).

לא צריכא דפרוש לחצר אחרת, מהו דתימא: כל דפריש – מרובא פריש, קא משמע לן דלא הלכו בפקוח נפש אחר הרוב.

איני? והאמר רבי אסי אמר רבי יוחנן: תשעה גוים וישראל אחד, באותה חצר – מפקחין, בחצר אחרת – אין מפקחין! לא קשיא, הא – דפרוש בילהו, הא – דפרוש מקצתיהו.

ומי אמר שמואל הכי? והתנן: מצא ביה תינוק מושלך, אם רוב גוים – גוי, ואם רוב ישראל – ישראל, מחצה על מחצה – ישראל. ואמר רב: לא שנו אלא להחיותו, אבל לייחסו – לא.

The Gemara answers: **No, it is necessary** to teach that one does not follow the majority in a case where one individual did not remain with the group in their courtyard but **separated** and went to **another courtyard**, and a building collapses on him. **Lest you say:** One should follow the principle that **whatever is separated from a group is considered to have left from the majority**, and since there was a majority of gentiles there the individual who left the group was probably a gentile, and it is not necessary to clear the debris for a gentile on Shabbat, therefore **it teaches us that with regard to uncertainty in a situation of saving a life, one does not follow the majority.**

The Gemara asks: **Is that so? But didn't Rav Asi say that Rabbi Yoḥanan said:** If there are **nine gentiles and one Jew** and a building collapses on one of them, if it is **in that same courtyard one removes the debris, but in another courtyard one does not remove the debris?** The Gemara answers: This is **not difficult**; there is no contradiction between the *halakhot*. **This case**, where one removes the debris, is **when they all left** for another courtyard and it is clear that the Jew was among them. Consequently, the principle of being in a fixed location still applies, and it is considered a case of uncertainty. **That other situation is when only a minority of them left** for the other courtyard, and it is unknown whether the Jew left with them.<sup>N</sup>

The Gemara asks: **Did Shmuel actually say this**, that one does not follow the majority with regard to saving a life? **Didn't we learn** in a mishna: If **one finds an abandoned child** in a city and his parents are unknown, **if the majority of the city are gentiles** the child is considered a **gentile**; and **if the majority of the city are Jews** the child is considered a **Jew**; if the city is composed of **half gentiles and half Jews**, the child is considered a **Jew**? **And Rav said:** They taught this, that he is a Jew, **only with respect to sustaining him but not with respect to attributing a lineage to him.** One does not say that he is definitely Jewish based on the majority. Therefore, with regard to the *halakhot* of marriage, his status remains uncertain. If the abandoned child is a girl, she is not permitted to marry a priest, who may marry only a woman of certain lineage.<sup>H</sup>

Perek VIII  
Daf 85 Amud a

ושמואל אמר: לפקח עליו את הגל. כי איתמר דשמואל – ארישא איתמר: אם רוב גוים – גוי, אמר שמואל: ולענין פקוח נפש אינו בן.

**And Shmuel said:** This *halakha* of the status of a found child is with regard to **removing debris from on top of him**, implying that if there is a majority of gentiles in the city where he is found, one does not violate Shabbat by removing the debris from the child to save his life. This implies that one does follow the majority in the case of saving a life. The Gemara answers: **When this statement of Shmuel was stated, it was stated with regard to the first halakha.** Shmuel's intent was to be lenient, and his statement should be understood as follows: **If the majority are gentiles, he is a gentile. Shmuel said: But with regard to the matter of saving a life it is not so.** Rather, one saves him based on the uncertainty.

אם רוב גוים גוי למאי הילכתא? אמר רב פפא: להאכילו נבלות. אם רוב ישראל – ישראל, למאי הילכתא – להחזיר לו אבידתו.

§ It was taught that if there is a **majority of gentiles** in the city, a foundling is considered to have the status of a **gentile**. The Gemara asks: **To what halakha** does this statement relate? **Rav Pappa said:** It relates to **feeding him non-kosher food**. One need not protect the child from every prohibition and may even feed him non-kosher food, as though he were a gentile. It was further taught: **If there is a majority of Jews, he is a Jew.** The Gemara asks: **To what halakha** does this relate? The Gemara answers: It relates to **returning a lost object to him**. In such a case it is assumed that he is definitely a Jew. Consequently, Jews must return lost objects to him, whereas there is no obligation to return lost objects to gentiles.