

הלכות עבודת פוכבים • פרק תשיעי

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

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this chapter, we learn the halachos of how a Yid must distance himself from the avodah zarah of the non-Jews around him, specifically regarding business dealings and social interactions during their holidays. Hashem wants us to be a holy nation, so the Chachamim put safeguards in place to ensure we do not assist them in their idol worship or cause them to offer thanks to their false deities.

We will also learn about the prohibitions against selling items that could be used directly for avodah zarah, as well as dangerous items like weapons that could bring harm to the public. The Rambam guides us in how to navigate these halachos in Eretz Yisrael versus Chutz la'Aretz, and how to handle situations where we must maintain peaceful relations with the local government.

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

ה'א

אסור משא ומתן עם עובדי פוכבים לפני חגיהם Halacha 1 • Prohibition of Business Transactions with Idolaters Before Their Festivals

שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים לִפְנֵי חָגָם שֶׁל עֹבְדֵי פֹכְבִּים אָסוּר לָקַח מֵהֶם וְלִמְכֹר
and to sell from them to buy it is forbidden stars worshipers of of their festival before days Three

לָהֶם דְּבַר הַמְתָּקִים, לָלוּת מֵהֶן וּלְהַלְוֹתָם, לִפְרַע מֵהֶן וּלְפָרַע
and to pay from them to collect payment and to lend to them from them to borrow that endures a thing to them

לָהֶם מַלְוָה בְּשֹׁטֵר אוֹ עַל הַמִּשְׁכּוֹן אֲבָל מַלְוָה עַל פֶּה נִפְרָעִין מֵהֶן
from them we collect mouth by a loan but a collateral upon or with a document a loan to them

מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא כְּמַצִּיל מִיָּדָם. וּמִתֵּר לִמְכֹר לָהֶן דְּבַר שְׂאִינוֹ מִתְקִים
enduring that is not a thing to them to sell and it is permitted from their hand like saving that it is because

בְּגוֹז יִרְקוֹת וְתִבְשִׁיל עַד יוֹם חָגָם. בְּמָה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים בְּאֶרֶץ
in the Land of are said words In what their festival the day of until and a cooked dish vegetables such as

יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבָל בְּשָׂאֵר אֶרְצוֹת אֵינוֹ אָסוּר אֶלָּא יוֹם חָגָם בְּלֻבְד.
alone their festival the day of except forbidden it is not lands in the rest of but Yisrael

עֲבַר וְנָשָׂא וְנָתַן עִמָּהֶן בְּאוֹתָן הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים הָרִי זֶה
this behold days three during those with them and gave and conducted If he transgressed business

מִתֵּר בִּהְנֵאָה. וְהַנּוֹשֵׂא וְנָתַן בְּיוֹם חָגָם עִמָּהֶן הָרִי זֶה אָסוּר
is forbidden this behold with them their festival on the day of and gives and one who conducts for benefit is permitted business

The Sages prohibited business dealings with idolaters before their festivals to prevent them from thanking their idols, distinguishing between Eretz Yisrael and other lands.

ה'י"ב

אסור משלוח וקבלת דורונות מנכרי ביום אידו

Halacha 2 · Prohibition of Sending and Receiving Gifts from a Non-Jew on His Holiday

ואסור לשלח דורון לכותי ביום אידו אלא אם כן נודע לו
to him it is known unless his holiday on the day of to a non-Jew a gift to send And it is forbidden
שאינו מודה בעבודת כוכבים ואינו עובדה. וכן כותי
a non-Jew And similarly worship it and he does not stars the worship of acknowledge that he does not
ששלח דורון לישראל ביום חגו לא יקבלנו ממנו. ואם חשש
he feared And if from him accept it he should not his festival on the day of to a Jew a gift who sent
לאיבה נוטלו בפניו ואינו נהנה בו עד שיודע לו שזה
that this to him it becomes known until from it benefit and he may not in his presence he may take it for ill-feeling
הכותי אינו עובד כוכבים ואינו מודה בה:
it acknowledge and does not stars worship does not non-Jew

The Rambam rules that one may not exchange gifts with an idolater on his holiday to avoid encouraging or participating in his celebration, unless refusing would cause dangerous ill-feeling.

ה'י"ג

אסור משא ומתן בחגי עובדי כוכבים הנמשכים ימים רבים

Halacha 3 · The Prohibition of Business Transactions During Multi-Day Festivals of Idolaters

היה אידן של אותן עפ"ם ימים הרבה שלשה או ארבעה או עשרה כל
all ten or four or three many days idolaters those of the festival If was
אותן הימים כיום אחד הן וכלן אסורין עם ג' ימים לפניהן:
before them days three with are forbidden and all of them they are one like day days those

This halacha teaches that if an idolatrous festival spans multiple days, the entire period is treated as a single continuous festival, and the prohibition of business transactions extends to all of those days as well as the three days preceding them.

ה'י"ד

אסור משא ומתן עם עובדי כוכבים לפני חגיהם

Halacha 4 · Prohibition of Business Transactions with Idolaters Before Their Festivals

בנענים עובדי כוכבים ומזלות הם ויום ראשון הוא יום אידם.
their festival day of it is first and day they are and constellations stars worshippers of Canaanites
לפיכך אסור לתת ולשאת עמם בארץ ישראל יום חמישי ויום
and day fifth day Yisrael in the Land of with them and to take to give it is forbidden therefore
ששי שבכל שבת ושבת ואין צריך לומר יום ראשון עצמו שהוא
which it itself first day to say need and there is no and week week that is in every sixth

אָסור בְּכָל מָקוֹם. וְכֵן נוֹהֲגִין עִמָּהֶם בְּכָל אִיּוֹדֵיהֶם:

their festivals on all of with them we conduct and so place in every is forbidden

This halacha details the restrictions on conducting business with idolaters in the days leading up to their weekly and annual festivals.

ה'ה

אָסור מִשָּׂא וּמִתָּן בְּחֲגֵי עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁל יָחִיד

Halacha 5 · Prohibition of Business on Individual Festivals of Idolaters

יוֹם שְׂמֵת־כִּנְסִין בּוֹ עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים לְהַעֲמִיד לָהֶן מֶלֶךְ וּמִקְרִיבִין
and they sacrifice a king for themselves to establish stars worshipers of on it that gather A day
וּמִקְלָסִים לְאַלֹהֵיהֶם יוֹם חָג הוּא וַהֲרִי הוּא כְּשָׂאֵר חֲגֵיהֶם אֲבָל
but their festivals is like the rest of it and behold it their festival the day of to their gods and praise
עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה הוּא חָג לְעַצְמוֹ וּמוֹדָה לְכוֹכַב שְׁלוֹ וּמִקְלָסוֹ
and praises it his the star and thanks for himself a festival he who makes stars a worshiper of
בְּיוֹם שְׁנוּלָד בּוֹ יוֹם תְּגַלַּחַת זָקְנוֹ אוֹ בְּלוּרִיתוֹ יוֹם שֶׁעָלָה
that he went up and the day his hair-lock or his beard shaving of and the day of on it that was born on the day
בּוֹ מִן הַיָּם וְשִׂיצָא מִבֵּית הָאֲסוּרִים יוֹם שֶׁעָשָׂה בּוֹ מִשְׁתָּה
a feast on it that he made and the day the prisoners from the house of and that he went out the sea from on it
לְבָנוֹ וְכִיּוּצָא בְּאֵלוֹ אֵינוֹ אָסוּר אֲלָא אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם וְאוֹתוֹ הָאִישׁ בְּלֻבָּד.
alone man and that day that except forbidden is not of these and the like for his son
וְכֵן יוֹם שְׂמֵמוֹת לָהֶן בּוֹ מֵת וַיַּעֲשׂוּהוּ חָג אוֹתָם הָעוֹשִׂים
who make those a festival and they make it a dead person on it for them that dies a day and likewise
אֲסוּרִין אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם. וְכָל מִיתָה שֶׁשׂוֹרְפִין בָּהּ כֵּלִים וּמִקְטָרִים קְטָרֶת
incense and burn vessels at it that they burn death and any day that are forbidden
בְּיָדוּעַ שִׂישׁ בָּהּ עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים. אֵין יוֹם הַחָג אָסוּר אֲלָא לְעוֹבְדֵיהָ
to its worshipers except forbidden the festival the day of is not stars worship of in it that there is it is known
בְּלֻבָּד. אֲבָל אוֹתָם שֶׁשִּׂמְחִים בּוֹ וְאוֹכְלִין וְשׂוֹתִין וּמִשְׁמְרִין אוֹתוֹ מִפְּנֵי
because of it and keep and drink and eat on it who rejoice those but alone
מִנְהֶג אוֹ מִפְּנֵי כְבוֹד הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲבָל הֵם אֵין מוֹדִין בּוֹ הֲרִי אֵלּוֹ מִתְּרִין
are permitted these behold it thank do not they but the king the honor of because of or custom
לְשֵׂאת וּלְתַת עִמָּהֶן:
with them and to take to give

This halacha distinguishes between public idolatrous festivals and private celebrations of individual idolaters, defining who is forbidden to do business with on those days.

ה'ו

אָסור מְכִירַת תְּקוּרֹת וְחֻפֵּץ הַמִּיָּחֵד לְעֲבוֹדַת זָרָה

Halacha 6 · Prohibition of Selling Items Designated for Idol Worship

דְּבָרִים שֶׁהֵן מִיָּחֵדִין לְמִין מִמִּינֵי עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁבָּאוֹתוֹ מִקוֹם אָסוּר
it is forbidden place that is in that worship idol of types of for a type designated that are Items

לְמַכּוֹר לְעוֹבְדֵי אוֹתָהּ עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁבָּאוּתוֹ הַמָּקוֹם לְעוֹלָם. וּדְבָרִים

and items forever place that is in that worship idol that to worshipers of to sell

שֶׁאֵינָן מִיְחָדִין לָהּ מוֹכְרִין אוֹתָם סֵתָם. וְאִם פִּרַּשׁ הָעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים

worshiper the idol specified and if without specifying them we sell for it designated that are not

שֶׁהוּא קוֹנֶה אוֹתָם לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים אָסוּר לְמַכּוֹר לוֹ אֲלֹא אִם כֵּן

· · unless to him to sell it is forbidden worship for idol them is buying that he

פָּסְלוֹ מִלְּהִקְרִיבוֹ לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים. לְפִי שֶׁאֵין מִקְרִיבִין חֲסֵר

a blemished animal offer that they do not because worship to idol from offering it he disqualified it

לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים:

worship to idol

This halacha details the restrictions on selling items that are uniquely used for idolatrous worship to those who practice it.

ה'י ז

מְכִירַת תַּעֲרֹכֶת דְּבָרִים הַמֵּיְחָדִין לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

Halacha 7 · Selling Mixtures Containing Items Designated for Idol Worship

הֵיוּ מְעֻרְבִין דְּבָרִים הַמֵּיְחָדִין עִם דְּבָרִים שֶׁאֵין מִיְחָדִין כְּגוֹן לְבוֹנָה

frankincense such as designated that are not articles with that are designated articles mixed If they were

זָכָה בְּכָלֵל לְבוֹנָה שְׁחוּרָה מוֹכֵר הַכֹּל סֵתָם וְאֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁין

suspect and we do not without specifying the whole one may sell black frankincense within pure

שֶׁמָּא יִלְקֹט הַזָּכָה לְבִדָּה לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְכֵן כָּל פְּיוּצָא בְּזָה:

to this similar all and so stars for worship of alone the pure he will gather lest

It is permitted to sell a mixture of designated and non-designated items without fearing that the buyer will separate them for idolatrous use.

ה'י ח

אָסוּר מְכִירַת כָּלִי מִשְׁחִית וּדְבָרִים הַמְּזִיקִים לְעוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים

Halacha 8 · Prohibition of Selling Weapons and Harmful Items to Idolaters and Suspects

כַּשֵּׁם שֶׁאֵין מוֹכְרִין לְעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים דְּבָרִים שֶׁמַּחְזִיקִין בָּהֶן יְדִיהֶן

their hands with them that strengthen things stars to a worshiper of we sell that not Just as

לְעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים כֹּף אֵין מוֹכְרִין לָהֶם דָּבָר שֶׁיֵּשׁ בּוֹ נֹזֵק לְרַבִּים כְּגוֹן

such as to the public damage in it that has a thing to them we sell not so stars for worship of

דְּבָרִים וְאַרְיֹת וְכָלִי זֵין וְכַבָּלִים וְשִׁלְשָׁלוֹת. וְאֵין מְשַׁחֲזִין לָהֶם

for them do we sharpen and not and chains and fetters armaments and weapons of and lions bears

אֶת הַזֵּין. וְכָל שֶׁאָסוּר לְמַכּוֹר לְעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים אָסוּר לְמַכּוֹר

to sell it is forbidden stars to a worshiper of to sell it that is forbidden and everything the weapons —

לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הַחֲשׂוֹד לְמַכּוֹר לְעוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים. וְכֵן אָסוּר לְמַכּוֹר

to sell it is forbidden and likewise stars to a worshiper of to sell who is suspected to a Jew

כָּלִי נֹזֵק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְסָטִים:

bandit to a Jewish damage weapons of

This halacha details the prohibition of selling weapons, dangerous animals, or restraints to idolaters or to Jews who might sell them to idolaters.

הל"ט

מכירת פלי זין לעובדי כוכבים והליכה בקרבת עבודה זרה

Halacha 9 · Selling Weapons to Idolaters and Walking Near a City of Idolatry

היו ישראל שוכנים בין העובדי כוכבים וכרתו להם ברית

a covenant with them and they made stars the worshippers of among dwelling Yisrael Were

מתר למכר פלי זין לעבדי המלך וגיסותיו מפני שעושים בהם

with them that they make because and his legions the king to the servants of armour weapons of to sell it is permitted

מלחמה עם צרי המדינה להצילה ונמצאו מגנים עלינו שהרי אנו

we since us protecting and they are found to save it the province the enemies of with war

שרויין בתוכם. עיר שיש בה עבודת כוכבים מתר להלך חוצה לה

of it outside to walk it is permitted stars worship of in it that there is A city in their midst are dwelling

ואסור להכנס בתוכה. הנה חוצה לה עבודת כוכבים מתר להלך

to walk it is permitted stars worship of of it outside If there was into its midst to enter and it is forbidden

בתוכה:

in its midst

This halacha outlines the permission to sell weapons to the ruling authorities for mutual defense and the boundaries of walking near a city containing idolatry.

הל"י

אסור מעבר בעיר שיש בה עבודת כוכבים

Halacha 10 · Prohibition of Passing Through a City Containing an Idol

החולך ממקום למקום אסור לו לעבר בעיר שיש בה עבודת

worship of in it that has through a city to pass for him it is forbidden to a place from a place One who goes

כוכבים. במה דברים אמורים בזמן שהדרך מיחדת לאותו מקום אבל אם

if but place to that is designated that the road at a time are said words In what stars

יש שם דרך אחרת ונקרה והלך בזו מתר:

it is permitted on this one and he went and it happened another a road there there is

This halacha discusses the prohibition of traveling through a city where idolatry is practiced when an alternative route is available.

הל"יא

אסור בנין כפת עבודת כוכבים ושכר הבונה

Halacha 11 · Prohibition of Building an Idolatrous Dome and the Permissibility of the Wages

אסור לבנות עם העובדי כוכבים כפה שמעמידים בה עבודת

worship of in it that they set up a dome stars the worshippers of with to build It is forbidden

כוכבים. ואם עבר וקנה שכרו מתר. אבל בונה הוא לכתחלה

ab initio he builds but is permitted his wage and built he transgressed and if stars

הַטֶּרֶקְלִין אוֹ הַחֲצֵר שֶׁיֵּשׁ בָּהּ אוֹתָהּ הַכֶּפֶה:

dome that in it that there is the courtyard or the palace

This halacha discusses the prohibition of building a dome specifically designated for housing an idol, while permitting the wages post facto and allowing the construction of the surrounding palace or courtyard.

ה'ל"ב

חֲנוּתֵי הַמַּעֲטָרוֹת לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וּשְׂכִירוֹת חֲנוּתֵיהֶן

Halacha 12 · Shops Adorned for Idol Worship and Renting from Idolatrous Temples

עִיר שֶׁיֵּשׁ בָּהּ עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְהָיוּ בָּהּ חֲנוּתֵי מַעֲטָרוֹת וְשֹׂאֵינָן
and that are not adorned shops in it and there were stars worship of in it that has A city

מַעֲטָרוֹת הַמַּעֲטָרוֹת אָסוּר לְהֵנֹות בָּהֶן בְּכָל מָה שֶׁבִּתּוֹכָן מִפְּנֵי
because is inside them what with all from them to benefit it is forbidden the adorned ones adorned

שֶׁחֲזָקָתָן שֶׁבִּגְלַל עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים נִתְּעָרוּ וְשֹׂאֵינָן מַעֲטָרוֹת
adorned and those that are not they were adorned stars worship of that because of their presumption is

מִתְּרוֹת בִּהְנֵאָה. חֲנוּתֵי שֶׁל עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים אָסוּר לְשַׁכְּרָן מִפְּנֵי שֶׁמֶהֱנֶה
he benefits because to rent them it is forbidden stars worship of of Shops for benefit are permitted

עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים:

stars worship of

This halacha details the prohibitions regarding shops in a city with an idol, distinguishing between those decorated for idolatrous festivals and those that are not, as well as renting directly from an idolatrous temple.

ה'ל"ג

אָסוּר הֵנֵאָה מִדְּמֵי מִכִּירַת בֵּית לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים

Halacha 13 · The Prohibition of Benefiting from the Sale of a House to Idolaters

הַמוֹכֵר בֵּית לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים דְּמֵיו אָסוּרִים בִּהְנֵאָה וְיֹוֹלִיכֵם לָיָם
to the Sea of and he must take them in benefit is forbidden its money stars to service of a house One who sells

הַמֶּלַח. אֲבָל עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁאֶנְסוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגִזְלוּ בֵּיתוֹ וְהִעֲמִידוּ בּוֹ
in it and set up his house and robbed a Jew who coerced stars servants of but the Salt

עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים דְּמֵיו מִתְּרִין, וְכוֹתֵב וּמַעֲלָה בְּעִרְכָּאוֹת שֶׁלָּהֶם:
of theirs in courts and submit and he may write is permitted its money stars service of

This halacha details the prohibition of benefiting from money received when selling a house for idolatrous purposes, contrasted with receiving compensation for a house taken by force.

ה'ל"ד

רִכִּישַׁת נִכְסִים מִן הָעוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים בְּיוֹם הַיָּרִיד שֶׁלָּהֶם

Halacha 14 · Purchasing Property and Livestock from Idolaters at a Pagan Fair

וְחִלְלִין שֶׁל עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים אָסוּר לְסַפֵּד בָּהֶן. הוֹלְכִין לְיָרִיד שֶׁל
of to a fair One may go with them to eulogize it is forbidden stars worshippers of of And flutes

עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְלוֹקְחִין מֵהֶן בִּהְמָה עֲבָדִים וּשְׁפָחוֹת בְּגִיּוֹתָן וּבָתֵּי
and houses in their gentility and maidservants servants livestock from them and purchase worship idol

וְשָׂדוֹת וְכַרְמִים וְכוֹתֵב וּמַעֲלָה בְּעֶרְכָּאוֹת שֶׁלֹּהֶן מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא כְּמַצִּיל
 like one who rescues that he is because of theirs in courts and register and write and vineyards and fields
 מִיָּדָם. בְּמָה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים בְּלוֹקֵחַ מִבַּעַל הַבַּיִת שֶׁאִינוֹ נוֹתֵן
 give who does not the house from a master of with a purchaser are said words In what from their hand
 מִכֶּסֶּס אֲבָל הַלוֹקֵחַ שֶׁם מִן הַתֵּגֶר אָסוּר מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא נוֹתֵן מִכֶּסֶּס
 tax gives that he because it is forbidden the merchant from there one who purchases but tax
 וְהַמֶּכֶס לַעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְנִמְצָא זֶה מְהֵרָה עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים. עֶבֶר
 If he transgressed worship idol benefits this one and it turns out worship is for idol and the tax
 וְלָקַח מִן הַתֵּגֶר. אִם בְּהֵמָה לָקַח מִנֶּשֶׁר פִּרְסוּתִיָּה מִן הָאֲרָכָה
 the knee joint from its hooves he must cut off he purchased livestock if the merchant from and purchased
 וְלִמְטָה. וְאִם כְּסוּת וְכֵלִים לָקַח יִרְקָבוּ. לָקַח מְעוֹת וְכֵלִי
 and utensils of money If he purchased they must rot he purchased and utensils clothing and if and below
 מִתְּכוֹת יוֹלִיכֵם לָיִם הַמֶּלַח. לָקַח עֶבֶד לֹא מַעֲלִים וְלֹא
 and not do we raise him not a servant If he purchased Salt to the Sea of he must bring them metals
 מוֹרִידִין:
 do we cast down

This halacha details what items may be purchased from idolaters at their commercial fairs and the restrictions regarding buying from merchants who pay taxes to the idol.

ה'ת"ט

אָסוּר הִנָּאָה וְאֲכִילָה בְּסַעֲדַת עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים בְּחֻטְתָּהּ בְּנִי

Halacha 15 · The Prohibition of Benefiting and Eating at an Idolater's Wedding Feast

עוֹבֵד כּוֹכָבִים שֶׁעָשָׂה לְבָנוֹ אוֹ לְבִתּוֹ מִשְׁתָּה אָסוּר לְהִנּוֹת
 to benefit it is forbidden a feast for his daughter or for his son who made stars A worshiper of
 מִסַּעֲדָתוֹ. וְאִפְלוּ לֶאֱכַל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת הַיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁלוֹ שֶׁם אָסוּר הוּאִיל
 since it is forbidden there from his own the Jew and to drink to eat and even from his meal
 וּבְמִסְבֵּת עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים אֲכָלוּ. וּמֵאִמְתִּי אָסוּר לֶאֱכַל אֶצְלוֹ
 by him to eat is it forbidden And from when he ate it stars worshipers of and in a gathering of
 מִשִּׁיתְּחִיל לַעֲסֹק וְלִהְיוֹן צָרְכֵי סַעֲדָה וְכָל יְמֵי הַמִּשְׁתָּה וְלֵאחֶר
 and after the feast the days of and all the meal the needs of and to prepare to engage from when he begins
 יְמֵי הַמִּשְׁתָּה שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם. וְאִם עָשָׂה סַעֲדָה אַחֶרֶת מִחֻמַּת הַנִּשְׁוּאִין אִפְלוּ
 even the marriage because of another a meal he made and if days thirty the feast the days of
 לֵאחֶר שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם אָסוּר עַד שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ. וְכָל הַהִרְחָקָה הַזֹּאת
 this distancing and all months · twelve until it is forbidden days thirty after
 מִפְּנֵי עֲבוֹדָה שֶׁל כּוֹכָבִים הוּא שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר שְׁמוֹת לְדָ טו "וְקָרָא לָהּ
 to you and he will call 15 34 Shemos as it is said it is stars of worship because of

וְאָכַלְתָּ מִזִּבְחוֹ שְׁמוֹת לַדָּט "וְלָקַחְתָּ מִבְּנֹתָיו לְבָנָיִךְ

for your sons from his daughters and you will take 16 34 Shemos from his slaughtering and you will eat

וְזָנוּ וְגו':

etc and they will stray

This halacha details the strict distancing required from an idolater's wedding celebration to prevent intermarriage and idolatrous influence.

ה'טז

מִיִּלְדָּת וּמִיְנִיקָה לְעוֹבְדֵת פּוֹכְבִּים וּמִהֵן

Halacha 16 · Midwifery and Nursing for an Idolater and Receiving These Services from Them

בֵּת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא תִיָּנִיק אֶת בְּנָהּ שֶׁל עוֹבְדַת פּוֹכְבִּים מִפְּנֵי שְׂמִנְדָּלָת

that she raises because stars a worshiper of of the son — shall nurse not Yisrael A daughter of

בֶּן לְעֹבֹדֶת פּוֹכְבִּים. וְלֹא תִילֵד אֶת הַנְּכָרִית עִפּו"ם אֲבָל מִיִּלְדָּת

delivers but idolater the non-Jewish woman — shall she deliver and not stars for worship of a son

הִיא בְּשָׂכָר מְשׁוּם אִיכָּה. וְהַנְּכָרִית עִפּו"ם מִיִּלְדָּת אֶת בֵּת

the daughter of — delivers idolater and the non-Jewish hostility because of for a fee she woman

יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִיְנִיקָה אֶת בְּנָהּ בְּרִשׁוּתָּהּ כִּדִּי שְׁלֹא תַהַרְגֶנּוּ:

she will kill him that not so in her domain her son — and nurses Yisrael

This halacha details the restrictions on Jewish women nursing or delivering the babies of idolaters, and the safety precautions required when receiving these services from them.

ה'יז

אֲסוּר מִשָּׂא וּמִתֶּן עִם עוֹבְדֵי פּוֹכְבִּים וּמוֹמְרִים הַהוֹלְכִים לְעֹבֹדָה זָרָה

Halacha 17 · The Prohibition of Trading with Idolaters and Apostates Traveling to Idolatrous Worship

הַהוֹלְכִין לְתַרְפוֹת עִפּו"ם אֲסוּר לְשֵׂאת וּלְתֵת עִמָּהֶן וְהַבָּאִים מִתָּרִין

are permitted but those returning with them and to sell to buy it is forbidden idol worship to a place of Those going

וְהוּא שְׁלֹא יִהְיוּ קְשׁוּרִין זֶה בָּזֶה שָׂאֻם הֵיוּ קְשׁוּרִין שְׂמָא דְעֵתָן

their mind is perhaps bound they were for if to that one this one bound are not is when they and this

לְחֹזֵר. יִשְׂרָאֵל הַהוֹלֵךְ לְתַרְפוֹת עִפּו"ם, בְּהִלִּיכָה מִתֵּן לְשֵׂאת וּלְתֵת

and to sell to buy it is permitted on the journey there idol worship to a place of who goes A Jew to return

עִמּוֹ שְׂמָא יִחְזֹר בּוֹ וּבְחִזְרָה אֲסוּר. יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹמֵר בֵּין

whether who is an apostate A Jew it is forbidden but on the return from it he will turn back perhaps with him

בְּהִלִּיכָה בֵּין בְּחִזְרָה אֲסוּר:

it is forbidden on the return or whether on the journey there

This halacha details the restrictions on business dealings with non-Jews, Jews, and apostates when they are traveling to or from places of idolatrous worship.

ה'יח

יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁהָלַךְ לְיָרִיד שֶׁל עֶכו"ם, בְּחֲזִירָה אָסוּר לְשֵׂאת וּלְתֵת עִמּוֹ
with him and to deal to trade it is forbidden upon returning idol worshipers of to a fair who went A Jew

שֶׁמָּא עֶכו"ם מָכַר לָהֶן שָׁם, וְדָמֵי עֶכו"ם בְּיַד יִשְׂרָאֵל אָסוּרִים
is forbidden a Jew in the hand of an idol and the money of there to them he sold an idol lest

בְּהֶנָּה וּבְיָד עֶכו"ם מְתָרִין בְּהֶנָּה, וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה נוֹשְׂאִין וְנוֹתְנִין עִם
with and we deal we trade this and because of in benefit it is permitted an idolater but in the hand of in benefit

עֶכו"ם הַבָּא מִן הַתְּרָפוֹת שֶׁל עֶכו"ם וְאֵין נוֹשְׂאִין וְנוֹתְנִין עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל
a Jew with and deal trade but we do not idol worship of the festival from who comes an idolater

הַבָּא מִן הַתְּרָפוֹת הַהוּא וְלֹא עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹמֵר לֹא בְּהִלֵּכְתּוֹ וְלֹא
and nor on his going neither apostate a Jew with and not that the festival from who comes

בְּחֲזִירָתוֹ:

on his returning

It is forbidden to trade with a Jew returning from an idolatrous fair because he may have sold an idol and the money received is forbidden for benefit.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter begins by forbidding business transactions, loans, and gifts with idolaters within three days of their festivals in Eretz Yisrael, or on the day of the festival itself in Chutz la'Aretz, though certain non-durable goods and verbal loans are permitted to prevent financial loss. It distinguishes between communal festivals and private celebrations of an individual, and details the strict prohibition against selling items specifically used for avodah zarah or dangerous items like weapons and wild animals. Finally, the Rambam outlines the guidelines for traveling near cities containing avodah zarah and the halachos of building structures, such as domes or courtyards, that might be used for pagan worship.

My dear talmid, when you look at the detailed halachos of how we must distance ourselves from the festivals and practices of avodah zarah, a profound truth of the neshamah emerges. The Torah is teaching us about the incredible power of association and influence. We are forbidden to do business with them before their holidays because we do not want our actions, our livelihood, or our energy to even indirectly fuel or validate something that stands against the oneness of Hashem.

This is not just about ancient temples and statues; it is about the spiritual environment we build around ourselves every single day. The people we connect with, the places we walk, and the transactions we make all leave an imprint on our hearts. If we allow ourselves to get too close to influences that do not align with Torah and yiras Shamayim, those influences slowly seep into our thoughts and weaken our connection to Hashem.

Just as the halacha warns us not to sell weapons or dangerous things that can cause harm, we must protect our own spiritual safety. We have to be mindful of what we bring into our homes and what we allow to occupy our minds. Our avodah is to keep our hearts pure and dedicated solely to Hashem, ensuring that everything we touch and do brings us closer to Kedushah.

Today, take a moment to look at your daily routine and identify one environment, media source, or social circle that does not elevate your yiras Shamayim, and make a conscious decision to step back from it to keep your neshamah pure.