

לְשׁוֹם אֲכִילָה – לְשׁוֹם אֲכִילָה – For the sake of excessive eating – לְשׁוֹם אֲכִילָה – לְשׁוֹם אֲכִילָה – The Magen Avraham, citing Roke'ah, comments that on the first night of Passover, it is prohibited to eat the *afikoman* in a forced manner when one is full, as this is a fulfillment of the verse "Transgressors stumble over them" (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 476:1).

איסי בן יהודה אומר: "ולא ידע ואשם ונשא עונו", ומה מי שנתכוון לעלות בידו בשר טלה ועלה בידו בשר חזיר, כגון שתי חתיכות אחת של חלב ואחת של שומן – "ונשא עונו". המתכוון לעלות בידו בשר חזיר ועלה בידו בשר חזיר – על אחת כמה וכמה!

Isi ben Yehuda says that this verse: "Though he does not know it yet he is guilty, and shall bear his iniquity" (Leviticus 5:17), should be explained in a slightly different manner: **And if in a case similar to one who intended to pick up the meat of a lamb in his hand and he picked up pork in his hand, e.g., where there were two pieces before him, one of forbidden fat and one of permitted fat, and he picked up one and ate it without knowing which of them was forbidden, it states with regard to him: "And shall bear his iniquity," i.e., he is obligated to bring an offering; then with regard to one who intends to pick up pork in his hand and picked up pork in his hand, all the more so is he in need of atonement.**

על דבר זה ידו הדווים.

The Gemara adds: **And with regard to this matter, those who suffer should suffer, i.e., one can see from here the extent to which one requires atonement and forgiveness.**

וכל הני למה לי? צריכין; דאי תנא גבי אשה – התם הוא דבעיא כפרה וסליחה, משום דמעיקרא לאיסורא איביון. אבל חתיכה של חלב ספק של חלב שומן, דלהיתרא איביון – לא בעי כפרה וסליחה.

The Gemara asks: **And why do I need all these examples for the same idea?** The Gemara answers: **All of them are necessary, as had we taught this idea only with regard to the case of a woman, one might have said that it is there that she requires atonement and forgiveness because at the outset her intention was to sin. However, in the case of one who took a piece with regard to which it was uncertain whether it was permitted fat and uncertain whether it was forbidden fat, who intended to eat permitted food, one might have said that he does not require atonement and forgiveness.**

ואי איתמר הדא – דאיבא איסורא, אבל אשה דהפר לה בעלה, דהיתרא – לא תיבעי כפרה וסליחה.

And had this case concerning one who eats a piece that might be forbidden been stated alone, one could say that atonement is required in this situation, as there is possibly a prohibition present before him. However, with regard to a woman whose husband nullified her vow, where she was in fact permitted to perform the actions she performed, perhaps she does not require atonement and forgiveness.

ואי איתמר הני תרתי – הוה אמינא: הני תרתי הוא דסגי להון בכפרה וסליחה, דלא איבע איסורא, אבל שתי חתיכות אחת של חלב ואחת של שומן, דאיבע איסורא – לא סגי ליה בכפרה וסליחה, קא משמע לן דלא שניא.

And had only these two cases been stated, I would say: It is in these two cases in which atonement and forgiveness are enough for them, as the prohibition is not established; even one who ate the piece that was possibly forbidden fat has not necessarily committed a sin. However, if there were two pieces, one of forbidden fat and one of permitted fat, where the prohibition is established, as there was definitely a forbidden piece before him and nevertheless he proceeded to eat one of them, one might have said that atonement and forgiveness should not suffice for him. Isi ben Yehuda therefore teaches us that there, it is no different, as even this individual is included in the verse: "And he shall be forgiven" (Leviticus 5:18).

אמר רבה בר בר חנה אמר רבי יוחנן: מאי דכתיב "כי ישרים דרכי ה' וצדקים ילכו בסם ופושעים יכשלו בסם"? משל לשני בני אדם שצלו את פסחיהן, אחד אכלו לשום מצוה ואחד אכלו לשום אכילה גסה; זה שאכלו לשום מצוה – "וצדקים ילכו בסם". וזה שאכלו לשום אכילה גסה – "ופושעים יכשלו בסם".

§ Rabba bar bar Hanna said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "For the paths of the Lord are right, and the just walk in them, but transgressors stumble over them" (Hosea 14:10)? How can the same path lead to such different outcomes? This is comparable to two people who roasted their Paschal offerings on Passover eve, in the proper manner. **One ate it for the sake of the mitzva, and one ate it for the sake of excessive eating.**¹⁴ This one, who ate it for the sake of the mitzva, has fulfilled: "And the just walk in them," while that one, who ate it for the sake of excessive eating, is described by the end of the verse: "But transgressors stumble over them."

אמר ליה ריש לקיש: האי רשע קרית ליה? נהי דלא קא עביד מצוה מן המובחר – פסח מיהא קא עביד! אלא, משל לשני בני אדם, זה אשתו ואחותו עמו, וזה אשתו ואחותו עמו. לזה נודמנה לו אשתו, ולזה נודמנה לו אחותו; זה שנודמנה לו אשתו – "וצדקים ילכו בסם". וזה שנודמנה לו אחותו – "ופושעים יכשלו בסם".

Reish Lakish said to Rabba bar bar Hanna: **You call this individual wicked? Even though he had not performed the mitzva in the optimal manner when he eats this Paschal offering, he has at least performed the mitzva of the Paschal offering. Rather, this is comparable to two people; this one has his wife and sister in the same house with him, and that one has his wife and sister with him. Each husband arrives home and engages in sexual intercourse with one of the women. This one happened upon his wife, and that one happened upon his sister. This one, who happened upon his wife, is described by the phrase "And the just walk in them," and that one, who happened upon his sister, is described by the phrase "But transgressors stumble over them."**

מי דמי? אַנן קאַמרינן תּדא דרד – הכּא שני דרכים! אלא, משל ללוט ושתי בנותיו עמו. הן שנתכוונו לשם מצוה – “וַיֵּצְדֻקִים יִלְכוּ בָם”. הוא שנתכווין לשם עבירה – “וּפְשָׁעִים יִכְשְׁלוּ בָם”.

וּדְלָמָא הוּא נְמִי לְשׁוּם מְצוּה אִיבּוּוֹיִן? אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כָּל הַפְּסוּק הַזֶּה עַל שֵׁם עֲבִירָה נֶאֱמַר:

“וַיִּשָּׂא לוֹט” – וְתִשָּׂא אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲדָנָיו אֶת עֵינֶיהָ. [אֶת עֵינָיו] – כִּי הִיא יִשְׂרָה בְּעֵינָי.

“וַיִּרְא” – וַיִּרְא אֶתְהָ שָׂכָם בֶּן חֲמוֹר. “אֶת כָּל כְּבוֹד הַיָּרְדֵן” כִּי בָעַד אִשָּׁה זוֹנָה עַד כְּבוֹד לְחָם. “כִּי כָלָה מִשְׁקָה” – “אֲלֹכָה אַחֲרַי מֵאֲהָבִי נָתַנִּי לְחָמִי וּמִימֵי צִמְרֵי וּפְשָׁתֵי שִׁמְנֵי וְשִׁיקוּיֵי”.

וְהָא מִינֵם אָנִים. תְּנַא מְשׁוּם רַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר רַב חוּנִי: לְמָה נִקְוֵד עַל וִי “וּבְקוּמָה” שֶׁל בְּבִירָה – לוֹמַר שֶׁבְּשִׁכְבָּהּ לֹא יָדַע, אֲבָל בְּקוּמָה יָדַע.

וּמֵאִי הָוָה לֵיהּ לְמִיעֵבֵד? מֵאִי דְהָוָה הָוָה. נִפְקָא מִינָהּ, דְּלִפְנֵי אַחֲרִינָא לֹא אִיבְעֵי לְמִישְׁתֵּי חֲמָרָא.

דְּרַשׁ רַבָּא: מֵאִי דְכָתִיב “אֶחָ נִפְשָׁע מִקְרִית עֵז”

The Gemara raises a difficulty: **Is it comparable? We said one path;** i.e., two people follow the same path by performing the very same action with two different outcomes; whereas **here** there are **two paths**. Each person engaged in sexual intercourse with a different relative and therefore they cannot be said to have followed the same path. Rather, it is **comparable to Lot and his two daughters**, who were **with him**. **They, who intended** to engage in sexual intercourse with him **for the sake of a mitzva**, as they thought that the entire world was destroyed and wished to preserve the human race, are described in the first part of the verse: **“And the just walk in them.”** **He who intended** to act for the sake of a transgression is described by the last part: **“But transgressors stumble over them.”**

The Gemara asks: **And perhaps Lot too intended** that his actions should be **for the sake of a mitzva**? The Gemara answers: This was not the case, as **Rabbi Yohanan said** with regard to Lot: **This entire verse**: “And Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw all the plain of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere” (Genesis 13:10), **is stated with regard to the sin** of licentiousness. Since this verse teaches that Lot was a lustful man, it can therefore be assumed he meant to sin with his daughters as well.

Rabbi Yohanan explains: **“And Lot lifted up his eyes”** employs the same expression as a verse that refers to Joseph’s temptation: **“That his master’s wife lifted up her eyes”** (Genesis 39:7), which is clearly referring to sin. The phrase used in reference to Lot, **“his eyes,”** is stated similarly to Samson’s appraisal of the Philistine girl he sought to marry: **“For she is pleasing in my eyes”** (Judges 14:3).

Rabbi Yohanan continues to interpret the verse as a series of references to licentiousness. The phrase **“and saw”** is reminiscent of the verse dealing with Jacob’s daughter Dinah: **“And Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, saw her and he took her, and lay with her”** (Genesis 34:2). The verse continues: **“All the plain [kikar] of the Jordan,”** which alludes to the verse: **“For on account of a harlot a man is brought to a loaf [kikar] of bread”** (Proverbs 6:26). The last part of the verse: **“That it was well watered everywhere,”** recalls: **“I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink”** (Hosea 2:7).

The Gemara asks: **But Lot was forced** to participate in the sexual intercourse, as he was asleep at the time; how can he be considered a sinner? The Gemara answers that this is as a Sage **taught in the name of Rabbi Yosei bar Rav Honi**: **Why is there a dotⁿ in a Torah scroll over the letter vav of the word “uvekumah,” with regard to Lot’s elder daughter**, in the verse: **“And he did not know when she lay down and when she arose [uvekumah]”** (Genesis 19:33)? This dot serves to say that **when she lay down he did not know; however, when she arose he knew** what she had done, as he later understood what had happened.

The Gemara asks: **And what could he have done** about it? **What has happened has happened;** i.e., Lot could not change the past. The Gemara answers: **The difference is that on the other, following, night, he should not have drunk wine** again. By allowing himself to get drunk a second time, he showed that the end result, engaging in sexual intercourse with his younger daughter, was something he desired.

§ Rava interpreted a verse homiletically with regard to Lot: **What is the meaning of that which is written: “A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city,**

NOTES

Why is there a dot – לְמָה נִקְוֵד: The dots that traditionally appear over certain letters of the Torah are read as a sign of erasure, indicating a measure of uncertainty with regard to the word in question. In this case the phrase “and when she arose” is interpreted as though it were omitted, alluding to Lot’s awareness when she

got up (*Tosafot*). Others add that this does not mean that Lot had full knowledge of the event, as in that case the phrase would not have been written at all. Rather, he had a dim recollection of what had occurred. Consequently, he should have been more careful the following night (*Yefat To'ar*).



Dot over the vav of the phrase “and when she arose [uvekumah]” as it appears in a Torah scroll

ומדינים כביריח ארמון? "אח נפשע מקרית עז" – זה לוט שפירש מאברהם: "ומדינים כביריח ארמון" – שהטיל מדינים כביריחין וארמון – "לא יבא עמוני ומואבי בקהל ה'".

דרש רבא ואיתימא רבי יצחק: מאי דכתיב "לתאווה יבקש נפרד ובכל תושיה יתגלע"? "לתאווה יבקש נפרד" – זה לוט: "ובכל תושיה יתגלע" – שנתגלה קלונו בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשות, דתנן: עמוני ומואבי אסורין, ואיסורן איסור עולם.

אמר עולא: תמר זינתה, זמרי זינה.

תמר זינתה – יצאו ממנה מלכים ונביאים, זמרי זינה – נפלו עליו כמה רבבות מישראל.

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: גדולה עבירה לשמה ממצוה שלא לשמה. והאמר רב יהודה אמר רב: לעולם יעסוק אדם בתורה ובמצוות אפילו שלא לשמן, שמתוך שלא לשמן בא לשמן!

אלא אימא: כמצוה שלא לשמה, דכתיב "תברך מנשים יעל אשת חבר הקיני מנשים באהל תברך". מאן נשים שבאהל – שרה ורבקה רחל ולאה.

and their contentions are like the bars of a castle" (Proverbs 18:19)? "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city,"ⁿ this is Lot, called Abraham's brother (see Genesis 14:14), who separated from Abraham. "And their contentions are like the bars of a castle," this is because Lot brought contention between the Jewish people and his own descendants like bars, which lock the gates of a castle. Just as no one can enter a locked castle, so too Lot's descendants, Ammon and Moab, were prevented from joining the Jewish people, as it states: "An Ammonite and a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 23:4).

On the same issue, Rava expounded a verse homiletically, and some say it was Rabbi Yitzhak: What is the meaning of that which is written: "He who separates himself seeks his own desire, and snarls against all sound wisdom" (Proverbs 18:1)?ⁿ "He who separates himself seeks his own desire," this is Lot, who separated from Abraham. "And snarls [yitgala] against all sound wisdom," this too describes Lot, as his shame was eventually revealed [nitgala] in the synagogues, when his actions recorded in the Torah are read in public, and in the study halls, where the halakhot of his descendants are taught. As we learned in a mishna: An Ammonite and a Moabite are prohibited^h from entering the congregation by marrying a Jewish woman, and their prohibition is permanent.

§ In relation to the preceding discussion with regard to the daughters of Lot, who acted in a wanton manner for the sake of a mitzva, the Gemara cites that which Ulla said: Tamar engaged in licentious sexual intercourse with her father-in-law, Judah (see Genesis, chapter 38), and Zimri ben Salu also engaged in licentious sexual intercourse with a Midianite woman (see Numbers, chapter 25).

Yet despite the similarity between their actions, Tamar engaged in licentious sexual intercourse for the sake of a mitzva, to have children, and therefore she merited that kings of the House of David descended from her. King David's lineage traces back to Tamar's son Peretz (see Ruth 4:18–22). And she also merited to be the ancestor of prophets, e.g., Isaiah, who was related to the royal family. Conversely, with regard to Zimri, who engaged in licentious sexual intercourse for the purpose of a transgression, several multitudes of Israel fell due to him; twenty-four thousand in a plague (see Numbers 25:9). This shows that a great deal depends on one's intentions.

§ Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: Greater is a transgression committed for its own sake, i.e., for the sake of Heaven, than a mitzva performed not for its own sake. The Gemara questions this comparison: But didn't Rav Yehuda say that Rav said: A person should always occupy himself with Torah^h and mitzvot even not for their own sake, as it is through acts performed not for their own sake that good deeds for their own sake come about? How, then, can any transgression be considered greater than a mitzva not for the sake of Heaven?

Rather, one must emend the above statement and say as follows: A transgression for the sake of Heaven is equivalent to a mitzva not for its own sake. The proof is as it is written: "Blessed above women shall Yael be, the wife of Hever the Kenite, above women in the tentⁿ she shall be blessed" (Judges 5:24), and it is taught: Who are these "women in the tent?"ⁿ They are Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. Yael's forbidden intercourse with Sisera for the sake of Heaven is compared to the sexual intercourse in which the Matriarchs engaged.

NOTES

Than a strong city – מקרית עז: The early commentaries explain that the term "strong city" alludes to Abraham, who is described in similar terms: "Look to the rock from where you were hewn and to the hole of the pit from where you were dug; look to Abraham your father" (Isaiah 51:1–2).

Against all sound wisdom, etc. – ובכל תושיה וכו': As mentioned in several places in Proverbs (see Proverbs 2:7), the Torah is called: "Sound wisdom." Consequently, the phrase "all sound wisdom" refers to all parts of the Torah, both the Written Law and the Oral Law. Therefore, the Gemara mentions synagogues, in which the Written Torah is read, as well as the study halls, where the Oral Law is studied (Commentary on Nazir).

Above women in the tent – מנשים באהל: The Gemara in tractate Sanhedrin (105b) explains that the prefix mem, translated as "above," does not necessarily mean: Better than, as in the first version of Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak's statement. Rather, it can be interpreted as a kind of comparison: She is like the women in the tent. Alternatively, it means that she too will receive the blessing of the women in the tent (Rosh). According to this interpretation, the mem means: From (see Birkat Rosh).

Who are these women in the tent, etc. – מאן נשים שבאהל וכו': The commentaries cite verses that mention each of the Matriarchs in connection to a tent (Tosafot). As for the basis of this comparison, some commentaries explain that three of the Matriarchs performed a mitzva not for its own sake, as each gave their maidservant to their husband out of jealousy, either of their sister or of other mothers (Commentary on Nazir). Others state that as the Matriarchs enjoyed sexual intercourse with their husbands, theirs was like a mitzva performed not for its own sake, whereas Yael derived no pleasure at all (Tosafot on Yevamot 103a). Several later commentaries explain at length that the Matriarchs cannot be seen as acting other than for the sake of the mitzva. Rather, the Gemara means that Yael's motivation was as pure as theirs.

HALAKHA

An Ammonite and Moabite are prohibited, etc. – עמוני ומואבי אסורין וכו': All male Ammonites and Moabites are prohibited from entering into the Jewish people, i.e., they may not marry Jewish women. However, all females of these nations are permitted to marry Jews (Rambam Sefer Kedusha, Hilkhot Issurei Bia 12:18; Shulhan Arukh, Even HaEzer 4:2).

A person should always occupy himself with Torah, etc. – לעולם יעסוק אדם בתורה וכו': One should always occupy himself with Torah, even not for its own sake, as by studying not for its own sake he will come to study for the sake of Heaven (Rambam Sefer HaMadda, Hilkhot Teshuva 10:5 and Hilkhot Talmud Torah 3:5; Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a 246:20).