

חומש עם רש"י • חקת-בלק • חמישי

Complete Word-for-Word Interlinear • Navy & Gold Edition

CHUKAS-BALAK • 5TH ALIYAH

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this aliyah, we see the unfolding of Balak's desperate attempts to bring Bilaam to curse the Bnei Yisrael. After the first group of messengers is sent away, Balak sends a more distinguished delegation, promising great wealth and honor. Although Bilaam boasts that he cannot go against the word of Hashem, his deep-seated desire to go is clear. Hashem ultimately permits him to go, but with the strict condition that he may only speak the words that Hashem places in his mouth.

As Bilaam eagerly sets out on his donkey, Hashem's anger is kindled, leading to the famous and wondrous episode of the speaking donkey. Three times, an angel of Hashem blocks the path, visible only to the donkey, who tries to protect her master. This leads to a remarkable dialogue between Bilaam and his animal, opening Bilaam's eyes to his own spiritual blindness and his complete lack of independent power.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פסוק א

Pasuk 1

וַיָּקָם בִּלְעָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל שָׂרֵי בָלָק לְכוּ אֶל אֲרָצְכֶם כִּי
for your land to go Balak the officers of to and he said in the morning Balaam And Balaam arose
מֵאֵן יְהוָה לְתַתִּי לְהֵלֵךְ עִמָּכֶם:
with you to go to allow me Hashem refused

רש"י

לְהֵלֵךְ עִמָּכֶם. אֶלָּא עִם שָׂרִים גְּדוֹלִים מִכֶּם, לְמַדְנּוּ שְׂרוּחוֹ גְּבוּהָהּ, וְלֹא רָצָה
did he want and not is haughty that his spirit we learned than you greater princes with but with you to go
לְגַלּוֹת שְׁהוּא בְּרִשּׁוֹתוֹ שֶׁל מְקוֹם, אֶלָּא בְּלָשׁוֹן גָּסוּת, לְפִיכָּהּ וַיִּסַּף עוֹד
more and he sent again therefore arrogance in language of except the Omnipresent of under the authority that he is to reveal
בַּלָּק:
Balak

פסוק ב

Pasuk 2

וַיָּקוּמוּ שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל בָּלָק וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֵן בִּלְעָם הֵלֵךְ עִמָּנוּ:
with us to go Bilam refused and they said Balak to and they came Moav the officers of And they arose

פסוק ג

וַיֹּסֶף עוֹד בָּלַק שְׁלַח שָׂרִים רַבִּים וְנִכְבְּדִים מֵאלֵה:

than these and more distinguished more numerous officers to send Balak again And he added

פסוק ד

וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵל בָּלָעַם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ כֹּה אָמַר בָּלַק בֶּן צִפּוֹר אֵל נָא

please Do not Tzippor son of Balak said Thus to him and they said Bilam to And they came

תִּמְנַע מִהֲלֹךְ אֵלַי:

to me from going withhold yourself

פסוק ה

כִּי כִבֹּד אֲכַבְּדָךְ מְאֹד וְכָל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלַי אֶעֱשֶׂה וּלְכָה נָא קָבֹה

curse please and go I will do to me you say that and everything greatly I will honor you honor for

לִי אֵת הָעָם הַזֶּה:

this the people — for me

רש"י

כִּי כִבֹּד אֲכַבְּדָךְ מְאֹד. יוֹתֵר מִמָּה שֶׁהָיִיתָ נוֹטֵל לְשַׁעֲבֵר אֲנִי נוֹתֵן לְךָ שָׁם:

there to you am giving I in the past receiving that you were than what more exceedingly I will honor you honoring For

פסוק ו

וַיַּעַן בָּלָעַם וַיֹּאמַר אֵל עֲבָדֵי בָלַק אִם יִתֵּן לִי בָלַק מְלֵא בֵּיתוֹ

his house the fullness of Balak to me gives If Balak the servants of to and said Bilam And answered

כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכַל לְעֹבֵר אֶת פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת קִטְנָה אוֹ

or a small thing to do my God Hashem the word of — to transgress will I be able not and gold silver

גְּדוֹלָה:

a great thing

רש"י

מֵלֵא בֵּיתוֹ כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב. לְמַדְּנוּ שֶׁנִּפְשׁוֹ רַחֲבָה וּמִחְמַד מָמוֹן אַחֲרִים, אָמַר רַאוּי

it is fitting he said others wealth of and covetous of was broad that his soul we learn and gold silver his house full of

לוֹ לִתֵּן לִי כָּל כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב שְׁלוֹ, שֶׁהָרִי צָרִיךְ לְשַׁכֵּר חֵילוֹת רַבּוֹת, סֶפֶק

doubtful many armies to hire he would need for behold of his and gold silver all of to me to give for him

נוֹצֵחַ סֶפֶק אֵינוֹ נוֹצֵחַ, וְאֲנִי וְדַאי נוֹצֵחַ שָׁם:

there conquer certainly but I conquer he does not doubtful he conquers

רש"י

לֹא אוֹכַל לְעֹבֵר. עַל כִּרְחוֹ גָּלָה שֶׁהוּא בְּרִשּׁוֹת אַחֲרִים, וְנִתְּנָבֵא כָּאֵן

here and he prophesied of others is in the control that he he revealed his own will Against to transgress be able I cannot

שְׂאִינוּ יָכוֹל לְבַטֵּל הַבְּרָכוֹת שֶׁנִּתְּבָּרְכוּ הָאֲבוֹת מִפִּי הַשְּׁכִינָה שָׁם :
there the Shechinah from the mouth of the patriarchs that were blessed the blessings to annul able that he is not

פסוק ז

Pasuk 7

וְעַתָּה שְׁבוּ נָא בְּזֶה גַם אַתֶּם הַלַּיְלָה וְאִדְעָה מָה יֹסֵף יְהוָה דְּבַר עִמִּי:
with me to speak Hashem will add what and I will know tonight you also here please stay And now

רש"י

גַּם אַתֶּם. פִּי הַכְּשִׁילוֹ — גַּם אַתֶּם סוּפְכֶם לַיְלָה בְּפִחִי נִפֵּשׁ כְּרֵאשׁוֹנִים:
like the first ones soul with disappointment of to go your end is you also tripped him up his mouth you also

רש"י

מָה יֹסֵף. לֹא יִשְׁנֶה דְּבָרָיו מִבְּרָכָה לְקַלְלָהּ, הַלּוֹאִי שְׁלֹא יוֹסִיף לְבָרֶךְ; כָּאֵן
here to bless He will add that not if only to curse from blessing His words will He change not He will add what
נִתְּנָבֵא שְׁעֵתִיד לְהוֹסִיף לָהֶם בְּרָכוֹת עַל יָדוֹ שָׁם :
there his hand by blessings for them to add that He is destined he prophesied

פסוק ח

Pasuk 8

וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל בִּלְעָם לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם לִקְרֹא לָךְ בָּאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים
the men have come you to call If to him and He said at night Bilam to God And came
קוּם לָךְ אַתֶּם וְאֵךְ אֶת הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אֲדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אַתָּה תַעֲשֶׂה:
you shall do it to you I shall speak that the word — and only with them go arise

רש"י

אִם לִקְרֹא לָךְ. אִם הִקְרִיאתָ שְׁלָךְ וְסָבֹר אַתָּה לְטַל עָלֶיךָ שְׂכָר, קוּם לָךְ אַתֶּם :
with them go arise payment for it to take you and think is for you the calling if thee to call If

רש"י

וְאֵךְ. עַל כְּרִיחָךְ אֶת הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אֲדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אַתָּה תַעֲשֶׂה; וְאֵךְ עַל פִּי כֵן
so though · and even you shall do it to you I will speak that the word — your will against but
וַיֵּלֶךְ בִּלְעָם, אָמַר שְׂמָא אֶפְתָּנוּ וַיִּתְּרָצָה:
and He will agree I will persuade Him perhaps he said Bilaam and he went

פסוק ט

Pasuk 9

וַיָּקָם בִּלְעָם בִּבְכֹר וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ אֶת אֲתָנּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ עִם שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב:
Moav the officers of with and he went his donkey — and he saddled in the morning Bilaam And he arose

רש"י

וַיַּחֲבֹשׁ אֶת אֲתָנּוֹ. מִכָּאֵן שֶׁהִשְׁנִיחָהּ מִקְלָקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה, שֶׁחֲבֹשׁ הוּא בְּעַצְמוֹ;
himself he for he saddled the proper line — disregards that hatred from here his she-ass — And he saddled
אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ רָשָׁע כְּבֹר קִדְמָה אֲבִיהֶם וַיִּשְׁפֹּם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ב "וַיִּשְׁפֹּם
and he rose early 22 Bereishis as it is said their father Avraham preceded you already wicked one the Holy One said

אברהם בבקר ויחבש את חמרו" תנחומא :

Tanchuma his donkey — and he saddled in the morning Avraham

רש"י

עם שרי מואב. לבו כלבם שוה:

was equal like their heart his heart Moav the princes of with

פסוק י

Pasuk 10

ויחר אף אלהים כי הילך הוא ויתיצב מלאך יהוה בדרך

in the road Hashem an angel of and stood he was going because God the anger of and flared

לשטן לו והוא רכב על אתנו ושני נערי עמו:

were with him his youths and two of his donkey upon riding and he was to him as an adversary

רש"י

כי הולך הוא. ראה שהדבר רע בעיני המקום ונתאוה לילה:

to go and he desired the Omnipresent in the eyes of was evil that the matter he saw he was going because

רש"י

לשטן לו. מלאך של רחמים היה, והיה רוצה למנעו מלחטא, שלא

so that not from sinning to prevent him wanting and he was it was mercy of an angel to him for an adversary

יחטא ויאבד שם :

there and perish he would sin

רש"י

ושני נערי עמו. מפאן לאדם חשוב היוצא לדרך יוליך עמו שני

two with him he should take on the way who goes out distinguished for a person from here with him his lads And two of

אנשים לשמשו, וחוזרים ומשמים זה את זה שם :

there this one — this one and they serve and they return to serve him men

פסוק יא

Pasuk 11

ותרא האתון את מלאך יהוה נצב בדרך וחרבו שלופה בידו

in his hand drawn and his sword in the way standing Hashem the angel of — the she-donkey And she saw

ותט האתון מן הדרך ותלך בשדה ויך בלעם את האתון

the she-donkey — Bilaam and he struck in the field and she went the way from the she-donkey and she turned

להטתה הדרך:

to the way to turn her

רש"י

ותרא האתון. והוא לא ראה שנתן הקב"ה רשות לפהמה לראות יותר מן

than more to see to the animal permission the Holy One for gave see did not but he the she-ass And she saw

האדם, שמתוה שיש בו דעת, תטרף דעתו פשיראה מזיקין:

damaging spirits when he sees his mind would be unsettled intellect in him that there is for because the man

רש"י

וחרבו שלופה בידו. אמר, רשע זה הניח כלי אמנותו, שכלי זינו
their weapon for the tool of his craft the tool of abandoned this wicked man He said in his hand drawn and his sword
של אמות העולם בחרב, והוא בא עליהם בפיו שהוא אמנות שלהם, אף
even of theirs the craft which is with his mouth against them comes and he is with the sword the world the nations of of
אני אתפש את שלו ואבא עליו באמנותו, וכן סופו — "ואת בלעם בן
the son of Bilaam "and — was his end and so with his craft against him and I will come his — will seize I
בעור הקרו בחרב" במדבר ל"א :
31 Bamidbar with the sword" they killed Beor

פסוק יב

Pasuk 12

ויעמד מלאך יהוה במשעול הפרמים גדר מזה וגדר מזה:
from this side and a fence from this side a fence the vineyards in a path of Hashem the angel of And he stood

רש"י

במשעול. כתרגומו "בשביל", וכן "אם ישפק עפר שמרון לשעלים" מלכים א
I Melachim for handfuls" Shomron the dust of will suffice "if and similarly "in a path" like its Targum In a path
כ' — עפר הנדבק בכפות הרגלים בהלוקו, וכן "מי מדד בשעלו מים"
water" with his step measured "who and similarly in their walking the feet to the soles of that clings dust 20
ישעיהו מ' — ברגליו ובהלוקו:
and with his walking with his feet 40 Yeshayahu

רש"י

גדר מזה וגדר מזה. סתם גדר של אבנים הוא:
it is stones of fence an undefined from this side and a fence from this side a fence

פסוק יג

Pasuk 13

ותרא האתון את מלאך יהוה ותלחץ אל הקיר ותלחץ את
— and she squeezed the wall against and she pressed Hashem the angel of — the she-donkey And she saw
רגל בלעם אל הקיר ויסף להפתה:
to beat her and he continued the wall against Bilam the foot of

רש"י

ותלחץ. היא עצמה:
herself and she pressed

רש"י

ותלחץ: את אחרים — את רגל בלעם :
Bilaam the foot of — others — and she pressed

פסוק יד

וַיֹּסֶף מִלֵּאךְ יְהוָה עֲבוֹר וַיַּעֲמֵד בְּמָקוֹם צָר אֲשֶׁר אֵין דֶּרֶךְ לְנִטּוֹת
 to turn way there was no where narrow in a place and he stood to pass Hashem the angel of And added
 יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל:
 or left right

רש"י

וַיֹּסֶף מִלֵּאךְ ה' עֲבוֹר. לְעֹבֵר עוֹד לְפָנָיו — לְהֵלֵךְ לְהִיטֵל לְפָנָיו בְּמָקוֹם אַחֵר,
 another in a place before him to be to go before him further to pass to pass Hashem the angel of And added
 כָּמוֹ "וְהוּא עָבַר לְפָנֵיהֶם" בְּרֹאשִׁית ל"ג; וּמִדְּרַשׁ אַגְדָּה יֵשׁ בְּתַנְחוּמָא: מָה
 what in Tanchuma there is of Aggadah And the Midrash 33 Bereishis before them" passed "and he like
 רָאָה לַעֲמֹד בְּשָׁלֹשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת? סִמְנֵי אֲבוֹת הָרָאָהוּ:
 he showed him the Patriarchs signs of places in three to stand did he see

פסוק טו

וַתֵּרָא הָאֵתוֹן אֶת מִלֵּאךְ יְהוָה וַתִּרְבֹּץ תַּחַת בִּלְעָם וַיַּחַר אַף
 the anger of and flared Bilaam under and she crouched Hashem the angel of — the she-donkey And she saw
 בִּלְעָם וַיִּךְ אֶת הָאֵתוֹן בַּמֶּקֶל:
 with the staff the she-donkey — and he struck Bilaam

פסוק טז

וַיִּפְתַּח יְהוָה אֶת פִּי הָאֵתוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר לְבִלְעָם מָה עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ כִּי
 that to you have I done What to Bilam and she said the she-donkey the mouth of — Hashem And He opened
 הִכִּיתַנִּי זֶה שָׁלַשׁ רְגָלִים:
 times three these you have beaten me

רש"י

זֶה שָׁלַשׁ רֵגְלִים. רָמַז לוֹ: אֵתָהּ מִבְּקֹשׁ לַעֲקֹר אֲמָה הַחוֹגֶגֶת שָׁלַשׁ רְגָלִים בְּשָׁנָה?
 in the year festivals three that celebrates a nation to uproot seek you to him he hinted times three this
 תַּנְחוּמָא:
 Tanchuma

פסוק יז

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם לְאֵתוֹן כִּי הִתְעַלְלָתָּ בִּי לוֹ יֵשׁ חֶרֶב בְּיָדִי כִּי עָתָה
 now for in my hand a sword there were if only me you mocked because to the donkey Bilam And said
 הֲרִגְתִּיהָ:
 I would have killed you

רש"י

התעללת. כתרגומו, לשון גנאי ובזיון:
and disdain scorn an expression of like its translation you have mocked

רש"י

לו יש חרב בידי. גנות גדולה היתה לו דבר זה בעיני השרים — זה
this one the princes in the eyes of this matter to him was great a disgrace in my hand a sword there were if only
הולך להרג אמה שלמה בפיו ולאתון זו צריה פלי זין:
armour weapons of he needs this and for a donkey with his mouth entire a nation to kill goes

פסוק יח

Pasuk 18

ותאמר האתון אל בלעם הלא אנכי אתנה אשר רכבת עלי
upon me you have ridden whom your she-donkey I Am I not Bilam to the she-donkey And she said
מעודה עד היום הזה הסכנ הסכנ לעשות לך פה ויאמר
and he said so to you to do to be accustomed have I been this the day until since you existed
accustomed

לא:

No

רש"י

ההסכן הסכנתי. כתרגומו, וכן "הלאל יסכן גבר" איוב כ"ב ; ורבותינו
and our Rabbis 22 Iyov a man be useful Can to God and so like its Targum to do so Have I been accustomed
דרשו מקרא זה בתלמוד, אמרו ליה מאי טעמא לא רכבת אסוסיא? אמר להו
to them he said on a horse you ride not the reason what is to him they said in the Talmud this verse expounded
ברטיבא שדאי ליה כו', כדאיתא במסכת ע"ז דף ד' :
4 page Avodah Zarah in Tractate as it is etc it I cast in the pasture

פסוק יט

Pasuk 19

ויגל יהוה את עיני בלעם וירא את מלאך יהוה נצב בדרך
in the way standing Hashem the angel of — and he saw Bilam the eyes of — Hashem And He uncovered
וחרבו שלפה בידו ויקד וישתחו לאפיו:
to his face and he prostrated and he bowed in his hand drawn and his sword

פסוק כ

Pasuk 20

ויאמר אליו מלאך יהוה על מה הכית את אתנה זה שלוש רגלים
times three these your jenny — have you beaten what for Hashem the angel of to him And said
הנה אנכי יצאתי לשטן פי ירט הדרך לנגדי:
to me the errand is obnoxious for as an adversary came out I behold

רש"י

כי ירט הדרך לנגדי. רבותינו חכמי המשנה דרשוהו נוטריקון — יראה,
she feared as an acrostic expounded it the Mishnah the Sages of our Rabbis before me the way is perverse because

ראתה, נטתה בשביל שהדרך לנגדי שבת קכ"ה, כלומר לקנאתי
to my anger meaning to say 105a Shabbos is against me that the journey because she turned aside she saw

ולקנאתי; ולפי משמעו כי חרד הדרך לנגדי, לשון רטט — כי
for trembling an expression of against me the journey hastened that its literal meaning and according to and to provoke me

ראיתי בעל הדרך שחרד ומהר הדרך שהוא לכעסי ולקמרו, ומקרא
and a verse and to defy me to my anger which is the journey and hurried who trembled the journey the master of Isaw

קצר הוא, כמו "ותכל דוד" שמואל ב י"ג; לישנא אחרינא ירט לשון רצון,
pleasure is an expression of yarad another an expression 13 II Shmuel David and longed like it is elliptical

וכן "על ידי רשעים ירטני" איוב ט"ז — מפני ומנחם אותי על ידי
the hands of by me and comforts He appeases 16 Iyov He appeases me wicked men the hands of by and so

רשעים שאינן אלא מקניטים:
provoking but who are not wicked men

פסוק כא

Pasuk 21

ותראני האתון ותט לפני זה שלש רגלים אולי נטתה
she turned aside perhaps times three these before me and she turned aside the she-donkey And she saw me

מפני כי עתה גם אתכה הרגתי ואותה החייתי:
I would have kept alive and her I would have killed you also now for from before me

רש"י

אולי נטתה. כמו לולי, פעמים שאולי משמש בלשון לולי:
unless in the sense of is used that perhaps sometimes unless is like she turned aside Perhaps

רש"י

גם אתכה הרגתי. הרי זה מקרא מסרס והוא כמו גם הרגתי אותה, כלומר, לא
not meaning to say thee I would have slain also is like and it inverted a verse this behold I had slain thee Also

העכבה בלבד קראתה על ידי, כי גם ההריגה:
the slaying also but my hand by befell thee alone the delay

רש"י

ואותה החייתי. ועתה מפני שדברה והוכיחתה, ולא יכלת לעמד בתוכחתה
against its rebuke to stand you were able and not and rebuked you that it spoke because and now I would have kept alive and it

— כמו שכתוב ויאמר לא — הרגתי, שלא יאמרו, זו היא שסלקה בלעם
Bilaam that silenced is it this they should say so that not I killed it no and he said it is written just as

בתוכחתה ולא יכול להשיב, שחס המקום על כבוד הבריות, וכן
and likewise the creations the honor of on the Omnipresent for has pity to reply he was able and not with its rebuke

ויקרא כ' "והרגת את האשה ואת הבהמה", וכן שם "את הבהמה תהרגו"
you shall slay the animal — there and likewise the animal and — the woman — and you shall slay chapter 20 Vayikra

תנחומא :

Tanchuma

וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעַם אֶל מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה חָטֵאתִי כִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אַתָּה נֹצֵב
 were standing you that did I know not for I have sinned Hashem the angel of to Bilam And he said
 לְקִרְאָתִי בַדֶּרֶךְ וְעַתָּה אִם רַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ אָשׁוּבָה לִי:
 for myself I will return in your eyes it is evil if and now in the way to meet me

רש"י

כִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי. גַּם זֶה גְּנוּתוֹ, וְעַל כְּרַחוּ הוֹדָה, שֶׁהוּא הָיָה מְשִׁתַּפֵּחַ שְׂיֹדֵעַ
 that he knows boasting was for he he admitted his will and against is his disgrace this also Iknew not For
 דַּעַת עֲלִיּוֹן, וּפִיו הֵעִיד לֹא יָדַעְתִּי שָׁם:
 there Iknew not testified and his mouth the Most High the knowledge of

רש"י

אִם רַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ אָשׁוּבָה לִי. לְהַתְרִיס נֶגֶד הַמָּקוֹם הַיָּא תְּשׁוּבָה זֹ, אָמַר לוֹ הוּא
 He tohim He said this answer is the Omnipresent against To provoke · I will return in your eyes it is bad If
 בְּעֶצְמוֹ צִוֵּנִי לְלַכֵּת וְאַתָּה מִלְאָךְ מְבַטֵּל אֶת דְּבָרִי, לָמוּד הוּא בִּכְךָ שֶׁאוֹמֵר דָּבָר
 a thing that He says tothis He is Accustomed His words — annul an angel and you togo commanded me Himself
 וּמִלְאָךְ מַחְזִירוֹ, אָמַר לְאַבְרָהָם "קַח נָא אֶת בְּנֶךָ" וְגו' בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ב, וְעַל יָדִי
 means of and by 22 Bereishis etc. your son — please Take toAvraham He said retracts it and an angel
 מִלְאָךְ בָּטַל אֶת דְּבָרִי, אִם אֲנִי אִם רַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ צָרִיךָ אֲנִי לָשׁוּב:
 return I must in your eyes it is bad if I So too His word — He annulled an angel

וַיֹּאמֶר מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל בְּלָעַם לֵךְ עִם הָאֲנָשִׁים וְאַפְסָאֵת הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר
 that the word — but only the men with go Bilaam to Hashem the angel of And said
 אֲדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אַתָּה תְּדַבֵּר וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּלָעַם עִם שָׂרֵי בָלָק:
 Balak the officers of with Bilaam and went you shall speak it to you I will speak

רש"י

לֵךְ עִם הָאֲנָשִׁים. בַּדֶּרֶךְ שֶׁאָדָם רוֹצֵה לֵּילֶךְ בָּהּ, מוֹלִיכִין אוֹתוֹ:
 him they lead on it togo desires that a person on the road the men with go

רש"י

לֵךְ עִם הָאֲנָשִׁים. כִּי חֶלְקָהּ עִמָּהֶם וְסוֹפָהּ לֵאבֹד מִן הָעוֹלָם מְכוּת י':
 10 Makkos the world from is toperish and your end is with them your portion for the men with go

רש"י

וְאַפְסָ. עַל כְּרַחֲךָ אֶת הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר אֲדַבֵּר וְגו':
 etc. I shall speak that the word — your will against but

רש"י

עם שרי בלק. שִׁמַּח לְקַלֵּם כְּמוֹתָם:

like them to curse them he was glad Balak the princes of with

פסוק כד

Pasuk 24

וַיִּשְׁמַע בִּלְקָם כִּי בָא בִלְעָם וַיֵּצֵא לִקְרֹאתוֹ אֶל עִיר מוֹאָב אֲשֶׁר

which Moav the city of to to meet him and he went out Bilaam had come that Balak And he heard

עַל גְּבוּל אֲרֹנֶן אֲשֶׁר בְּקֶצֶה הַגְּבוּל:

the border is at the end of which Arnon the border of is on

רש"י

וישמע בלק. שִׁלַּח שְׁלֹחִים לְבַשְׂרוֹ:

to announce to him messengers he sent Balak And Balak heard

רש"י

אֵל עִיר מוֹאָב. אֶל מְטְרוֹפּוֹלִין שְׁלוֹ — עִיר הַחֲשׂוּבָה שְׁלוֹ, לֹמַר רְאֵה מָה אֵלֹ

these what see to say of his the important the city of his the metropolis to Moav the city of To

מִבְּקָשִׁים לְעֹקֵר תַּנְחוּמָא :

Tanchuma to uproot seek

פסוק כה

Pasuk 25

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְקָם אֶל בִּלְעָם הֲלֹא שִׁלַּח שְׁלֹחֵי אֵלֶיךָ לִקְרֹא לָךְ לָמָּה לֹא

did you not why you to summon to you send surely Did I not Bilaam to Balak And he said

הֲלֹכְתָּ אֵלַי הָאֲמָנָם לֹא אוֹכַל כְּבֹדְךָ:

to honor you be able that I cannot is it truly to me come

רש"י

האמנמם לא אוכל כבודך. נִתְּנָא שְׁסוּפּוֹ לְצֵאת מֵעֲמוֹ בְּקִלּוֹן שֵׁם :

there in disgrace from him is to leave that his end He prophesied to honor you I am able not Is it indeed

פסוק כו

Pasuk 26

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּלְעָם אֶל בִּלְקָם הִנֵּה בָאתִי אֵלֶיךָ עַתָּה הִיכּוֹל אוֹכַל דִּבֶּר מֵאוּמָה

anything to speak ability do I have now to you I have come behold Balak to Bilam And said

הַדִּבֶּר אֲשֶׁר יִשִּׁים אֱלֹהִים בְּפִי אֶתֹּ אֲדִבֶּר:

I will speak it in my mouth God will place that the word

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aliyah begins with Bilaam sending Balak's first messengers back, followed by the arrival of a second, more prestigious delegation. Despite Bilaam's claim that he cannot violate Hashem's command for a house full of silver and gold, Hashem allows him to go with them, warning him to only speak what he is told. On the journey, an angel with a drawn sword blocks the path, causing Bilaam's donkey to swerve, press his leg against a wall, and finally lie down, prompting Bilaam to beat her

each time. Hashem miraculously opens the donkey's mouth to protest, and then uncovers Bilaam's eyes to see the angel, who reprimands him and reiterates that he must only speak the words of Hashem. The aliyah concludes with Balak greeting Bilaam at the border, where Bilaam immediately emphasizes that he has no power of his own and can only utter what Hashem puts in his mouth.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

Look at the incredible blindness of Bilaam. He was a prophet with a towering intellect, yet when his donkey repeatedly stopped and pressed his leg against the wall, he did not stop to think, "Why is this happening? Why is my reliable animal suddenly acting so strangely?" Instead, he became furious and beat her. He was so blinded by his desire for honor and wealth from Balak that he completely missed the obvious signs Hashem was placing right in front of his eyes.

How often do we act like Bilaam in our own lives? We make a plan, we decide exactly how things must go, and then we run into unexpected obstacles. The car won't start, a meeting gets canceled, or someone gets in our way and delays us. Our natural reaction is often anger and frustration. We want to "beat the donkey" and force our way through the barrier, without stopping to realize that the delay itself is a message from Hashem.

Every block in the road is a hand from Shamayim guiding us, protecting us, or telling us to slow down and reconsider our path. When we live with emunah, we understand that there are no random frustrations. Instead of pushing through with anger when things do not go your way, stop and ask yourself what Hashem is trying to show you in this very moment.

Today, when you encounter an annoying delay, a minor frustration, or an obstacle to your plans, do not react with anger. Take a deep breath, realize that Hashem is standing in the path, and ask Him to help you see the direction He wants you to take.

דף יומי • הליון • דף נ"ו

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THE SUGYA

We begin this daf by concluding a brief discussion regarding the status of the hide of the vulva of a korban, and whether intending to burn it outside its proper time or place renders the offering piggul or unfit. From there, we move into a major new Mishnah that details the specific laws of tereifos in birds. The Mishnah lists several fatal defects, including a perforated gullet, a severed windpipe, a weasel bite to the head, and internal organs that have been singed and turned green after the bird fell into a fire.

We also learn about the status of a bird that was trampled, slammed against a wall, or crushed by an animal. If the bird is twitching, it is considered a tereifa because its limbs were shattered; however, if it survives for twenty-four hours before being slaughtered, it is ruled kosher. The Gemara then launches into a deep analysis of how to inspect a bird that was bitten on the head by a weasel to see if the membrane of the brain was actually perforated.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

עמוד א' DAF 56A

EXPLANATION

להביא עור בית הבושט

This is **to include the hide of the vulva**, which is treated like flesh.

RULING

חוץ למקומו פסול ואין בו כרת,

If one slaughtered the offering with intent to burn this hide **outside its** designated **area**, the offering is **unfit**, but there is no liability of **karet** for eating **it**.

RULING

חוץ לזמנו פיגול וְחַיִּיבִים עָלָיו כָּרֶת.

If he had intent to burn it **beyond its** designated **time**, this renders the offering **piggul**, and one is **liable to receive karet** for eating **it**.

משנה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מתני' ואלו טרפות בעוף:

MISHNAH: And these are the tereifot in a bird:

MISHNAH

נְקִיבַת הַוֶּשֶׁט, וּפְסוּקַת הַגְּרִגֶּרֶת,

One with a **perforated gullet**, or with a **cut windpipe** that was cut across its width;

MISHNAH

הַכֶּתֶה חוּלְדָּה עַל רֹאשָׁהּ מְקוֹם שֶׁעוֹשָׂה אוֹתָהּ טֵרֵיפָה,

or if a **weasel struck** the bird **on its head** in a **place that renders it a tereifa**, because we must be concerned that the membrane of the brain was perforated;

MISHNAH

בִּיקָב הַקּוֹרְקָבֹן, בִּיקָבוֹ הַדִּקְיָן,

or if the **gizzard was perforated**; or if the **small intestines were perforated**;

MISHNAH

נָפְלָה לְאוּר וְנִחְמְרוּ בְּנֵי מַעֲיָה, אִם יְרוֹקִים – פְּסוּלִים, אִם אֲדוּמִים – כְּשֵׁרִים.

or if the bird **fell into the fire** and its **innards were singed**; if they turned **green**, they are **unfit** and the bird is a tereifa, but if they remained **red**, they are **kosher**.

MISHNAH

דָּרְסָה וּטְרַפָּה בְּכוֹתֵל אוֹ שְׂרִיצָצְתָה בְּהֶמָּה וּמִפְרָכְסָה,

If a person **trampled** the bird, or **slammed it against a wall**, or if an animal **crushed it** and it is **twitching**, it is a tereifa because its limbs were shattered;

MISHNAH

וְשִׁהְתָּה מֵעַת לָעַת וְשִׁחְטָהּ – כְּשֵׁרָה.

but if it lasted for **twenty-four hours** and then one **slaughtered it**, it is **kosher**.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

GEMARA

גְּמ' רַב וּשְׁמוּאֵל וְלֵוִי דְאָמְרִי:

GEMARA: Rav and Shmuel and Levi say regarding a bird struck on the head by a weasel:

STATEMENT

מְכַנִּיס יָדוֹ לְפָנִים וּבוֹדֵק,

One **inserts his hand inside** the bird's mouth after slaughter and **inspects** by pushing the brain tissue with his finger.

STATEMENT

אִם מְבַצֵּץ וְעוֹלָה – טֵרֵפָה, וְאִם לֹא – כְּשֵׁרָה.

If the brain tissue **emerges and rises** out through the hole in the skull, the bird is a **tereifa**, because this proves that the membrane has been perforated; **and if not, it is kosher**.

QUESTION

הַנִּיחָא לְמַאן דְּאָמַר עַד דְּמִנְקִיב קְרָמָא תַּתָּא,

The Gemara asks: **This works out well according to the one who says** that a bird is not a tereifa **until the inner membrane is perforated** as well.

QUESTION

אָלָא לְמַאן דְּאָמַר אֵינְקִיב עִילָאָה אַף עַל גַּב דְּלֹא אֵינְקִיב תַּתָּא,

But according to the one who says that if the **outer** membrane was perforated, **even though the inner** membrane was not perforated, it is a tereifa,

QUESTION

נִיחוּשׁ דְּלָמָּא עִילָאָה אֵינְקִיב תַּתָּא לָא אֵינְקִיב?

let us be concerned that **perhaps the outer** membrane was perforated **but the inner** membrane was not perforated, in which case the bird is a tereifa even though the brain tissue does not emerge?

ANSWER

אִי אִיתָא דְּאֵינְקִיב עִילָאָה, תַּתָּא אַגַּב רוּפְכִּיָּה מִיִּפְקַע פְּקַע.

The Gemara answers: **If it is so that the outer** membrane was perforated, the inner membrane, **due to its fragility**, will **inevitably burst** from the pressure of the finger, allowing the brain tissue to emerge. If it does not emerge, it is certain that the outer membrane is intact as well.

STATEMENT

אָמַר זְעִירִי: אִין בְּדִיקָה לְחֻלְדָּה, מִפְּנֵי שְׁשִׁינְיָה דְּקוֹת.

Ze'eiri says: There is no effective inspection for a bird bitten by a weasel, **because its teeth are thin**, and even if they perforate the membrane, the brain tissue will not emerge through such tiny holes.

QUESTION

וְכִי שְׁשִׁינְיָה דְּקוֹת מַאי הָוִי?

The Gemara asks: **And if its teeth are thin, what of it?** Surely a small amount of brain tissue will still emerge through the perforation.

ANSWER

אָמַר רַב אוֹשְׁעִיא: מִפְּנֵי שְׁשִׁינְיָה דְּקוֹת וְעֻקְמוּת.

Rav Oshaya said: There is no inspection **because its teeth are thin and crooked**, so the hole in the skull does not align with the perforation in the membrane, and nothing will be able to escape.

STATEMENT

כִּי סָלִיק לְנֶהֱרַדְעָא, שְׁלַח לְהוּ:

When Ze'eiri went up to Neharde'a, he sent a message to them:

STATEMENT

דְּבָרִים שֶׁאִמַּרְתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם טְעוּת הֵן בְּיָדִי,

The matters that I stated before you are an error on my part.

STATEMENT

כֹּרֶם כֹּךְ אָמְרוּ מִשְׁמִיָּה דְּרַבִּי שִׁמּוֹן בֶּן לָקִישׁ:

Rather, this is what they said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish:

STATEMENT

בּוֹדְקִין לְחוֹלְדָּה בְּיָד, אֲבָל לֹא בְּמַסְמָר,

One inspects a bird bitten by a weasel with the hand, but not with a nail, lest the nail itself perforate the membrane.

STATEMENT

וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: אַף בְּמַסְמָר.

And Rabbi Yochanan says: One may even inspect it with a nail.

STATEMENT

וּבְפִלּוּגָתָא דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה וְרַבִּי נַחֲמִיָּה,

The Gemara notes: And this dispute is parallel to the dispute of Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Nechemya,

STATEMENT

חַד בְּדִיק בִּידָא, וְחַד בְּדִיק בְּמַחְטָא.

where one inspected with the hand, and one inspected with a needle.

STATEMENT

מֵאֵן דְּבִדִּיק בִּידָא אָמַר לִיה לְמֵאֵן דְּבִדִּיק בְּמַחְטָא:

The one who inspected with the hand said to the one who inspected with a needle:

STATEMENT

עַד מָתִי אַתָּה מַכְלָה מְמוֹנָן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל?

Until when will you waste the money of the Jewish people by causing them to discard kosher meat when your needle itself perforates the membrane?

STATEMENT

אָמַר לִיה מֵאֵן דְּבִדִּיק בְּמַחְטָא לְמֵאֵן דְּבִדִּיק בִּידָא:

The one who inspected with a needle said to the one who inspected with the hand:

STATEMENT

עַד מָתִי אַתָּה מַאֲכִיל לְיִשְׂרָאֵל נְבִלוֹת?

Until when will you feed carcasses to the Jewish people by permitting a bird whose membrane was already perforated but the brain tissue did not emerge?

QUESTION

נבלות? והא שחוטה היא!

The Gemara asks: **Carcasses? But this is a slaughtered** bird; even if it is forbidden, it is a tereifa, not a carcass!

ANSWER

אֵלָא טְרֵפוֹת, שְׁמָא נִיקָב קְרוֹם שֶׁל מוֹחַ.

Rather, he must have said: Until when will you feed **tereifot** to the Jewish people, **perhaps the membrane of the brain was perforated** and your hand inspection did not reveal it.

STATEMENT

תַּסְתִּיִּים דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה הוּא דְּבָדִיק בִּידָא, דִּתְנִיָּא:

The Gemara notes: **It may be concluded that it is Rabbi Yehuda who inspected with the hand**, as it is taught in a baraita:

BRAISA

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר אוֹמֵר מִשּׁוֹם רַבִּי יְהוּדָה:

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says in the name of Rabbi Yehuda:

BRAISA

בּוֹדֵקִין לְחוּלְדָּה בִּיד, אֲבָל לֹא בַּמַּסְמֵר.

One inspects a bird bitten by a weasel with the hand, but not with a nail.

STATEMENT

נִשְׁפֵּר הָעֶצֶם, אִף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא נִיקָב קְרוֹם שֶׁל מוֹחַ – תַּסְתִּיִּים.

And the baraita continues: If **the bone of the skull was broken**, even though the membrane of the brain was not **perforated**, it is a tereifa. The Gemara affirms: Indeed, **it may be concluded** that Rabbi Yehuda is the one who permits inspection only by hand.

QUESTION

הָא גּוּפָא קַשְׂיָא, אָמַרְתָּ:

The Gemara objects: **This itself is difficult. You said** in the first clause:

QUESTION

בּוֹדֵקִין לְחוּלְדָּה בִּיד אֲבָל לֹא בַּמַּסְמֵר.

One inspects a bird bitten by a weasel with the hand, but not with a nail;

QUESTION

אֵלמָא אֵית לִיה בְּדִיקוּתָא,

apparently, it has an option of inspection.

QUESTION

וְהָדָר תִּנִּי: נִשְׁבַּר הָעֶצֶם אֲף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא נִיקָב קְרוֹם שֶׁל מוֹחַ.

But then it teaches: If the bone was broken, even though the membrane of the brain was not perforated, it is a tereifa;

QUESTION

אֵלֶּמָּא לִית לִיה בְּדִיקוּתָא!

apparently, it has no option of inspection, because the broken bone itself renders it a tereifa!

ANSWER

סִיפָא אֶתְאֵן לַעוּף שֶׁל מִיָּם, הוּאִיל וְאֵין לוֹ קְרוֹם.

The Gemara answers: In the latter clause, we come to discuss a water bird, since it has no membrane.

QUESTION

אֵין לוֹ קְרוֹם סָלָקָא דַּעְתָּךְ?

The Gemara asks: Can it enter your mind that it has no membrane? We can see that it does!

ANSWER

אֵלָּא, הוּאִיל וְקְרוֹמוֹ רָךְ.

Rather, the response is: Since its membrane is fragile, it must have ruptured when the skull was broken.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לִיה רַב נַחֲמָן לְרַב עֲנִין:

Rav Nachman said to Rav Anan:

STATEMENT

מָר אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל בְּדִיק בִּידָא וּמַכָּשֵׁר,

The Master says that Shmuel inspects with the hand and deems the bird kosher,

STATEMENT

וְהוּנָא חֲבֵרִין אָמַר רַב בְּדִיק בִּידָא וּמַכָּשֵׁר.

and our colleague Rav Huna says that Rav inspects with the hand and deems it kosher.

QUESTION

וְהִתְנִי לוֹי: טְרֵפוֹת שְׁמָנוּ חֲכָמִים בְּבִהְמָה – כְּנָגְדָן בְּעוּף,

But doesn't Levi teach in a baraita: Those tereifot that the Sages enumerated in an animal apply likewise in a bird,

QUESTION

יֵתֵר עַל־יָהֳן עוּף – נִשְׁבַּר הָעֶצֶם אֲף עַל פִּי שֶׁלֹּא נִיקָב קְרוֹם שֶׁל מוֹחַ?

and in addition to those, a bird is a tereifa if the bone of the skull was broken, even though the membrane of the brain was not perforated? If so, how can any bird be permitted through inspection?

ANSWER

אמר ליה: ההוא בעוף של מים, הואיל ואין לו קרום.

Rav Anan said to him: That baraita is referring to a water bird, since it has no membrane.

QUESTION

אין לו קרום סלקא דעתך?

The Gemara asks: Can it enter your mind that it has no membrane?

ANSWER

אלא, הואיל וקרומו רך.

Rather, say: Since its membrane is fragile.

STATEMENT

ההיא תרנגולתא דהואי בי רב חנא, שדרה לקמיה דרב מתנא.

The Gemara relates: There was a certain chicken that was in the house of Rav Chana, and he sent it before Rav Matna for a ruling.

STATEMENT

נשבר העצם ולא ניקב קרום של מוח הואי, ואכשרה.

The bone of its skull was broken, but the membrane of the brain was not perforated, and he deemed it kosher.

QUESTION

אמר ליה: והתני לוי: טרפות שמנו חכמים בבהמה כנגדן בעוף, יתר עליהן עוף – נשבר העצם אף על פי שלא ניקב קרום של מוח!

Rav Chana said to him: But doesn't Levi teach: Those tereifot that the Sages enumerated in an animal apply likewise in a bird, and in addition to those, a bird is a tereifa if the bone was broken, even though the membrane of the brain was not perforated!

ANSWER

אמר ליה: הָתָם בְּעוֹף שֶׁל מַיִם, הוּאִיל וְאִין לוֹ קְרוֹם.

Rav Matna said to him: There, the baraita is referring to a water bird, since it has no membrane.

QUESTION

אין לו קרום סלקא דעתך?

The Gemara asks: Can it enter your mind that it has no membrane?

ANSWER

אלא אימא: הואיל וקרומו רך.

Rather, say: Since its membrane is fragile.

STATEMENT

רב שיזבי בדיק בשמשא, רב יימר בדיק במיא, רב אחא בר יעקב בדיק

The Gemara notes: **Rav Sheizbi would inspect** the membrane for perforations by holding it up to **the sun**; **Rav Yeimar would inspect** it by placing it **in water** to see if bubbles emerged; **Rav Acha bar Yaakov would inspect** it with a straw.

עמוד ב' DAF 56B

EXPLANATION

בגילא דחיתתא.

The test for a perforated membrane is done **with a wheat straw**, by dragging it over the membrane to see if it catches.

STATEMENT

אמר רב שיזבי: הני אווזי דידן כעוף של מים דמין.

Rav Sheizvi said: These geese of ours are considered like water birds, which have thin skulls; therefore, if the skull is broken, even if the membrane is not perforated, it is a tereifa.

STATEMENT

נפלה לאור, אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי יוסי בן יהושע: שיעור ירוקתן כשיעור נקובתן, מה נקובתן במשהו – אף ירוקתן במשהו.

Regarding a bird that **fell into the fire** and its innards were singed, **Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei ben Yehoshua:** The measure of their turning green is like the measure of their perforation; just as their perforation renders them a tereifa **in any amount**, so too their turning green renders them a tereifa **in any amount**.

QUESTION

בעא מיניה רב יוסף בריה דרבי יהושע בן לוי מרבי יהושע בן לוי: הוריקה כבד כנגד בני מעיים מהו? אמר ליה: טרפה.

Rav Yosef, son of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: If the liver turned green on the side facing the intestines, what is the halacha? **He said to him:** The bird is a tereifa.

OBJECTION

ולא יהא אלא ניטלה!

Rav Yosef objected: But should this case be any more stringent than if the liver was removed entirely, in which case if an olive-bulk remains the bird is kosher? Why should turning green render it a tereifa if an olive-bulk remains red?

RESOLUTION

אמר רבא: כיון שהוריקה כבד כנגד בני מעיים – בידוע שנפלה לאור, ונחמרו בני מעיים, וטרפה.

Rava said: Since the liver turned green facing the intestines, it is known that the bird fell into the fire, and the intestines themselves were singed, and therefore the bird is a tereifa because of the intestines, not because of the liver.

STATEMENT

רבי יהושע בן לוי הויא ליה תרנגולא לתא, שדריה לקמיה דרבי אלעזר הקפר בריבי, אמר ליה: רוקין הו, ואכשרה.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi had a certain hen that fell into the fire. He sent it before Rabbi Elazar HaKappar Beribi and said to him: Its innards were green, and Rabbi Elazar HaKappar deemed it kosher.

QUESTION

והאנן תנן: "רוקין פסולין"!

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asked: But didn't we learn in the Mishnah: If they turned green they are unfit?

ANSWER

לא אמרו "רוקין פסולין" אלא בקורקבן, בלב ובכבד.

Rabbi Elazar HaKappar said to him: They only said that green innards are unfit with regard to the gizzard, the heart, and the liver, which are naturally red, but other innards are naturally green.

PROOF

תנאי נמי הדין: באלו בני מעיים אמרו – בקורקבן, בלב ובכבד.

This is also taught in a baraita: Concerning which innards did they say that turning green renders the bird a tereifa? Only concerning the gizzard, the heart, and the liver.

STATEMENT

רבי יצחק בר יוסף הוה ליה תרנגולא לתא, שדריה לקמיה דרבי אבהו, ואמר ליה: אדומין הו וטרפה.

Rabbi Yitzchak bar Yosef had a certain hen that fell into the fire. He sent it before Rabbi Abbahu, and Rabbi Abbahu said to him: Its innards were red, and yet it is a tereifa.

QUESTION

והאנן תנן: "אדומין פשרים"!

Rabbi Yitzchak bar Yosef asked: But didn't we learn in the Mishnah: If they are red, they are kosher?

ANSWER

אמר ליה: אדומין שהוריקו וירוקין שהאדימו – טרפה, לא אמרו "אדומין פשרים" אלא בלב בקורקבן ובכבד.

Rabbi Abbahu said to him: Red organs that turned green, and green organs that turned red, render the bird a tereifa. They only said that red organs are kosher with regard to the heart, the gizzard, and the liver, which are naturally red; but organs that are naturally green render the bird a tereifa if they turn red.

STATEMENT

אמר רב שמואל בר חייא אמר רבי מנא: אדומין שהוריקו ושלקו וחזרו והאדימו – פשרין, מאי טעמא? קוטרא עייל בהו.

Rav Shmuel bar Chiyya said that Rabbi Mani said: Red organs that turned green, and one boiled them and they returned and turned red again, the bird is kosher. What is the reason? This shows that smoke entered them and changed their color temporarily, but they were not actually burned.

STATEMENT

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: אף אנו נאמר, אדומין שלא הוריקו ושלקן והוריקו – טרפה, מאי טעמא? איגלאי בהתייהו.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: We, too, will say a corresponding rule: Red organs that had not turned green, and one boiled them and they turned green, the bird is a tereifa. What is the reason? Their shame was revealed; i.e., it is now evident that they were indeed burned by the fire.

STATEMENT

אמר רב אשי: הלכה לא ליכול אינש אלא בשלקא.

Rav Ashi said: Therefore, a person should not eat a bird that fell into the fire unless its innards are first tested by boiling them, to ensure they do not turn green.

REFUTATION

ולא היא, אחזקי ריעותא לא מחזקינן.

The Gemara rejects this: But that is not so, for we do not presume the existence of a flaw without evidence; if the organs look kosher, we do not require boiling.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

דרסה וטרפה בפותל.

Regarding the Mishnah's ruling: If an animal trampled the bird, or slammed it against a wall, and it survived twenty-four hours, it is kosher.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

STATEMENT

אמר רבי אלעזר בן אנטיגנוס משום רבי אלעזר ברבי ינאי: אחת זו ואחת זו צריכה בדיקה.

Rabbi Elazar ben Antigonus said in the name of Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Yannai: Both this case and that case require inspection after slaughter, to ensure no internal organ was ruptured.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מתני' ואלו כשרות בעוף: ניקבה הגרגרת, או שנסדקה, הפתה חולדה על ראשה מקום שאינו עושה אותה טרפה, ניקב הזפק, רבי אומר: אפילו ניטל, יצאו בני מעיה ולא ניקבו, נשתפרו גפיה, נשתפרו רגליה, נמרטו כנפיה, רבי יהודה אומר: אם נטלה הנוצה פסולה.

MISHNAH: And these are kosher among birds: If the windpipe was perforated, or if it was cracked lengthwise; or if a weasel struck the bird on its head in a place that does not render it a tereifa, i.e., without perforating the brain membrane; or if the crop was perforated. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: Even if the crop was removed entirely, the bird is kosher. If its intestines emerged from the abdominal cavity but were not perforated; or if its wings were broken; or if its legs were broken; or if the feathers of its wings were plucked, the bird is kosher. Rabbi Yehuda says: If the down covering its body was removed, it is unfit as a tereifa.

גמרא GEMARA

BRAISA

גמ' תנו רבנן: מעשה ברבי סימאי ורבי צדוק שהלכו לעבר שנה בלוד, ושבתו באונו, והורו בטרפחת ברבי בזפק.

GEMARA: The Rabbis taught in a baraita: There was an incident involving Rabbi Simai and Rabbi Tzadok, who went to intercalate the year in Lod, and they spent Shabbos in the town of Ono, and they ruled regarding a womb that was removed in accordance with Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's ruling regarding the crop.

QUESTION

איבעיא להו: הורו בטרפחת לאיסורא, ברבי בזפק להתיירא?

A dilemma was raised before them: Did they rule regarding the womb to prohibit it, because they do not compare it to a crop, and did they rule in accordance with Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi regarding the crop to permit it?

QUESTION

או דילמא: הורו בטרפחת להתיירא ברבי בזפק, אבל ברבי בזפק לא סבירא להו?

Or perhaps: They ruled regarding the womb to permit it, comparing it to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's ruling regarding the crop, but they do not agree with Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi regarding the crop itself to permit it if removed?

RESOLUTION

תיקו.

The Gemara concludes: The dilemma shall stand unresolved.

STATEMENT

אמר רבה, ואיתימא רבי יהושע בן לוי: גגו של זפק נידון כפושט.

Rabba says, and some say it was Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi who says: The roof of the crop is treated like the gullet, meaning that if it is perforated in any amount, the bird is a tereifa.

EXPLANATION

היכא? אמר רב ביבי בר אבאי: כל שנמתח עמו.

The Gemara asks: **Where** is the roof of the crop? **Rav Beivai bar Abaye said: Any part** of the crop **that stretches** with the gullet when the bird stretches its neck.

STATEMENT

קָצְאוּ בְּנֵי מַעֲיָה, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בְּרַב רַב יִצְחָק: לֹא שָׁנוּ אֶלָּא שְׁלֹא הֵיפֵךְ בָּהֶן, אֲבָל הֵיפֵךְ בָּהֶן – טְרֵפָה,

Regarding the Mishnah's ruling: **If its intestines emerged** but were not perforated, the bird is kosher. **Rabbi Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak said: They only taught** this **where one did not jumble them** when putting them back, **but if he jumbled them**, the bird is a **tereifa**,

PROOF

דְּכַתִּיב: "הוּא עָשָׂה וַיְכַנְנֶה", מִלְּמִד שֶׁפָּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא כּוֹנֵן הַבָּאֲדָם, שְׁאֵם נִהְפֵךְ (אַחַת) [אַחַד] מֵהֶן – אֵינוּ יָכוֹל לְחַיֹּת.

as it is written: 'Has He not made you, and established you?' (Deuteronomy 32:6). This teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created established locations for each organ in a person, so that if one of them is switched, he cannot live. The same applies to other creatures.

BRAISA

תַּנְיָא, הֵיךְ רַבִּי מֵאִיר אָמַר: "הוּא עָשָׂה וַיְכַנְנֶה" – פֶּרֶקָא דְּכוּלָּהּ בִּיה, מִמֶּנּוּ כֹהֲנָיו, מִמֶּנּוּ נְבִיאָיו, מִמֶּנּוּ שָׂרָיו, מִמֶּנּוּ מְלָכָיו, שְׁנֵאמַר: "מִמֶּנּוּ כֹהֵן מִמֶּנּוּ יֵתֵד וְגו'".

It is taught in a baraita: Rabbi Meir would say: 'Has He not made you, and established you?' This teaches that the Jewish nation is like a city that has everything in it: from it come its Kohanim, from it come its prophets, from it come its ministers, and from it come its kings, as it is said: 'From them shall come the cornerstone, from them the peg, etc.'

STATEMENT

הָהוּא רוּמָא דְּחִיָּיָה לְהָהוּא גִבְרָא דְּנָפַל מֵאִגְרָא לְאַרְעָא, פִּקְעִיה כְּרִסְיָה וּנְפֹק מִעֲיֵינִיה, אֲתִיָּיה לְבָרִיָּה וְשִׁחֲטִיה קָמִיה

The Gemara relates: There was a certain Roman who saw a certain man who fell from a roof to the ground; his abdomen split open and his intestines came out. The Roman brought the man's son and slaughtered him before him to shock him, so that the father would sigh and draw his breath in, which would pull his intestines back inside.

SUMMARY

The Gemara explores the practical methods for inspecting a bird's brain membrane after a weasel bite, presenting a dispute between Rav, Shmuel, and Levi—who hold that one can push the brain tissue with a finger to see if it emerges through the skull—and Ze'eiri, who initially argues that no inspection is reliable due to the thin, crooked teeth of the weasel. Ze'eiri later retracts this, citing a dispute between Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish and Rabbi Yochanan over whether one may inspect with a nail or only by hand, which mirrors an older Tannaic dispute between Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Nechunya. Finally, the Gemara addresses a seeming contradiction in a baraita regarding a broken skull bone rendering a bird a tereifa even without a perforated membrane, resolving that this strict ruling applies specifically to a water bird whose fragile membrane inevitably ruptures when the bone breaks.

In today's daf, we witness a beautiful and deeply moving debate between two great sages. One argues for a gentler inspection of a wounded bird using only the hand, crying out, "Until when will you waste the money of the Jewish people?" The other insists on a sharper, more rigorous inspection with a needle, countering, "Until when will you feed tereifot to the Jewish people?"

Look at the immense love and responsibility packed into this argument. Neither sage is looking for an easy way out or trying to win a debate for the sake of victory. One is consumed with a burning love for his fellow Jews, desperate to protect their hard-earned livelihood and save them from financial ruin. The other is consumed with a burning fear of Heaven, desperate to protect those same Jews from the spiritual damage of eating non-kosher food. Both are motivated by pure, unadulterated care for the physical and spiritual well-being of Klal Yisrael.

This is the true path of Torah. When we look at our families, our neighbors, or those we daven with, we must carry this double-sided love in our hearts. We must be fiercely protective of their spiritual purity, helping them stay close to the Aibershter, while simultaneously being incredibly sensitive to their physical struggles, their dignity, and their hard-earned money.

Today, when you interact with another Yid, look for a way to protect both their physical comfort and their spiritual standing. Before you speak or act, ask yourself: "How can I show real care for both this person's pocket and their neshama?"

הלכות יסודי התורה • פרק שלישי

Learned like the daf, the literal words in bold, flowing with the elucidation

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, the Rambam takes us on a breathtaking journey through the physical structure of the cosmos, showing us the wondrous design of Hashem's creation. We learn about the nine great spheres that surround the world, starting from the sphere of the moon closest to us, all the way up to the ninth sphere which encompasses everything and rotates daily from east to west. The Rambam explains how these spheres are pure and refined, layered like the peels of an onion, and completely free of physical properties like weight, color, taste, or smell.

We also delve into the calculations of astronomy, the sizes of the celestial bodies—including how the sun and moon compare to the size of the Earth—and the twelve mazalos (constellations) mapped out by the early Sages. Most beautifully, the Rambam reveals the inner life of these creations, explaining that the stars and spheres are not dead matter, but are actually endowed with a neshama, knowledge, and intellect, standing in constant recognition and praise of their Creator.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

הלכה א

Halacha 1 • The Order of the Nine Spheres and the Arrangement of the Stars

הגלגלים הם הנקראים שמים ורקיע וזבול וערכות.

The spheres, they are those called "heavens" and "firmament" and "habitation" and "skies."

והם תשעה גלגלים.

And they are nine spheres in total.

גלגל הקרוב ממנו הוא גלגל הירח.

The sphere that is the closest to us, it is the sphere of the moon.

והשני שלמעלה ממנו הוא גלגל שבו הכוכב הנקרא כוכב.

And the second sphere which is above it, it is the sphere in which is the star called Kochav, which is Mercury.

וגלגל שלישי שלמעלה ממנו שבו נגה.

And the third sphere which is above it, in which is Nogah, which is Venus.

וגלגל רביעי שבו חמה.

And the fourth sphere in which is the sun.

וגלגל חמישי שבו מאדים.

And the fifth sphere in which is Ma'dim, which is Mars.

וּגְלָגַל שְׁשִׁי שָׁבוּ כּוֹכַב צֶדֶק.

And the sixth sphere in which is the star of Tzedek, which is Jupiter.

וּגְלָגַל שְׁבִיעִי שָׁבוּ שַׁבְּתַי.

And the seventh sphere in which is Shabbtai, which is Saturn.

וּגְלָגַל שְׁמִינִי שָׁבוּ שְׂאָר כָּל הַכּוֹכָבִים שֶׁנִּרְאִים בָּרָקִיעַ.

And the eighth sphere in which is the rest of all the stars that are seen in the sky, the constellations.

וּגְלָגַל תְּשִׁיעִי הוּא גְלָגַל הַחוּזֵר בְּכָל יוֹם מִן הַמִּזְרָח לַמַּעֲרָב וְהוּא הַמְקִיף וּמְסִבֵּב אֶת הַכָּל.

And the ninth sphere, it is the sphere that revolves in every day from the east to the west, and it encompasses and surrounds everything else.

וְזֶה שֶׁתִּרְאֶה כָּל הַכּוֹכָבִים כְּאִלוֹ הֵם כְּלָם בְּגִלְגָּל אֶחָד וְאֵף עַל פִּי שֵׁשׁ בְּהֵן זֶה לְמַעַלָּה מִזֶּה.

And this that you see all the stars as if they all are in a sphere, one single layer, and even though there is among them this one above this one, at different depths,

מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַגְּלָגָלִים טְהוֹרִים וְזָכִים כְּזֹכוּכִית וְכֶסֶפִּיר

is because the spheres are pure and clear like glass and like sapphire;

לְפִיכָּה נִרְאִים הַכּוֹכָבִים שֶׁבְּגִלְגָּל הַשְּׁמִינִי מִתַּחַת גְּלָגַל הָרִאשׁוֹן:

therefore are seen the stars that are in the eighth sphere as if they are below the first sphere, closest to us.

הַלָּכָה ב

Halacha 2 · The Structure and Movement of the Celestial Spheres

כָּל גְּלָגַל וּגְלָגַל מִשְׁמוֹנָה הַגְּלָגָלִים שֶׁבְּהֵן הַכּוֹכָבִים

Every single sphere of the eight spheres in which the stars are set

נִחְלָק לְגִלְגָּלִים הַרְבֵּה

is actually divided into many sub-spheres,

זֶה לְמַעַלָּה מִזֶּה כְּמוֹ גְּלָדֵי בָצָלִים.

one above the other, like the layers of onions nested inside each other.

מֵהֶן גְּלָגָלִים סוֹבְבִים מִמַּעֲרָב לְמִזְרָח.

Of them, there are spheres that revolve from west to east,

וּמֵהֶן סוֹבְבִים מִמִּזְרָח לְמַעֲרָב

and of them, there are those that revolve from east to west,

כמו הגלגל התשיעי החוזר ממזרח למערב.

like the ninth sphere, which returns and rotates daily from east to west.

וּכְלֹן אֵין בֵּינֵיהֶם מְקוֹם פָּנוּי:

And as for all of them, there is no empty space between them at all.

הִלְכָּה ג

Halacha 3: The Absence of Physical Properties and Colors in the Celestial Spheres

כָּל הַגִּלְגָּלִים אֵינָן לֹא קִלִּים וְלֹא כְבִידִים

All the spheres are neither light nor heavy, as they are not made of the physical elements that possess weight,

וְאֵין לָהֶם לֹא עֵין אָדָם וְלֹא עֵין שָׁחַר וְלֹא שְׂאָר עֵינּוֹת.

and they do not have a red color, nor a black color, nor any other colors of their own.

וְזֶה שֶׁאֲנוּ רֹאִין אוֹתָם כְּעֵין הַתְּכֵלֶת

And this that we see them as a blue color when we look up at the sky,

לְמִרְאֵית הָעֵין בְּלִבְדּוּ הוּא לְפִי גְבֹהַּ הָאָוִיר.

is only to the sight of the eye, according to the height of the atmosphere which creates this visual effect.

וְכֹן אֵין לָהֶם לֹא טַעַם וְלֹא רִיחַ

And likewise, they have neither taste nor smell,

לְפִי שֶׁאֵין אֵלּוּ הַמַּאֲרָעִין מִצּוּרֵי אֶלָּא בְּגוֹפּוֹת שְׁלִמָּה מִהֶן:

because these phenomena are not found except in the physical bodies that are below them in the terrestrial world.

הִלְכָּה ד

Halacha 4: The Spherical Shape of the Orbs and the Earth Suspended in Their Midst

כָּל הַגִּלְגָּלִים הָאֵלּוּ הַמְקִיפִין אֶת הָעוֹלָם

All of these spheres that surround the world

הֵן עֲגֻלִּין כְּכדור

are spherical like a ball,

וְהָאָרֶץ תְּלוּיָהּ בְּאֶמְצָע.

and the Earth is suspended in the middle.

וְיֵשׁ לְמִקְצַת מִן הַכּוֹכָבִים גִּלְגָּלִים קְטַנִּים

And some of the stars have small spheres

שהן קבועים בהן

that they are fixed in,

ואין אותם הגלגלים מקיפין את הארץ

and those small spheres do not surround the Earth;

אלא גלגל קטן שאינו מקיף

rather, each small sphere that does not surround the Earth

קבוע בגלגל הגדול המקיף:

is fixed within the large sphere that does surround it.

הלכה ה

Halacha 5 · The Number of Spheres and the Science of Astronomy

מספר כל הגלגלים המקיפין את כל העולם שמונה עשר.

The number of all the spheres that surround — all the world is eighteen.

ומספר הגלגלים הקטנים שאינם מקיפין שמונה.

And the number of the spheres that are the small ones that do not surround the entire globe is eight.

וממנה לה הכוכבים ידיעת שעור סביבתן בכל יום ובכל שעה

And from the movement of the stars and the knowledge of the measure of their revolution in every day and in every hour,

ומנטייתן מרוח דרום לרוח צפון ומרוח צפון לרוח דרום

and from their inclination from the direction of south to the direction of north and from the direction of north to the direction of south,

ומגבהן מעל הארץ וקריבתן

and from their height above the earth and their closeness,

יודע מספר כל אלו הגלגלים וצורת הליכתן ודור הקפתן.

will be known the number of all these spheres and the form of their path and the way of their orbit.

וזו היא חכמת חשבון תקופות ומזלות.

And this is the science of calculating seasons and constellations.

וספרים רבים חפרו בהן חכמי יון:

And books many composed about them the wise men of Greece.

הלכה ו

Halacha 6: The Division of the Ninth Sphere into Twelve Constellations

גלגל התשיעי שהוא מקיף את הכל

The ninth sphere, which encompasses everything,

חלקוהו החכמים הקדמונים לשנים עשר חלקים.

the early Sages divided it into twelve parts.

כל חלק וחלק העלו לו שם

To every single part, they assigned a name

על שם צורה זו שתראה בו

based on the name of that form which appeared in it

מן הכוכבים שלמטה ממנו שהם מכונים תחתיו.

from the stars that are below it, which are aligned directly underneath it.

והם המזלות ששמותם

And these are the constellations whose names are:

טלה. שור. תאומים. סרטן. אריה. בתולה.

Aries (the lamb), **Taurus** (the ox), **Gemini** (the twins), **Cancer** (the crab), **Leo** (the lion), **Virgo** (the virgin),

מאזניים. עקרב. קשת. גדי. דלי. דגים:

Libra (the scales), **Scorpio** (the scorpion), **Sagittarius** (the bow), **Capricorn** (the kid goat), **Aquarius** (the water bucket), and **Pisces** (the fish).

הלכה ז

Halacha 7: The Ninth Sphere and the Movement of Stars in the Eighth Sphere

גלגל התשיעי עצמו

The ninth sphere itself

אין בו לא חלוקה ולא צורה מכל הצורות האלו ולא פוכב.

has in it neither division nor shape of any of these shapes, and no star at all.

אלא בחבור הכוכבים שבגלגל השמיני

Rather, it is by the connection of the stars that are in the eighth sphere

הוא שִׁירָאָה בְּכוֹכְבִּים גְּדוֹלִים שֶׁבוֹ תְּכֵנִית הַצּוּרוֹת הָאֵלוֹ אוֹ קְרוֹב מֵהֶן.

that there is seen, in the large stars that are in it, the form of these shapes or something close to them.

וְאֵלֵּי הַשָּׁנִים עֲשֶׂר צוּרוֹת

And these twelve shapes of the zodiac

לֹא הָיוּ מְכוֹנּוֹת כְּנֶגֶד אוֹתָן הַחֲלָקִים אֲלָא בְּזֶמֶן הַמַּבּוּל

were not aligned opposite those parts of the ninth sphere except at the time of the Flood,

שֶׁאִזְזוּ הָעָלוּ לָהֶן שְׁמוֹת אֵלֵּי.

for then they gave them these names because they aligned perfectly.

אֲבָל בְּזֶמֶן הַזֶּה כָּבַד סָבְבוּ מְעֻט.

But at this time, they have already turned a little, shifting out of that original alignment,

לְפִי שֶׁכָּל הַכוֹכְבִּים שֶׁבִּגְלָגַל שְׁמִינִי

because all of the stars that are in the eighth sphere,

כָּלָם סוֹבְבִים כְּמוֹ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ

all of them turn like the sun and the moon,

אֲלָא שֶׁהֵן סוֹבְבִין בְּכִבְדוֹת.

except that they turn with great heaviness and slowness.

וְחֵלֶק שְׂתֵּתָהּ לָהֶּן הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ כְּנֶגְדּוֹ בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד

And a portion of the sphere that the sun and the moon travel opposite in one day,

יֵלֶךְ כְּנֶגְדּוֹ כָּל כּוֹכַב מֵהֶן בְּקֶרֶב מֵשַׁבָּעִים שָׁנָה:

every star of them will travel opposite it in approximately seventy years.

הַלָּכָה ח

Halacha 8 · The Relative Sizes of the Stars, the Earth, the Moon, and the Sun

כָּל הַכוֹכְבִּים הַנִּרְאִים

Regarding all the stars that are seen in the night sky,

יֵשׁ מֵהֶן כּוֹכְבִּים קְטַנִּים שֶׁהָאָרֶץ גְּדוֹלָה מֵאֶחָד מֵהֶן.

there are of them small stars that the Earth is larger than one of them.

וְיֵשׁ מֵהֶן כּוֹכְבִּים גְּדוֹלִים שֶׁכָּל אֶחָד מֵהֶן גְּדוֹל מִן הָאָרֶץ כְּמָה פְּעָמִים.

And there are of them large stars that each one of them is larger than the Earth several times.

וְהָאָרֶץ גְּדוּלָּהּ מִן הַיָּרֵחַ כְּמוֹ אַרְבָּעִים פַּעַמִּים.

And the Earth is larger than the moon approximately forty times.

וְהַשֶּׁמֶשׁ גְּדוּלָּהּ מִן הָאָרֶץ כְּמוֹ מֵאָה וְשִׁבְעִים פַּעַמִּים.

And the sun is larger than the Earth approximately one hundred and seventy times.

נִמְצָא הַיָּרֵחַ אֶחָד מִשְׁשֶׁת אֲלָפִים וְשִׁמוֹנֶה מֵאוֹת מִן הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּקֵרוֹב.

Thus, it turns out that the moon is equivalent to one of six thousand and eight hundred parts of the sun, approximately.

וְאֵין בְּכָל הַכּוֹכָבִים כּוֹכֵב גְּדוּל מִן הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ

And there is not among all the stars a star larger than the sun,

וְלֹא קָטָן מִכּוֹכֵב שְׁפִנְיָלָהּ הַשֵּׁנִי:

and not a star smaller than Kochav, which is Mercury, that is in the second sphere.

הִלְכָּה ט

Halacha 9: The Intellect and Recognition of the Stars and Spheres

כָּל הַכּוֹכָבִים וְהַגְּלָגִלִּים כֻּלָּן בִּפְעֻלֵי נַפְשׁ וְדַעַה וְהַשְׂכָּל הֵם.

All the stars and the spheres, all of them, possess a soul and knowledge and intellect.

וְהֵם חַיִּים וְעוֹמְדִים וּמַכִּירִין אֶת מִי שֶׁאָמַר וְהָיָה הָעוֹלָם.

And they are alive and standing, and they recognize Hashem, the One who spoke and the world came into being.

כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד לְפִי גְדֻלּוֹ וּלְפִי מַעְלָתוֹ

Each and every one, according to its size and according to its level,

מְשַׁבְּחִים וּמְפָאֲרִים לְיוֹצְרָם כְּמוֹ הַמַּלְאָכִים.

praises and glorifies their Creator, just like the angels.

וּכְשֶׁם שֶׁמַּכִּירִין הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

And just as they recognize the Holy One, blessed is He,

כִּי מַכִּירִין אֶת עַצְמָן

so they recognize themselves,

וּמַכִּירִין אֶת הַמַּלְאָכִים שְׁלִמְעֵלָה מֵהֶן.

and they recognize the angels that are above them.

ידעת הכוכבים והגלגלים מעוטה מדעת המלאכים

And the knowledge of the stars and the spheres is less than the knowledge of the angels,

וגדולה מדעת בני אדם:

and greater than the knowledge of human beings.

הלכה י

Halacha 10: The Four Elements and Bodies Below the Sphere of the Moon

ברא האל למטה מגלגל הירח גלם אחד שאינו כגלם הגלגלים.

God created below the sphere of the moon one prime matter which is not like the matter of the spheres above.

וברא ארבע צורות לגלם זה ואינן כצורת הגלגלים

And He created four forms for this matter, and they are not like the form of the spheres;

ונקבע כל צורה וצורה במקצת גלם זה.

and each and every form was fixed in a portion of this matter.

צורה ראשונה צורת האש נתחברה במקצת גלם זה ונהיה משניהן גוף האש.

The first form, which is the form of fire, connected with a portion of this matter, and from both of them became the body of fire.

וצורה שנייה צורת הרוח נתחברה במקצתו ונהיה משניהן גוף הרוח.

And the second form, which is the form of wind—meaning air—connected with a portion of it, and from both of them became the body of wind.

וצורה שלישית צורת המים נתחברה במקצתו ונהיה משניהם גוף המים.

And the third form, which is the form of water, connected with a portion of it, and from both of them became the body of water.

וצורה רביעית צורת הארץ נתחברה במקצתו ונהיה משניהם גוף הארץ.

And the fourth form, which is the form of earth, connected with a portion of it, and from both of them became the body of earth.

נמצא למטה מן הרקיע ארבעה גופין מחלקיו זה למעלה מזה

It is found that below the sky there are four distinct bodies, one above the other;

וכל אחד ואחד מקיף את שלמטה ממנו מכל רוחותיו כמו גלגל.

and each and every one encompasses that which is below it from all its directions like a sphere.

הגוף הראשון הסמוך לגלגל הירח הוא גוף האש.

The first body, which is close to the sphere of the moon, is the body of fire.

למטה ממנו גוף הרוח.

Below it is the body of wind.

למטה ממנו גוף המים.

Below it is the body of water.

למטה ממנו גוף הארץ.

Below it is the body of earth.

ואין ביניהם מקום פנוי בלא גוף כלל:

And there is not between them any empty space without a body at all.

הלכה יא

Halacha 11 · The Lack of Consciousness in the Four Elements

ארבעה גופות האלו

These four bodies, the basic elements of physical matter,

אינם בעלי נפש

are not possessors of a soul

ואינם יודעים ולא מכירים

and they do not know and do not recognize anything,

אך אף כגופים מתים.

but are like dead bodies that have no consciousness.

ויש לכל אחד ואחד מהם מנהג

And there is to every single one of them a nature and set of physical laws

שאינו יודעו ולא משיגו

that it does not know and does not comprehend,

ואינו יכול לשנותו.

and it is not able to change it on its own.

וזה שאמר דוד

And this is the meaning of that which Dovid HaMelech said in Tehillim:

תהילים קמח ז "הָלְלוּ אֶת ה' מִן הָאָרֶץ תַּנִּינִים וְכָל תְּהוֹמוֹת"

"Praise Hashem from the earth, sea monsters and all depths,"

תהילים קמח ח "אֵשׁ וּבָרָד שֶׁלֹּג וְקִיטוֹר".

and "fire and hail, snow and vapor."

וּבְאוֹר עֲנִיִּין הַדְּבָרִים

And the explanation of the matter of these words is:

הָלְלוּהוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם מִגְּבוּרוֹתָיו

praise Him, children of man, from His mighty deeds

שֶׁתִּרְאוּ בָּאֵשׁ וּבַבָּרָד

that you see in the fire and in the hail

וּבְשָׂרָא בְּרוּאִים שֶׁתִּרְאוּ לְמַטָּה מִן הַרְקִיעַ

and in the rest of the creations that you see below the heaven,

שֶׁגְּבוּרָתָם תָּמִיד נִכָּרָת לְקָטָן וּלְגָדוֹל:

whose power and the wisdom of Hashem in them is always recognizable to the small and to the great alike.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter begins by detailing the order and movement of the nine celestial spheres and the planets within them, explaining their physical properties and how their transparent nature allows us to see through them. The Rambam outlines the total number of major and minor spheres, noting that the science of these orbits was studied by the Sages of Israel and the wise men of Greece alike, with our acceptance of these truths relying on solid proof rather than the identity of the author. After describing the twelve mazalos of the ninth sphere and the slow movement of the stars in the eighth sphere, the Rambam compares the physical sizes of the Earth, moon, and sun. He concludes with the powerful yesod that all stars and spheres possess a soul and intellect, and they actively praise and glorify Hashem according to their high spiritual level.

When we look up at the night sky, we might see beautiful, silent, and cold spheres of light. But the Rambam reveals a breathtaking truth: these stars and spheres are not dead matter. They are alive, possessing a deep intellect and a profound awareness of Hashem. Each one, in its own unique orbit and according to its own stature, is constantly singing praises and glorifying its Creator, just like the holy angels.

Think about this for a moment. The sun, the moon, and the vast constellations are in a state of constant, conscious avodah. They know their Maker, and their very movement is a song of praise to Him. Yet, the Rambam notes that while their intellect is greater than ours, they have a fixed nature they cannot change. You, on the other hand, have something they will never possess: choice. When you choose to serve Hashem, your small whisper of praise carries a power that eclipses the grand song of the entire cosmos.

This changes how we look at the world around us. We are not living in a cold, mechanical universe. We are surrounded by a creation that is alive with the praise of Hashem. When you align your daily actions with the will of the Creator, you are not acting alone; you are joining the grand, cosmic choir of creation, bringing the ultimate purpose of the universe to its fulfillment.

Today, when you step outside and look at the sky, or even when you just feel the warmth of the sun, pause for ten seconds. Remind yourself that the creation around you is alive, knowing and praising Hashem, and make a conscious choice to join their song by doing your next mitzvah with joy and intention.

תהלים • חמשה קאפיטלער

The Five Daily Kapitlach

CHAPTER PREVIEW

These are the five kapitlach of Tehillim said every single day: 32, 43, 83, 121, and 130, each set word for word with its English meaning. They are gathered here as one section so the whole daily Tehillim can be said and downloaded together.

All introductions and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פֿאַרק ל"ב CHAPTER 32

לְדוֹד מִשְׁכִּיל אֲשֶׁרִי נָשׁוּי פֶשַׁע כָּסוּי חֲטָאָה:
אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם לֹא יַחְשֹׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹן וְאִין בְּרוּחוֹ רַמְיָה:
כִּי הִחַרְשָׁתִּי בָּלוּ עֲצָמַי בְּשֹׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם:
כִּי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה תִּכְבֵּד עָלַי יְדָה נִהַפָּה לְשׁוֹדִי בַּחֲרַבְנִי קִיץ סָלָה:
חֲטָאתִי אוֹדִיעָה וְעוֹנִי לֹא כִסִּיתִי אֲמַרְתִּי אוֹדָה עָלַי פֶשַׁעִי לִיהוָה וְאַתָּה נָשֵׂאתָ עוֹן חֲטָאתִי סָלָה:
עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חֹסֶיד אֱלֹהִים לְעַת מִצָּא רַק לְשֹׁטָף מִיָּם רַבִּים אֱלֹהִים לֹא יִגִּיעוּ:
אַתָּה סֹתֵר לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרֵנִי רָנִי פִּלַּט תְּסוּבְּבֵנִי סָלָה:
אֲשַׁכִּילָה וְאוֹרָה בְּדֶרֶךְ זוֹ תִּלְךָ אֵינִי עֹלָה עֲלֶיךָ עֵינִי:
אֵל תִּהְיוּ כָּסוּס כְּפָרֵד אִין הִבִּין בְּמִתְּג וְרָסוֹן עֲדִיו לִבְלוֹם בַּל קָרַב אֱלֹהִים:
רַבִּים מִכְּאוּבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בִּיהוָה חֲסֵד יְסוּבְּבֵנוּ:
שִׁמְחוּ בִיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקִים וְהִרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב:

פֿאַרק מ"ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפֹטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חֹסֶיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעוֹלָה תִּפְלֹטֵנִי:
כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִי מְעוּזִי לָמָּה זִנְחִתָּנִי לָמָּה קֹדֶר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחֲץ אוֹיֵב:
שְׁלַח אוֹרָה וְאַמְתָּה הַמָּה יִנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הַר קוֹדֶשְׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:
וְאֶבֹּאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שְׁמֹחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדָה בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִי:
מִה תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה נַפְשִׁי וּמִה תִּתְהַמֵּי עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדְנוּ יְשׁוּעַת פָּנֶי וְאֱלֹהִי:

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף:

אֱלֹהִים אֵל דָּמִי לָךְ אֵל תַּחֲרַשׁ וְאֵל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל:

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יִהְיֶינָיִם וּמִשְׁנֵאֶיךָ נִשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ:

עַל עֲמָךְ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וַיִּתְּעֲצּוּ עַל צְפוּנֶיךָ:

אָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנִכְחֵידֶם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזְכָּר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד:

כִּי נִוָּעֲצוּ לֵב יַחֲדוּ עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ:

אֱהִי אָדוֹם וַיִּשְׁמַעְאֲלִים מוֹאֵב וְהַגָּרִים:

גָּבַל וַעֲמֹן וַעֲמֶלֶק פָּלְשֶׁת עִם יִשְׁבִּי צוּר:

גַּם אֲשׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זְרוּעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סֶלָה:

עָשָׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְּיִבִּין בְּנַחֵל קִישׁוֹן:

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְּעֵין דָּאֵר הָיוּ דָמָן לְאַדְמָה:

שִׁיתֵּמוּ נְדִיבֵמוֹ כְּעֶרֶב וְכִזְאָב וְכִזְבַּח וְכִצְלָמָנֶע כָּל גְּסִיכְמוֹ:

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירְשָׁה לָנוּ אֵת גְּאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:

אֱלֹהֵי שִׁיתֵּמוּ כַּגִּלְגָּל כְּקֹשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ:

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעֶר יָעַר וְכִלְהָבָה תִּלְהַט הָרִים:

כֵּן תִּרְדָּפֶם בְּסַעֲרָךְ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תִּבְהַלֵּם:

מִלֵּא פְּנִיָּהֶם קִלּוֹן וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ שְׁמָךְ יְהוָה:

יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּבְהָלוּ עַדִּי עַד וַיִּחַפְּרוּ וַיֵּאבְדּוּ:

וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שְׁמָךְ יְהוָה לִבְדָּדָה עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ:

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי:

עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה שְׁמִים וְאָרֶץ:

אֵל יִתֵּן לַמוֹט רִגְלָךְ אֵל יָנוּם שְׁמֶרְךָ:

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יְהוָה שְׁמֶרְךָ יְהוָה צִלָּךְ עַל יַד מִיָּנָה:

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יִכָּכֶה וַיֵּרַח בִּלְיָלָהּ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמֹר צַאתְךָ וּבֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם:

פָּרָק ק"ל CHAPTER 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעַמְקִים קִרְאתֶיךָ יְהוָה:

אֲדֹנָי שְׁמֶעָה בְּקוֹלִי תַהֲיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קִשְׁבוּת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנִי:

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד:

כִּי עָמַךְ הִסְלִיכָה לְמַעַן תִּגְוֶרָא:

קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלְתִּי:

נַפְשִׁי לֹאֲדֹנָי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבָקֶר שְׁמָרִים לְבָקֶר:

יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֲסֹד וְהַרְבֵּה עֲמוֹ פְדוּת:

וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו:

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When you feel weighed down by your mistakes, do not keep silent or try to hide them. Open your heart to Hashem in honest confession, and then immediately shift your focus to absolute trust in His forgiveness and constant protection, knowing that He never slumbers and is always guarding your steps.

Today, the moment you feel a heavy heart or a sense of spiritual distance, stop what you are doing, speak to Hashem in your own words to acknowledge your mistake, and then say out loud: 'My help is from Hashem, who forgives and guards my soul.'