

הלכות עבודת פוכבים • פרק שביעי

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

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, we begin learning the practical halachos of how a Yid must distance himself from any connection to avodah zarah. The Rambam opens by teaching us the positive mitzvah to completely destroy and eradicate false deities, their accessories, and anything made for their service. We will learn the distinction between Eretz Yisrael, where we are commanded to actively hunt down and destroy these abominations, and the diaspora, where the obligation is limited to places we conquer.

We will also learn the severe prohibitions against deriving any benefit whatsoever from avodah zarah, its accessories, and its offerings. The Torah warns us, "Do not bring an abomination to your home," and "Let nothing which is condemned cling to your hand." The chapter goes into detail regarding what is forbidden, including animals sacrificed to idols, where even the bones, horns, and hides are completely prohibited from use.

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

הליא

מצות השמדת עבודת פוכבים בארץ ישראל ובחוץ לארץ

Halacha 1 • The Mitzvah to Destroy Idol Worship in Eretz Yisrael and the Diaspora

מצות עשה היא לאבד עבודת פוכבים ומשמשיה וכל הנעשה
that is made and everything and its accessories stars worship of to destroy it is action A commandment of

בשבילה שנאמר דברים יב ב "אבד תאבדון את כל המקומות" ונאמר
and it is said the places" all — you shall destroy "destroy 2 12 Devarim as it is said for its sake

דברים ז ה "כי אם כה תעשו להם" וגו'. ובארץ ישראל מצוה
it is a mitzvah Yisrael And in the Land of etc. to them" you shall do thus . "rather 5 7 Devarim

לרדף אחריה עד שנאבד אותה מכל ארצנו. אבל בחוץ לארץ אין אנו
are we not to the Land outside but our land from all it that we destroy until after it to pursue

מצוין לרדף אחריה אלא כל מקום שנכבש אותו נאבד כל עבודת
worship of all we destroy it that we conquer place any rather after it to pursue commanded

פוכבים שבו. שנאמר דברים יב ג "ואבדתם את שמם מן המקום
the place from their name — "and you shall destroy 3 12 Devarim as it is said that is in it stars

ההוא". בארץ ישראל אתה מצוה לרדף אחריה ואי אתה
you and not after them to pursue are commanded you Yisrael in the Land of that"

מצוה לרדף אחריה בחוץ לארץ:
to the Land outside after them to pursue are commanded

This halacha outlines the positive commandment to eradicate idol worship, its accessories, and its places of worship, distinguishing between the obligation to actively pursue it in Eretz Yisrael versus destroying it upon conquest in the diaspora.

ה'י"ב

אסור הנאה מעבודת כוכבים ומשמייה

Halacha 2· The Prohibition of Deriving Benefit from Idols and Their Accessories

עבודת כוכבים ומשמייה ותקרבת שלה וכל הנעשה בשבילה
for its sake that is made and everything of it and an offering and its accessories · An idol
אסור בהנאה שנאמר דברים ז' כו "ולא תביא תועבה אל ביתך"
your house" into an abomination bring "And do not 26 7 Devarim as it is said in benefit is forbidden
וכל הנהנה באחד מכל אלו לוקה שתיים. אחת משום ולא
and do not because of one twice receives lashes these of all from one who benefits and anyone
תביא. ואחת משום ולא ידבק בידך מאומה מן החרם:
the condemned thing of anything to your hand cling and let not because of and one bring

This halacha establishes that it is strictly forbidden to derive any benefit from idols, their accessories, or offerings made to them, and that violating this carries a double penalty of lashes.

ה'י"ג

אסור הנאה מתקרבת עבודה זרה ועורות לבובין

Halacha 3· The Prohibition of Benefiting from Idolatrous Offerings and Pierced Hides

בהמה שהקריבוה כלה לעבודת כוכבים אסורה בהנאה אפלו פרשה
its dung even for benefit is forbidden stars to worship of entirely that they sacrificed An animal
ועצמותיה וקרניה וטלפיה ועורה הכל אסור בהנאה. לפיכך אם
if Therefore for benefit is forbidden everything and its hide and its hooves and its horns and its bones
היה בעור סימן שידע בו שזה העור תקרבת עבודת כוכבים הוא
it is stars worship of is an offering of hide that this by it that one knows a sign in the hide there was
בגזן שהיו עושים שקורעים קרע עגל כנגד הלב ומוציאין הלב
the heart and they extract the heart opposite round a tear to tear accustomed that they were for example
הרי כל אותן העורות שהן כה אסורין בהנאה וכן כל פיוצא בזה:
to this similar all and so for benefit are forbidden so that are hides those all of behold

This halacha teaches that an animal sacrificed to idols is completely forbidden for any benefit, including its hide, bones, and waste, and explains how to identify such forbidden hides.

ה'יד

ההבדל בין עבודת כוכבים של עובד כוכבים לשל ישראל

Halacha 4· The Difference Between the Idol of a Non-Jew and a Jew

מה בין עבודת כוכבים של עובד כוכבים לעבודת כוכבים של
of stars to worship of stars a worshiper of of stars worship of between What
ישראל. עבודת כוכבים של עובד כוכבים אסורה בהנאה מיד
immediately for benefit is forbidden stars a worshiper of of stars worship of an Israelite

שְׁנֵאֲמַר דְּבָרִים זֶה כֹּה "פְּסִילֵי אֱלֹהֵיהֶם תִּשְׂרֹפוּ בָאֵשׁ" מִשְׁפָּסְלוֹ
from when he sculpted with fire" you shall burn their gods "The sculptures of 25 7 Devarim as it is said
it

נַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ אֱלֹהִים. וְשֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵינָהּ אֲסוּרָה בִּהְנֵאָה עַד שֶׁתַּעֲבֹד שְׁנֵאֲמַר
as it is said it is worshiped until for benefit forbidden is not an Israelite and of a god to him it becomes

דְּבָרִים כֹּז טו "וְשֵׁם בְּסֵתֶר" עַד שֶׁיַּעֲשֶׂה לָּהּ דְּבָרִים שֶׁבְּסֵתֶר שֶׁהֵן
which are that are in secret things for it he does until in secret" "and places 15 27 Devarim

עֲבוֹדָתָהּ. וּמִשְׁמָשֵׁי עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים בֵּין שֶׁל עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים בֵּין
or whether stars a worshiper of of whether stars worship of And the accessories of its worship

שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵינָן אֲסוּרִין עַד שֶׁיִּשְׁתַּמְּשׁוּ בָּהֶן לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים:
stars for worship of with them they are used until forbidden are not an Israelite of

This halacha explains when an idol and its accessories become forbidden for benefit, distinguishing between those of a non-Jew and those of a Jew.

ה'י"ה

שְׂכָר עֲשִׂית עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה וְחִלְקַת יְרֵשֶׁת גֵּר

Halacha 5 - Wages for Making an Idol and Dividing an Inheritance with a Non-Jew

הַעוֹשֶׂה עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים לְאַחֲרִים אֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁהוּא לוֹקֵה שְׂכָרוֹ
his wage receives lashes that he though · even for others stars worship of One who makes

מִתֵּר וְאִפְלוּ עָשָׂאָה לְעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁהִיא אֲסוּרָה מִיָּד. מִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵינָהּ
that it is not because immediately forbidden which is stars for a worshiper of he made it and even is permitted

נִיאֶסְרֶת עַד שֶׁתִּגְמַר וּמִכּוּשׁ אַחֲרוֹן שֶׁגּוֹמְרָהּ אֵין בּוֹ שׁוֹה פְּרוּטָה.
a perutah the value of in it there is not that completes it final and the stroke it is completed until forbidden

הַלּוֹקֵחַ גְּרוּטָאוֹת מִן הָעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים וּמֵצֵא בָּהֶן עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים.
stars worship of in them and found stars the worshiper of from scrap metal One who purchases

אִם נָתַן מָעוֹת וְלֹא מָשָׁךְ יִחְזִירָם לְעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים. וְכֵן אִם מָשָׁךְ
he pulled if and so stars to the worshiper of he should return them pulled but not money he gave if

וְלֹא נָתַן מָעוֹת אֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁמְשִׁיכָהּ בְּעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים קוֹנָה
acquires stars regarding a worshiper that pulling though · even money gave but not
of

בְּמִקַּח טְעוֹת הוּא. נָתַן מָעוֹת וּמָשָׁךְ יוֹלִיכֵם לַיָּם הַמֶּלַח. וְכֵן
And so Salt to the Sea of he must cast them and pulled money If he gave it is error like a purchase of

עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים וְגֵר שֶׁיִּרְשׁוּ אֶת אָבִיהֶן עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים יָכוֹל
is able stars a worshiper of their father — who inherited and a convert stars a worshiper of

הַגֵּר לומר לְעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים טַל אֶתָּה עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְאֲנִי מָעוֹת. טַל
take money and I stars worship of you take stars to the worshiper of to say the convert

אֶתָּה יֵין נֶסֶךְ וְאֲנִי פֵרוֹת. וְאִם מִשְׁבָּאֵי לְרִשּׁוֹת הַגֵּר אֲסוּר:
it is forbidden the convert into the possession of after they came but if produce and I libation wine of you

This halacha discusses the permissibility of wages for crafting an idol, the laws of purchasing scrap metal containing idols, and how a convert may divide an inheritance of forbidden items with his non-Jewish brother.

הנאה מצורות של עובדי פוכבים

Halacha 6 · Benefiting from Images Made by Idolaters

צורות שעשו אדם עובדי פוכבים לנאי מתרין בהנאה וצורות שעשו אדם

that made them and images for benefit are permitted for beauty stars worshipers of that made them Images

לעבודת פוכבים אסורין. כיצד. כל הצורות הנמצאים בכפרים אסורים

are forbidden in the villages that are found the images All How so are forbidden stars for worship of

בהנאה מפני שהזקתן של עבודת פוכבים הן עשויות, והנמצאות במדינה

in the city and those found are made they stars is that for worship of their presumption because for benefit

אם היו עומדין על פתח המדינה והיה ביד הצורה צורת

the form of the image in the hand of and there was the city the entrance of at standing they were if

מקל או צפור או כדור או סף או עטרה וטבעת חזקתו שהוא

is that it its presumption and a ring a crown or a sword or a globe or a bird or a staff

לעבודת פוכבים ואסור בהנאה. ואם לאו הרי הוא בחזקת

is in the presumption of it behold not and if for benefit and is forbidden stars is for worship of

לנאי ומתיר:

and is permitted for beauty

This halacha distinguishes between images made for aesthetic purposes and those made for idolatrous worship based on their location and features.

דין צלמי עבודת פוכבים הנמצאים משלכים ואיברי צורות

Halacha 7 · The Status of Discarded Idols and Severed Limbs of Worshipped Images

צלמי עבודת פוכבים הנמצאים משלכים בשוקים או בתוך הגרוטאות

the scrap metal inside or in the marketplaces cast away that are found stars worship of Statues of

הרי אלו מתרין ואין צריך לומר שבירי צלמיהן. אבל המוצא

one who finds but their statues fragments of to say need and there is no are permitted these behold

יד מצורת פוכב או מזל או רגלה או איבר מאיבריה משלה הרי

behold cast away from its limbs a limb or its foot or a constellation or a star from the form of a hand

זה אסור בהנאה הואיל וידע בודאי שזה האיבר מן צורת עבודת

worship of the form of is from limb that this with certainty he knew since in benefit is forbidden this

פוכבים הנעבדת הרי היא באסורה עד שיודע לו שהעובדי

that the worshipers of to him it becomes known until remains in its it behold that is worshiped stars prohibition

פוכבים עובדיה בטלוי:

nullified it its worshipers stars

This halacha clarifies when discarded statues or fragments of idols are permitted for benefit and when a severed limb remains forbidden until nullification is verified.

המוצא פֿליס ועליהן צורת חמה ולבנה ודִּרְקוֹן. אם היו פֿלי כסף
 silver vessels of they were if or a dragon or the moon the sun the form of and upon them vessels One who finds
 וְזָהב או בגדי שני או שהיו חקוקים על הנזמים ועל הטבעות הרי
 behold the rings and upon the nose-rings upon engraved that they were or scarlet garments of or and gold
 אלו אסורין. ועל שאר הפלים מתרין מפני שהזקתן לנוי. וכן
 and so for ornament their presumption is because they are permitted the vessels the rest of but upon are forbidden these
 שאר הצורות הנמצאות על כל הפלים חזקתן לנוי ומתרין:
 and they are permitted for ornament their presumption is the vessels all upon that are found the forms the rest of

This halacha details which found vessels with celestial or dragon images are forbidden as suspected objects of idolatry and which are permitted as mere ornaments.

הליט

עבודת כוכבים ומשמשיה וכל התקרבת שלה אוסרים בכל שהן. פיצד.
 How so amount in any forbid of it the offering and all and its accessories stars Worship of
 עבודת כוכבים שנתערבה בצורות של נוי אפלו אחת בכמה אלפים
 thousands in several one even beauty of with images that was mixed stars Worship of
 יוליף הכל לים המלח. וכן אם נתערב כוס של עבודת כוכבים
 stars worship of of a cup was mixed if And so Salt to the Sea of the whole he must bring
 בכמה כוסות או חתיכה מן הבשר שנתערבה בכמה חתיכות יוליף
 he must bring pieces with several that was mixed the meat of a piece or cups with several
 הכל לים המלח. וכן עור לבוב שנתערב בכמה עורות הכל
 the whole hides with several that was mixed pierced at the heart a hide And so Salt to the Sea of the whole
 אסור בהנאה. עבר ומכר עבודת כוכבים או אחד ממשמשיה או
 or of its accessories one or stars worship of and sold If he transgressed for benefit is forbidden
 תקרבת שלה הרי הדמים אסורין בהנאה ואסורין בכל שהן כעבודת
 like worship of amount in any and they forbid for benefit is forbidden the money behold of it an offering
 כוכבים שנאמר דברים ז' כו "והיית חרם כמהו" כל מה שאתה מביא
 bring which you that all like it banned and you shall be 26 7 Deuteronomy as it is said stars
 מעבודת כוכבים ומכל משמשיה ותקרבתה הרי היא כמוה:
 is like it it behold and its offering its accessories and from all stars from worship of

This halacha teaches that idolatry, its accessories, and its offerings are never nullified in a mixture, and that any money received from selling them carries the same strict prohibition.

הלי

אסור הנאה מאפר עבודה זרה ובטול תערובת

עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים אוֹ אֲשֶׁרָה שֶׁנִּשְׂרָפָה אֶפְרָה אָסוּר בִּהֲנָאָה. וְגַחְלַת שֶׁל
 of and a coal for benefit are forbidden its ashes that was burned an asherah or stars Worship of
 עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים אָסוּרָה וְהַשְׁלָהֶבֶת מִתֵּרֵת מִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵין בָּהּ מַמָּשׁ. סִפֵּק
 A doubt of substance in it that there is not because is permitted but the flame is forbidden stars worship of
 עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים אָסוּר, סִפֵּק סִפְקָה מִתֵּר. פִּיצֵד. כּוֹס שֶׁל עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים
 stars worship of of A cup How so is permitted its doubt a doubt of is forbidden stars worship of
 שֶׁנָּפַל בְּאוֹצָר מָלֵא כּוֹסוֹת כָּלָן אָסוּרִים, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְכָל
 and all stars that worship of because are forbidden all of them cups full of into a storehouse that fell
 מִשְׁמָשִׁיָּהּ אוֹסְרִין בְּכָל שֶׁהֵן. פֶּרֶשׁ כּוֹס אֶחָד מִן הַתַּעֲרֹבֶת וְנָפַל
 and fell the mixture from one cup If separated amount that they are in any forbid its accessories
 לְכוֹסוֹת שְׁנַיִם הָרִי אֵלָיו מִתֵּרִין. טַבַּעַת שֶׁל עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁנִּתְעַרְבָּה
 that became mixed stars worship of of A ring are permitted these behold two into cups
 בְּכַמָּה טַבָּעוֹת וְנָפְלוּ שְׁתֵּי מֵהֶן לַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל הֵתְרוּ כָּלָן שֶׁאֲנִי אוֹמֵר
 say for I all of them are permitted the great into the sea of them two and fell rings with many
 אוֹתָהּ הַטַּבָּעַת הִיָּתָה בְּכָלֵל הַשְּׁתֵּי. נִתְעַרְבָּה בְּמֵאָה וְנִתְחַלְקוּ
 and they were divided with one hundred If it became mixed the two among was the ring that
 אַרְבָּעִים לְמָקוֹם אֶחָד וְשִׁשִּׁים לְמָקוֹם אֲחֵר וְנָפְלוּ הָאַרְבָּעִים כָּלָן לְטַבָּעוֹת
 into rings all of them the forty and fell another to a place and sixty one to a place forty
 אֲחֵרוֹת כָּלָן מִתֵּרוֹת שֶׁאֲנִי אוֹמֵר אוֹתָהּ הַטַּבָּעַת הָאָסוּרָה בָּרֶב הִיא.
 it is in the majority the forbidden the ring that say for I are permitted all of them other
 נָפְלוּ הַשְּׁשִׁים לְטַבָּעוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת כָּלָן אָסוּרוֹת:
 are forbidden all of them other into rings the sixty If fell

This halacha details the prohibition of benefiting from the ashes and coals of an idol, and outlines the rules of double-doubt (safek sefeka) regarding mixtures of forbidden cups or rings.

הלי יא

אָסוּר הֲנָאָה מִצֵּל אֲשֶׁרָה וּמַעֲבָר תַּחְתֶּיהָ Halacha 11 · The Prohibition of Benefiting from the Shade of an Asherah and Passing Under It

הָאֲשֶׁרָה בֵּין שְׁהִיָּתָה נִעְבָּדָת בֵּין שְׁהִיָּתָה עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים מִנַּחַת תַּחְתֶּיהָ
 under it placed stars worship of that it was whether worshiped that it was whether The asherah
 אָסוּר לֵישֵׁב בְּצֵל קוֹמָתָהּ. וּמִתֵּר לֵישֵׁב בְּצֵל הַשְּׂרִיגִים
 the branches in the shade of to sit and it is permitted its trunk in the shade of to sit it is forbidden
 וְהָעָלִים שָׁלָהּ. וְאִם יֵשׁ לוֹ דֶּרֶךְ אַחֶרֶת אָסוּר לוֹ לַעֲבֹר תַּחְתֶּיהָ. וְאִם
 and if under it to pass for him it is forbidden another a path to him there is and if of it and the leaves
 אֵין שָׁם דֶּרֶךְ אַחֶרֶת עוֹבֵר תַּחְתֶּיהָ כְּשֶׁהוּא רָץ:
 runs while he under it he passes another a path there there is not

This halacha details the restrictions on sitting in the shade of an idolatrous tree (asherah) and the conditions under which one may walk beneath it.

אפרוחים שקננו בה ואין צריכין לאמן מתרין. והאפרוחים והביצים
and the eggs but the chicks are permitted their mother need and do not in it that nested Chicks

שצריכין לאמן אסורין שהרי האשרה כמו בסיס להן. והקן עצמה
itself and the nest for them a base is like the asherah because are forbidden their mother that need

שבראשה מתר מפני שהעוף מביא עציו ממקום אחר:
other from a place its wood brings the bird because is permitted that is at its top

This halacha clarifies which items found in an idolatrous tree are permitted and which are forbidden based on their dependence on the tree.

נטל ממנה עצים אסורים בהנאה. הסיק בהן את התנור יוצן ואחר
and after it must be cooled the oven — with them he heated in benefit forbidden wood from it He took

כך יסיק בעצים אחרים של הטר ויאפה בו. אפה בו את הפת
the bread — in it he baked in it and he shall bake permission of other with wood he shall heat that

ולא צננו הפת אסורה בהנאה. נתערבה באחרות יוליך דמי
the value of he shall bring with others it became mixed in benefit is forbidden the bread he cooled it and not

אותה הפת לים המלח כדי שלא יהנה בה ושאר הכפרות
the loaves and the rest of from it he will benefit that not in order the Salt to the Sea of bread that

מתרין:

are permitted

This halacha details the laws of an oven heated with forbidden wood of an asherah, and the status of bread baked in it.

נטל ממנה פרפר וארג בו את הבגד אסור בהנאה. נתערב
If it became mixed for benefit it is forbidden the garment — with it and wove a shuttle from it If one took

בבגדים אחרים יוליך דמי אותו הבגד לים המלח ושאר כל
all and the rest of Salt to the Sea of garment that the value of he must bring other with garments

הבגדים מתרין. ומתר לטע תחתיה ירקות בין בימות החמה
the sun in the days of whether vegetables under it to plant And it is permitted are permitted the garments

שהן צריכין לצל. בין בימות הגשמים. מפני שצל האשרה שהוא
which is the asherah the shade of because the rains in the days of whether shade need when they

אסור עם הקרקע שאינה נאסרת גורמין לירקות אלו לצמח וכל
and anything to grow these vegetables cause forbidden which is not the ground with forbidden

שְׂדֵדֶר אָסוּר וְדִבֵּר מִתֵּר גּוֹרְמִין לוֹ הָרִי זֶה מִתֵּר בְּכָל מְקוֹם.
place in every is permitted this behold it cause thing and a permitted thing that a forbidden
לְפִיכֶן שָׂדָה שְׂזֵבְלָהּ בְּזֵבֶל עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים מִתֵּר לְזַרְעָ אוֹתָהּ.
it to sow it is permitted worship idol with fertilizer of that one fertilized a field Therefore
וּפָרָה שִׁפְטָמָהּ בְּכִרְשֵׁינִי עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים תֹּאכֵל וְכֵן כָּל פִּיּוּצָא בְּזֶה:
to this similar all and so may be eaten worship idol with vetches of that one fattened and a cow

This halacha teaches that a garment woven with a shuttle from an asherah is forbidden, but if mixed with others, its value is cast into the Dead Sea; it also establishes that when a forbidden and a permitted factor combine to produce a result, the product is permitted.

ה'טו

אָסוּר תְּקַרְבַּת עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים וְכָל הַנִּמְצָא בְּבֵיתָהּ

Halacha 15 · The Prohibition of Offerings to Idols and Anything Found in an Idolatrous Temple

בָּשָׂר אוֹ יַיִן אוֹ פְּרוֹת שֶׁהֵכִינוּם לְהִקְרִיבָם לְעֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים לֹא
not stars to service of to offer them that they prepared fruits or wine or Meat
themselves
נִאָּסְרוּ בְּהִנָּאָה אֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁהֵכִינוּם לְבֵית עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים עַד
until stars service of to the house of that they brought them though · even in benefit are forbidden
in
שֶׁיִּקְרִיבוּם לְפָנֶיהָ. הִקְרִיבוּם לְפָנֶיהָ נַעֲשׂוּ תְּקַרְבַּת וְאֵף עַל פִּי
though · and even an offering they became before it once they offered them before it that they offer them
שֶׁחֲזְרוּ וְהוֹצִיאוּם הָרִי אֵלֵינוּ אֲסוּרִין לְעוֹלָם. וְכָל הַנִּמְצָא
that is found and everything forever are forbidden these behold and took them out that they returned
בְּבֵית עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים אֶפְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וּמֶלַח אָסוּר בְּהִנָּאָה מִן הַתּוֹרָה.
the Torah from in benefit is forbidden and salt water even stars service of in the house of
וְהָאוֹכֵל מִמֶּנּוּ כָּל שֶׁהוּא לֹקֵחַ:
is lashed amount any from it and the one who eats

This halacha defines when items prepared for idolatry become forbidden as offerings and rules that everything inside an idolatrous temple is strictly prohibited.

ה'טז

דִּין חֲפָצִים הַנִּמְצָאִים עַל גַּבֵּי עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה

Halacha 16 · Laws of Objects Found on an Idol and the Worship of Peor and Marculis

הַמוֹצֵא כֶּסֶף וְכֵלִים וּמַעוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ עֲבוֹדַת פּוֹכְבִּים. אִם מִצָּאן דֶּרֶךְ
by way of he found them if stars worship of on the head of or money or utensils garments One who finds
בְּזִיוֹן הָרִי אֵלֵינוּ מִתְרִין וְאִם מִצָּאן דֶּרֶךְ כְּבוֹד הָרִי אֵלֵינוּ אֲסוּרִין. כִּיצַד.
how are forbidden these behold honor by way of he found them and if are permitted these behold derision
מִצָּא כִּסּוּס תְּלוּי בְּצוּאָרוֹ. כֶּסֶף מְקַפֵּלֶת וּמִנְחָת עַל רֹאשׁוֹ. כְּלִי כִפּוּי
overturned a utensil its head on and placed folded a garment on its neck hanging a purse he found
עַל רֹאשׁוֹ הָרִי זֶה מִתֵּר מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא דֶּרֶךְ בְּזִיוֹן וְכֵן כָּל פִּיּוּצָא בְּזֶה.
to this similar all and so derision by way of that it is because is permitted this behold its head on

מָצָא בְּרֹאשׁוֹ דָּבָר שְׁפִיּוּצָא בּוֹ קָרַב לְגַבִּי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ הֲרִי זֶה אָסוּר. בְּמָה

in what is forbidden this behold the altar upon is offered to it that similar a thing on its head he found

דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים בְּזִמָּן שֶׁמָּצְאוּ חוּץ לְמָקוֹם עֲבוֹדָתוֹ אֲבָל אִם מָצָאוּ

he found it if but its worship to the place of outside that he found them at the time are said words

בְּפָנִים בֵּין דֶּרֶךְ כְּבוֹד בֵּין דֶּרֶךְ בְּזִיוּן בֵּין דְּבַר הָרְאוּי לְמִזְבֵּחַ בֵּין

whether for the altar that is fit a thing whether derision by way of whether honor by way of whether inside

דְּבַר שֶׁאִינוֹ רְאוּי כָּל הַנִּמְצָא בְּפָנִים אָסוּר אֲפִלּוּ מִיָּם וּמִלַּח. וּפְעוּר

and Peor and salt water even is forbidden inside that is found all fit that is not a thing

וּמִרְקוּלִים כָּל הַנִּמְצָא עִמָּהֶן בֵּין בְּפָנִים בֵּין בַּחוּץ אָסוּר בְּהִנָּאָה. וְכֵן

and so for benefit is forbidden outside whether inside whether with them that is found all and Marculis

אֲבָנֵי מִרְקוּלִים אֲבֹן הַנִּרְאִית שֶׁהִיא עִמּוֹ אָסוּר בְּהִנָּאָה:

for benefit is forbidden with it that it is that appears a stone Marculis the stones of

This halacha distinguishes between objects left on an idol in a respectful versus a derisive manner, and details the strict prohibitions regarding items found inside an idolatrous temple or near Peor and Marculis.

הל"ז

הִנָּאָה מִמְרָחֵץ וְגִנָּה שֶׁל עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

Halacha 17 · Deriving Benefit from a Bathhouse or Garden of an Idol

עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁהָיָה לָּהּ מְרָחֵץ אוֹ גִּנָּה נִהְיִים בָּהֶם שְׂלָא בְטוֹבָה

favor without from them we may benefit a garden or a bathhouse to it that had . An idol

וְאִין נִהְיִים בָּהֶם בְטוֹבָה. הָיָה לָּהּ וְלֵאחֵרִים נִהְיִין בָּהֶן אֲפִלּוּ

even from them we may benefit and to others to it If it belonged with favor from them benefit but we do not

בְטוֹבַת כְּהֻנָּה וּבְלִבָּד שְׂלָא יִתֵּן שְׂכָר:

payment one gives that not provided its priests with favor to

This halacha discusses the conditions under which one may benefit from a bathhouse or garden owned by an idol or jointly owned with others.

הל"ח

רְחִיצָה בְּמִרְחָץ שֶׁישׁ בּוֹ עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים לְנוֹי

Halacha 18 · Bathing in a Bathhouse Containing an Idol Placed for Aesthetic Purposes

מְרָחֵץ שֶׁישׁ בּוֹ עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים מִתֵּר לְרַחֵץ בּוֹ מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהִיא נַעֲשִׂית

is made that it because in it to bathe it is permitted stars worship of in it that has A bathhouse

שֵׁם לְנוֹי וְלֹא לְעִבְדָּהּ. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר אֱלֹהֵיהֶם. בְּזִמָּן שֶׁנִּוְהָגִים בָּהּ מִנְהַג

the custom of with it that they behave at a time their gods as it is said to worship it and not for beauty there

אֱלֹהוֹת וְלֹא בְּזִמָּן שֶׁמִּבְזִּין אוֹתָן כְּגוֹן זֶה שֶׁהִיא עוֹמֶדֶת עַל הַפֵּיב

the sewer pipe over stands which this such as them that they degrade at a time and not godliness

וְהַכֵּל מִשְׁתִּינִין בְּפָנֶיהָ. וְאִם הָיְתָה דֶּרֶךְ עֲבוֹדָתָהּ בְּכָךְ אָסוּר

it is forbidden in this manner its worship the way of was and if before it urinates and everyone

לְכַנֵּס בּוֹ:

it to enter

This halacha discusses the permissibility of using a bathhouse that contains an idol, provided the idol is treated as a mere decoration rather than a deity.

חל"י

שחיטה וחתיכה בפסין של עבודת כוכבים

Halacha 19 · Slaughtering and Cutting Meat with a Knife of Idol Worship

ספין של עבודת כוכבים ששחט בה הרי זה מתר מפני שהוא

that he is because is permitted this behold with it that one slaughtered worship idol of A knife

מקלקל. ואם היתה בהמה מסכנת הרי זו אסורה מפני שהוא מתקן והרי

and behold improving that he is because is forbidden this behold in danger an animal it was and if damaging

זה התקון מהנאת משמשי עבודת כוכבים. וכן אסור לחתך בה

with it to cut it is forbidden and likewise worship idol accessories of is from benefit of improvement this

בשר מפני שהוא מתקן ואם חתך דרך הפסד והשחתה מתר:

it is permitted and destruction loss by way of he cut and if improving that he is because meat

This halacha discusses when using a knife associated with idol worship is permitted based on whether the act improves or damages the item.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter outlines the dual obligations of destroying avodah zarah and avoiding any benefit from it. We learn that in Eretz Yisrael, there is an active mitzvah to seek out and eradicate idol worship, whereas in the diaspora, the obligation applies to conquered areas. Furthermore, the Rambam establishes that deriving any benefit from an idol, its accessories, or its offerings is strictly forbidden, carrying a double measure of lashes. This prohibition is so absolute that it extends to every part of an animal sacrificed to an idol, including its hide, bones, and hooves, all of which are completely forbidden for use.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Torah is teaching us a profound lesson about the nature of spiritual poison. When it comes to avodah zarah, the Torah does not just tell us to avoid worshipping it; we are commanded to destroy it, to hunt it down in Eretz Yisrael, and we are strictly forbidden from deriving even the slightest benefit from it. Even the ashes of a burned idol remain forbidden. Why such extreme measures? Because some things are so spiritually toxic that they cannot be managed, compromised with, or safely kept in our lives. If we leave even a small trace of them, they will eventually pull us down.

In our personal avodah, we all have our own 'avodah zarah', those negative habits, toxic environments, or improper influences that pull us away from Hashem and damage our yiras Shamayim. Sometimes we try to compromise. We think, 'I won't let it control me, I'll just keep a little piece of it around,' or 'I can handle being in this environment without it affecting me.' The halachah of eradicating avodah zarah teaches us that this is a dangerous mistake. True spiritual safety requires a complete break. We must eradicate the negative influence entirely from our lives and our homes, leaving no residue behind.

Identify one negative influence, improper media, or toxic habit in your life today that you have been trying to 'manage' rather than eliminate, and make a firm decision to completely remove it from your home and your life.