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Rabbi Nosson Scherman / Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz  
General Editors

פרשת אחרי-קדושים

Parashas Acharei-Kedoshim



## PARASHAS ACHAREI / פרשת אחרי

## אונקלוס

[טז] א וַיִּדְבֹּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אַחֲרֵי מוֹת שְׁנֵי בְנֵי

< sons < of the < the < after < Moses < to < HASHEM spoke 1 16  
two death

א וּמִלִּיל יְיָ עִם מֹשֶׁה בְּתֵר דְּמִיתוּ  
תְּרִין בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן בְּקִרְבֵּיהוֹן  
אַשְׁתָּא נִיבְרִיתָא קָדָם יְיָ  
וּמִיתוּ: בּוֹאֲמֵר יְיָ לְמֹשֶׁה מִלֵּל עִם

אַהֲרֹן בְּקִרְבָּתָם לִפְנֵי-יְהוָה וַיָּמָתוּ: ב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה דִּבֶּר אֶל-

< to < Speak << Moses: < to < And HASHEM said 2 << and they < HASHEM < before < when they << of Aaron,  
died. approached

רש"י

אל תאכל זוגין ואל תשכב בטחב, שלא תמות כדרך שמת פלוני. זה זרעו יותר מן הראשון. לכך נאמר אחרי מות שני בני אהרן ויאמר ה' אל משה דבר אל אהרן אחיך ואל יבא. שלא ימות כדרך שמתו בניו (ת"כ אחרי פרשת אגוד):

(א) וידבר ה' אל משה אחרי מות שני בני אהרן וגו'. מה ת"ל. וס"א אין לנו יודעים מה נאמר לו בדבור ראשון. היה רבי אלעזר בן עזריה מושלו משל, לחולה שנגס אלנו רופא, אמר לו אל תאכל זוגין ואל תשכב בטחב. בא אחר ואמר לו

## PARASHAS ACHAREI

## 16.

## The death of Aaron's sons and the Yom Kippur Service.

The Torah introduces the Yom Kippur service by saying that God spoke to Moses *after the death of the two sons of Aaron*, Nadab and Abihu, which implies that there was a connection between that tragedy and the Yom Kippur service. In addition, this verse adds a new dimension to the cause of their death, by saying that they died *when they approached before HASHEM*, an element that was omitted from the narrative in 10:1-2, which mentioned only their sin of offering an unbidden incense or fire. From the description here, however, it would seem that they were punished only for entering an area that was forbidden to them. This apparent discrepancy is discussed by the Sages and the commentators.

Why is the death of the righteous [Nadab and Abihu] mentioned in conjunction with the chapter of the Yom Kippur service? Because just as Yom Kippur brings atonement, so the death of the righteous brings atonement (*Yerushalmi Yoma* 1:1). *Meshech Chochmah* explains that Yom Kippur is עת רצון, a *time of favor*, and is thus an opportune time for atonement. When a righteous person such as Nadab or Abihu dies and his soul ascends to the world of souls, the other righteous souls in Heaven rejoice at his coming. This good feeling above can inspire a spirit of forgiveness and atonement to the righteous person's survivors on earth. This is the connection to Yom Kippur.

However, and this is crucial, both Yom Kippur and the death of the righteous bring atonement only on one condition. Yom Kippur atones only for people who recognize it as a holy day and treat it as such; those to whom it is merely a day of refraining from food and work, but without a spiritual dimension, do not find atonement on Yom Kippur. Similarly, those who do not honor the righteous in life do not benefit from their ascent to Heaven in death.

The Sages in *Sifra* note that 10:1 speaks of strange fire and unbidden incense, while our verse speaks only of their approach before God. R' Yose says that although they had no right to bring the incense and fire, that offense alone would not have caused their death. Our verse informs us that they died because they ventured into the Holy of Holies, which, as the rest of our chapter

teaches, no one may do except for the Kohen Gadol when he performs the Yom Kippur service.

R' Akiva, however, maintains that the apparent contradiction is resolved by a third verse, for the Torah states that they died *when they offered a strange fire before HASHEM* (*Numbers* 26:61). This teaches that it was the offering rather than the illegal entry that caused their death. *Onkelos* translates our verse according to R' Akiva's opinion.

R' Elazar ben Azariah comments that either sin — the unauthorized entry or the unbidden fire and incense — would have been sufficient cause to warrant their death.

[For further discussion of the sin of Nadab and Abihu, see commentary to 10:1-2.]

1. אַחֲרֵי מוֹת — *After the death*. Why did God couple the death of Aaron's sons with the commandment restricting Aaron's entry into the Holy of Holies? R' Elazar ben Azariah compared this to a sick person who had to be cautioned not to eat cold food or sleep in a damp place. One doctor merely gave him the instructions, without elaboration, but a second doctor told him, "Unless you avoid cold food and damp places, you will die as So-and-so died." Clearly the second doctor's warning was stronger than that of the first (*Rashi; Sifra*).

Here too, God told Moses to convey the law to Aaron in the context of the tragedy. Even if Aaron had been told that there was a potential death penalty for entering the Holy of Holies in an improper manner, it would not have had the same effect as the pronouncement that the death he had just witnessed was a Divine penalty for this very sin (*Chofetz Chaim*).

וַיָּמָתוּ — *And they died*. Since the verse began by speaking of their death, this phrase is apparently redundant. According to the *Zohar*, Nadab and Abihu died two deaths. One was the physical death; the other was that they left no children.

2-34. **The Yom Kippur service.** Less than six weeks after Israel received the Ten Commandments, the nation toppled from its spiritual pinnacle and worshiped the Golden Calf. Moses' long process of seeking forgiveness for his people ended on the tenth of Tishrei, when he came back from Sinai with the Second Tablets of the Law. That day became ordained as Yom Kippur, the eternal day of forgiveness. When the Temple stood, the centerpiece of Yom Kippur was the special service per-

אָהרֹן אַחוּר וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עֹלָל בְּכָל עֵדָן  
לְקוּדָשׁ מִגִּדּוֹ לְפָרְכָתָא לְקִדְּם בְּפָרְתָא  
דִּי עַל אֲרוֹנָא וְלֹא יָמוּת אַרִי בְּעֻנָּא  
אֲנָא מִתְגַּלִּי עַל בֵּית בְּפָרְתָא: גְּבָדָא  
יִהְיֶה עֹלָל אָהרֹן לְקוּדָשׁ בְּתוֹר בֶּר  
תּוֹרֵי לְחֻסָּתָא וּדְכַר לַעֲלָמָא: הִכְתוּנָא  
דְּבֻצָּא קוּדָשׁ יִלְבָּשׁ וּמְכַסִּין

אֶהְרֹן אֲחִיךָ וְאֶל-יִבְיָא בְּכָל-עֵת אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ  
 < the < into < times < at all < that he shall < your brother, < Aaron,  
 Sanctuary, not come

מִבֵּית לַפָּרֹכֶת אֶל-פְּנֵי הַכִּפֹּרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל-הָאָרֶץ  
 < the Ark, < upon < that is < of the Cover < the < to << the Curtain, < within  
 front

וְלֹא יָמוּת כִּי בַעֲזָן אֵרָאָה עַל-הַכִּפּוּרֹת׃ בְּנֹאת יִבֵּא אֶהְרֶן אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ

<< the < into < shall Aaron come < With this 3 << the < upon < will I < in a < for << so that he  
 Sanctuary: Ark-cover. appear a cloud not die;

בַּפֶּרֶךְ בֶּן־בִּקְרָה לַחֲטָאת וְאֵיל לְעֹלָה: - כְּתֻנֹּת־בֶּדֶד קָדַשׁ יִלְבָּשׁ וּמִכְנָסִי-

< and << He shall < that is < of < A tunic 4 <<for a burnt-< and a < for a < of the < a young< with a  
breeches don; sacred linen offering. ram sin-offering herd, one bull,

כש"י

הכפורים, כמו שמפורש בסוף הפרשה, בחדש השביעי בעשור לחדש (להלן טז:טז): (ד) בתנת בדר וגו'. מניד שליו משמש לפניו בשמונה בגדים שהם משמש בהם בחזק שיש בהם זכר, לפי שאין קטיגור נעשה סניגור (ר"ה כו.) אלא בארבעה ככהן הדיוט, וכולן של בן (פס' פרח תהי: קדש לביש. שיהיו משל ה' (פס' י:))

(ב) **ולא ימות**. ש"ס ז"ל הוא מת (סס); **בי בענן אראה**. כי תמיד אני נראה  
 ש"ס עמוד ענני, ופי' גלגלי שכיני' ש' יזהר שלל ריגיל זלא. זהו פשוט.  
 ורבותיו דרשוהו, **אל יבא בי אש בענן** הקטרת בז"ס הכפורים (סס ריג;  
 יומא גא); **בזאת**. יממירי' שלו ארבע מאות ועשר רמז לשי' בית ראשון  
 ויז"ר (כא); **בזאת יבא אהרן קרב**. ואף זו אש בכל עמ' כי אש בז"ס

formed by the Kohen Gadol. Many of its components were performed at no other time of the year and the day's service was done almost exclusively by the Kohen Gadol. Our chapter is the primary source of the special Yom Kippur service.

For a discussion of the Yom Kippur service, see the Overview to the ArtScroll edition of *Jonah* and the ArtScroll *Yom Kippur Machzor*.

**2. וְאֵלֶּיךָ בְּכָל־עֵת —** *That he shall not come at all times.* Even on Yom Kippur, when the Kohen Gadol is commanded to enter the Holy of Holies, he may not enter *at all times* of the day, but only when he carries out the sacrificial service outlined in this chapter (*Sifra*).

*Ramban* explains why the Torah states that the incense service was necessary to enable Aaron to enter the Holy of Holies without dying. The people had been deriding the incense service, claiming that Nadab and Abihu had died only because of it (*Mechilta, Beshalach*). Now they would understand that not only was the incense service not dangerous in itself, but it was thanks to it that Aaron would be able to perform the Yom Kippur service in safety — and even enter the most sacred part of the Sanctuary.

אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ — *Into the Sanctuary*, the Tabernacle or Temple building. See below.

מִבֵּית לְפָרֶכֶת — *Within the Curtain*, the Curtain in the Sanctuary that divided the Holy from the Holy of Holies. See *Exodus* 26:31.

**אֶל־פְּנֵי הַכֶּהָן** — *To the front of the Cover.* The Cover of the Holy Ark is described in *Exodus 25:17*. Thus, this term refers to the Holy of Holies.

**כִּי בִעָנָן** — *For in a cloud*. The simple meaning of the verse is that

no one may enter the inner Sanctuary because God's glory is manifested in the cloud of glory that hovers over the Ark. The Sages expounded, however, that the phrase refers to the special incense service of Yom Kippur (vs. 12-13). After the Kohen Gadol entered the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur, he ignited incense to create a *cloud*, whereupon God's glory appeared upon the Cover (*Rashi*; *Sifra*). The interpretation of this phrase was the subject of a major dispute between the Sages and the Sadducees, as explained in the prefatory remarks to verses 12-13 below.

### 3-6. The offerings of Aaron and the nation.

**3. בָּזֹאת יָבֵא אַהֲרֹן** — *With this shall Aaron come.* Only when he performs the entire sacrificial service listed below may Aaron, or his successors as Kohen Gadol, enter the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur.

**בָּפָר** — *With a bull.* This verse lists the personal offering of the Kohen Gadol, which he purchases with his own funds. The offering of the nation is given in verse 5.

**4. כְּתֹנֶת יָבֵד קֹדֶשׁ —** *A tunic of linen that is sacred.* The Kohen Gadol had two sets of vestments: One was called בְּגָדֵי זָהָב, *golden garments*, and consisted of eight garments, four of which contained gold. The second set was called בְּגָדֵי לָבָן, *white garments*, and consisted of the four white linen garments described in this verse. The white garments were worn only on Yom Kippur, and even then only for the special portions of the service that are specified in this chapter: the sacred incense service that is burned in the Holy of Holies, and the service of his bull, and the national he-goat sin-offerings. All of the regular daily rituals and part of the Yom Kippur service, as well, are performed in the regular golden garments. The order of the service and the garments in which each portion of it was performed is discussed

בְּדֵי יִהְיוּ עַל-בְּשָׂרוֹ וּבְאַבְנֵט בֶּדֶל יִחְגֹּר וּבְמִצְנֶפֶת

< and with << he shall gird < of < and with << his flesh, < upon < shall < of  
a turban himself, linen a sash be linen

בְּדֵי יִצְנֹף בְּגָדֵי-קֹדֶשׁ הֵם וְרַחֵץ בַּמַּיִם אֶת-בְּשָׂרוֹ

< his flesh < in water < and he << are < of < gar- << he shall cover < of  
shall wash they; holiness ments his head; linen

וּלְבָשִׁם: ֵה וּמֵאֵת עֵדֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִקַּח שְׁנֵי-

< two < he shall << of Israel < of the < the < From 5 << and then  
take Children assembly don them.

שְׁעִירֵי עֲזִים לְחֹטֵאת וְאַיִל אֶחָד לְעֹלָה: ֵה וְהִקְרִיב אֶהָרֶן אֶת-פָּרֹ

< the bull < Aaron shall bring near 6 << for a burnt- < and one ram < for a sin-offering < goats < male  
offering.

הַחֹטֵאת אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וְכִפֹּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵד בֵּיתוֹ: ֵה וְלָקַח אֶת-שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִים

< he-goats < the two < He shall 7 << his < and for < for < and he << his, < that is < of the  
take household. himself shall atone sin-offering

רש"י

וְשֵׁי קְדוּשֵׁי יָדִים ורגלים מן הכיור (ת"כ פרק ויהיו: יומא ס: (ו) את פר  
החטאת אשר לו. (והוא) האמור למעלה (פסוק ג), ולמדך כהן שמשלו הוא בל  
ולא משל לזכור (ת"כ פרשתא ב:; יומא ג:; ובפר בעדו ובעד ביתו. מתודה  
עליו עונותיו ועונות ביתו (ת"כ ס: ב:; יומא לו:)

יצנף. כתרומתו יחית צרישה, יחית צרישה. כמו ותגדו בגדו (צרישה לט:טז)  
ואחתה: ורחץ במים. אותו היום טעון טבילה בכל חליפותיו (ת"כ ס: יא"ב;  
יומא ל:). וחמש פעמים היה מחליף מעבודת פנים לעבודת חוץ ומחון לפניו,  
ומשנה מצדדי זהב לצדדי לזן ומצדדי זהב, ובכל חליפה טעון טבילה

in the notes. Since the Jewish people had sinned by worshipping a calf made of gold [and that sin remains like a "prosecutor" demanding that the people be punished (*Rashi* to *Exodus* 32:34)], it would have been inappropriate for the Kohen Gadol to wear gold while seeking forgiveness for the people's sins. Consequently he did not wear the golden garments during the portions of the service that sought forgiveness for sin. As the Sages put it, אין קטגור נעשה סגור, a prosecutor cannot become a defender (*Rosh Hashanah* 26a).

**בְּדֵי** — *Of linen*. The whiteness of linen is symbolic of forgiveness; and the material itself symbolizes the Heavenly service of the angels, who are described as wearing linen, as it were (*Ezekiel* 9:2). The four white garments symbolize the four camps of angels that serve God (*R' Bachya*).

The custom to wear a white *kittel* on Yom Kippur originated from the white garments of the Kohen Gadol. The Sages taught that a white garment is also symbolic of the Jews' confidence that God will accept our repentance on Yom Kippur. When the people of Israel face God's judgment, they dress in white, as if going to a celebration, in confidence that God will accept their repentance and forgive them.

**וְרַחֵץ** — *He shall wash*. . . and then don them. On Yom Kippur, whenever the Kohen Gadol changed into his regular garments or into his white ones — a total of five times — he immersed himself in a *mikveh*. In addition, before and after each change of garments, he washed his hands and feet with water from the *Laver*, that stood in the Sanctuary Courtyard. Thus, he immersed himself five times and washed his hands and feet ten times (*Rashi, Sifra; Yoma* 32a). In the course of the

chapter, we will indicate which garments he wore for the various services.

**וְהִקְרִיב אֶהָרֶן** — *Aaron shall bring near*. The Kohen Gadol was to bring the offering to the northwestern side of the Altar, where he would later perform the slaughter (*Ralbag*).

**אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ** — *That is his*. This term indicates that the Kohen Gadol purchased this, *his* own offering, from personal funds, unlike the offering of the nation, which was brought with communal funds (*Rashi; Sifra*).

**וְכִפֹּר** — *And he shall atone*. The Kohen Gadol gained atonement by pronouncing the confession for his own and his family's sins (*Rashi; Yoma* 36b).

The text of his confession was: "I beg of You, HASHEM, I have acted wickedly, rebelled, and sinned before You, I and my household. I beg of You, HASHEM, forgive now the wicked acts, rebellions, and sins, for I have acted wickedly, rebelled, and sinned before You, I and my household, as it is written in the Torah of Your servant Moses (16:30): *For on this day He will grant atonement to you* . . ." (*Mishnah Yoma* 3:8).

#### Confession.

The primary atonement of an offering is effected by the blood service, not by the confession (see below, 17:11), but the confession is an essential part of repentance, and hence of atonement (1:4; *Yoma* 5a). It is one of God's greatest gifts that He permits a person to erase the sins of his past so that he can begin a better life, a life unhampered by the corrosive effects of past sins. Such a new beginning is not possible unless the sinner has repented, by confronting his misdeeds, acknowledging them,

ויקום יתהוה קדם יי בתרע משכן  
זמנא: ה' ונתן אהרן על תבין צפירין  
עדבין עדבא חד לשמא דיי ועדבא  
חד לעזאזל: טויקרב אהרן ית  
צפירא די סליק עלוהי עדבא לשמא  
דיי ויעבדנה חטאתא: יוצפירא  
די סליק עלוהי עדבא לעזאזל  
יתקם כד חי קדם יי לכפרא עלוהי

וְהָעֵמִיד אֹתָם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה פָּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:

« of < of the < at the << HASHEM, < before < them < and he shall stand  
Meeting. Tent entrance

ח וְנָתַן אֶהָרֹן עַל-שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִים גִּרְלֹת גֹּזֶרֶל אֶחָד

< one lot << lots: < he-goats < the two < upon < Aaron shall place 8

לַיהוָה וְגֹזֶרֶל אֶחָד לְעִזָּאזֵל: ט וְהִקְרִיב אֶהָרֹן

< Aaron shall bring near 9 << for Azazel. < and one lot << for HASHEM,

אֶת-הַשְּׁעִיר אֲשֶׁר עָלָה עָלָיו הַגֹּזֶרֶל לַיהוָה וַעֲשֹׂהוּ חֲטָאתָ: י וְהַשְּׁעִיר

< And the 10 << a sin-offering. < and he shall << for < [by] the lot < was designated < that < the he-goat  
he-goat offering. make it HASHEM,

אֲשֶׁר עָלָה עָלָיו הַגֹּזֶרֶל לְעִזָּאזֵל יַעֲמַד-חַי לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו

<< through < to provide << HASHEM, < before < alive < shall be < for Azazel < [by] the lot < was designated < that  
it, atonement stood

רש"י

כשמיני הגורל עליו קורא לו שם ואומר לה' חטאת (וימא' לט, מ:): (וי) יעמד חי. כמו  
יועמד חי, על ידי אחרים, ותרגומו יתקם כד חי. מה ת"ל, לפי שנה' לשלח אותו לעזאזל  
ואיני יודע שילוחו אם למיתה אם לחיים, לכך נאמר יעמד חי, עמידתו חי עד שישתלח,  
מכאן שילוחו למיתה (ת"כ פרשתא ב:): לכפר עליו. שיתודה עליו (ס' ז, יומא לז,

(ח) ונתן אהרן על שני השעירים גרלות. מעמיד אחד לימין ואחד לשמאל,  
ונתן שתי ידיו בקלפי, ונטל גורל בימין וחברו בשמאל ונתן עליהם. את שכתוב בו לשם  
הוא לשם, ואת שכתוב בו לעזאזל משתלח לעזאזל (וימא' לט, מ:): עזאזל. הוא הר עזוקשה,  
זוק גבוה, שנה' ארץ גזרה (להלן פסוק כג) חתוכה (יומא סז:): (ט) ועשהו חטאת.

and sincerely resolving to change. This is represented by confession. In fact, according to *Rambam*, the commandment to repent is embodied in the commandment to confess.

That the Kohen Gadol's verbal confession could provide atonement for the entire nation is a remarkable demonstration of the power of a confession that is not a mere recitation of a formula, but a sincere declaration of remorse. People are loath to acknowledge a fact that hurts them more than they can bear. When Rabbi Judah the Prince died, his disciples declared that whoever said he was dead should be pierced with a sword (*Kesubos* 104a). They did not — nor could they — deny the fact of his death, but so grieved were they that they could not bear to hear it stated. Anyone who could bring such a tragedy to his lips was guilty of an unforgivable desecration. So too, man finds it hard to confess. When the Kohen Gadol did so with total contrition it was the equal of an offering — and had the power to bring atonement (*R' Yosef Dov Soloveitchik*).

**7-18. The lots.** The next step in the service was to select two he-goats: one that would become a national sin-offering and a second that would become the bearer of all the people's sins, as it were, and be pushed over a cliff in the desert.

**7. שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִים** — *The two he-goats.* This term indicates that the two goats are likened to each other. They must be similar in appearance, height, and value (*Shevuos* 13b).

**לִפְנֵי ה'** — *Before HASHEM.* The two he-goats were placed at the eastern end of the Courtyard facing west, toward the Sanctuary (*Sifra*).

**8. גִּרְלֹת . . . וְנָתַן אֶהָרֹן . . . לֹה' . . . לְעִזָּאזֵל** — *Aaron shall place . . . lots.* Aaron is to place two lots in a box, one marked לֹה' for HASHEM, and the other marked לְעִזָּאזֵל for Azazel (see vs. 20-22). One goat would

be at Aaron's right and the other at his left. He would draw one lot with his right hand and place it on the head of the animal at his right, and take the other lot with his left hand and place it on the other goat (*Rashi*).

In order to insure that the two goats — which were identical in appearance — would not become confused with each other, the Kohen Gadol would tie a red woolen strip to the head of the goat for Azazel, and another strip around the neck of the sin-offering. When the goat for Azazel was pushed over the precipice, the red wool would miraculously turn white, to symbolize that Israel's sins had been forgiven (*Yoma* 39a).

**לְעִזָּאזֵל** — *For Azazel.* The name symbolizes עֹז, *strong*, and אֵל, *mighty*. It is a lofty, hard cliff (*Rashi*; *Sifra*).

**9.** After placing the lot on the head of the he-goat, Aaron was to pronounce the words לֹה' חֲטָאתָ, *a sin-offering to HASHEM*, thus formally consecrating it as the national sin-offering (*Rashi*).

**10. יַעֲמַד-חַי** — *Shall be stood alive.* Or *HaChaim* notes that the goat is referred to here and in verse 21, before the confession, as *alive*. After Aaron pronounces confession upon it, however, it is no longer called *alive*, even though it would be some time before it would go to its death. The confession had the effect of placing all the people's sins on the goat, which would then carry them off to the desolate Azazel. The presence of such contamination on the goat rendered it spiritually "dead"; thus it was called *alive* only before Aaron's confession.

**לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו** — *To provide atonement through it.* The Kohen Gadol recited the confession for the sins of the nation, as set forth in verse 21 (*Rashi*). After that, the goat was dispatched to the desert, as described in vs. 21-22.

לִשְׁלַח אֹתוֹ לְעֶזְאוֹל הַמִּדְבָּרָה: יֵא וְהִקְרִיב אֶהָרֹן

< Aaron shall bring near 11 >> to the Wilderness. < to Azazel < it < to send

אֶת־פֶּרֶךְ הַחֲטָאתָ אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וְכִפֵּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵד

< and for < for < and he << his, < that is < of the sin- < the bull  
himself shall atone offering

בֵּיתוֹ וְשָׁחַט אֶת־פֶּרֶךְ הַחֲטָאתָ אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: יֵב וְלָקַח

< He shall 12 >> his. < that is < of the sin- < the bull < then he shall << his  
take offering slaughter household;

מִלֵּא־הַמַּחְתָּה גִּחְלִי־אֵשׁ מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִלִּפְנֵי

< from < the Altar < from < that are < of coals < shovel < a full  
before atop fiery

יְהוָה וּמִלֵּא חֲפָנָיו קִטְרֹת סַמִּים דֶּקָּה וְהִבִּיא מִבֵּית לַפָּרֹכֶת: יֵג וְנָתַן

< He shall 13 >> the Curtain. < within < and he shall << finely < spices, < of < and his cupped << HASHEM,  
place bring [it] ground, incense hands full

אֶת־הַקִּטְרֹת עַל־הָאֵשׁ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְכִסָּה עֲנַן הַקִּטְרֹת אֶת־הַכִּפֹּרֶת

< the Ark-cover < of the incense < [with] < so as to << HASHEM, < before < the fire < upon < the incense  
the cloud cover

אֲשֶׁר עַל־הָעֵדוּת וְלֹא יָמוּת: יֵד וְלָקַח מִדָּם הַפֶּר וְהִזָּה בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ עַל־

< upon < with his < and he shall << of the < some of < He shall 14 >> so that he << the [Tablets of < atop < that is  
forefinger sprinkle bull, the blood take not die. the] Testimony,

רש"י

שלפני הפתח והוא לז' מערבי (ת"כ פרק גז; יומא מה; זכחים נח); דקה. מה  
ת"ל דקה והלא כל הקטורת דקה היא, שלאמר ושחקת ממנה הדק (שמות לז) אלא  
שהיא דקה מן הדקה, שמערב יום הכפורים היה מחזירה למכתשת (ת"כ שם ט"ז;  
כריתות ו:); (יג) על האש. שבתוך המחמה: ולא ימות. הא אם לא עשהה כהקנה  
חייב מיתה (ת"כ שם יא; יומא גג.) (יד) והזה באצבעו. הוזה אחת זמשה:

מז: כדכתיב והתודה עליו (להלן פסוק כא); (יא) ובפר בעדו וגו'. וידוי שני עליו  
ועל אחיו הכהנים (יומא מא); שהם כלם קרוים ביהו (ת"כ פרשתא ג:א) שג' בית אהרן  
זרכו את ה' וגו' (והלים קלהי"ט) מכאן שהכהנים מתכפרים זו. וכל כפרתו וס"א  
כפרתו אינה אלא על טומאת מקדש וקדשיו, כמו שנא' וכפר על הקדש מטומאות וגו'  
(פסוק טז; שזכות יצ"ג): (יב) מעל המזבח. החילון (יומא מה); מלפני ה'. מלד

**11. וְכִפֵּר.** — *And he shall atone.* The Kohen Gadol confessed again — using the text given in the notes to verse 6 — this time for himself and his fellow Kohanim, all of whom are called *his household* (Rashi; Sifra).

**12-13. The incense service.** The Yom Kippur incense service was unique in several ways, as described in Mishnah Yoma 4:4. Among others, it could be performed only by the Kohen Gadol, it was performed only once a year, and it was performed in the Holy of Holies, the sacred area of the Temple that not even the Kohen Gadol could enter at any other time. The incense mixture was the same as that used all year round for the twice-daily service, but the day before Yom Kippur it would be ground again so that it would be *דקה מן הדקה*, *finest of the fine* (Kereisos 6b).

Very briefly, the Kohen Gadol would scoop a shovelful of burning coals from the Outer Altar, and then fill his hands with the specially ground incense, which he would place in a ladle. With the heavier shovel in his right hand and the lighter ladle in his left, he would enter the Holy of Holies, where he would pour the incense onto the fire and remain there until the incense

cloud rose and covered the Ark. For a full description of the service, see ArtScroll *Mishnah Yoma* Chs. 4-5.

**12. וְלָקַח.** — *He shall take . . .* After having cleansed himself of sin through confession and the slaughter of his personal sin-offering, the Kohen Gadol becomes worthy to appear before God. At this point, therefore, he may offer the incense in the Holy of Holies (*Sifra*).

**14-28. Blood service of the bull and he-goat sin-offerings.** Following the incense service, the Kohen Gadol turned to the special blood service of his own bull and the people's he-goat. The blood had been supervised by a Kohen who had been stirring it so that it should not congeal. Now, the Kohen Gadol leaves the Holy of Holies to get the vessel containing the blood and bring it into the Holy of Holies, where he sprinkles it toward the Ark-cover.

**14. וְהִזָּה בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ.** — *And he shall sprinkle with his forefinger.* The Kohen Gadol would dip his right index finger into the blood and sprinkle it eight times toward the Ark with a whiplike motion. He would aim upward once and downward seven times [see

על אפי כפרתא קדומא ולקדם  
כפרתא ידי שבע זמני מן דמא  
באצבעה: טו ויכוס ית צפירא  
דחטאתא די לעמא ויעל ית דמה  
למגיו לפרכתא ויעבד ית דמה כמא  
די עבד לדמא דתורא וידי יתה על  
כפרתא ולקדם כפרתא: טו ויכפר על  
קודשא מסואבת בני ישראל  
וממדיהון לכל חטאיהון וכן יעבד  
למשכן זמנא דשרי עמהון בגו  
סואבתהון: י"ו וכל אנש לא יהי  
במשכן זמנא במעלה לכפרא

פְּנֵי הַכֹּהֵן קִדְמָה וּלְפָנֶי הַכֹּהֵן יִזְה שִׁבְע־  
< seven < he shall < of the < and in << that faces < of the < the  
sprinkle Ark-cover front east; Ark-cover front

פְּעָמִים מִן־הַדָּם בְּאַצְבָּעוֹ: טו וְשָׁחַט אֶת־שְׂעִיר  
< the he-goat < He shall 15 << with his < the < from < times  
slaughter forefinger. blood

הַחֲטָאתֹ אֲשֶׁר לָעֵם וַהֲבִיֵּא אֶת־דָּמּוֹ אֶל־מִבֵּית  
< within < to < its blood < and he << from < that is < of the sin-  
shall bring the people, offering

לְפָרֶכֶת וַעֲשֵׂה אֶת־דָּמּוֹ בְּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְדָם הַפָּר  
<< of the < with the < he had < as < its < with < he shall << the  
bull, blood done blood do Curtain;

וַהֲזֵה אֹתוֹ עַל־הַכֹּהֵן וּלְפָנֶי הַכֹּהֵן: טז וְכָפַר עַל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ מִטְּמֵאוֹת  
< for the < the < upon < [Thus] shall 16 << of the < and in < the < upon < it < and he  
contaminations Sanctuary he bring Ark-cover. front Ark-cover shall  
atonement sprinkle

בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִפְשְׁעֵיהֶם לְכָל־חַטָּאתָם וְכֵן יַעֲשֶׂה לְאַהֶל מוֹעֵד הַשֹּׁכֵן  
< that < of < for the < shall < and so << their sins; < among all < and for their << of Israel, < of the  
dwells Meeting Tent he do rebellious sins Children

אַתֶּם בְּתוֹךְ טְמֵאוֹתֵיכֶם: י"ז וְכָל־אָדָם לֹא־יִהְיֶה | בְּאַהֶל מוֹעֵד בְּבֹאוֹ לְכַפֵּר  
< to bring < when he < of < in the < to be < is < person < Every 17 << their < amid < with  
atonement enters Meeting Tent forbidden contamination. them

רש"י

שנאמר לכל חטאתם, וחטאת הוא שוגג (שבועות ז'): ומפשעיהם. אף הנכנסין מזיד  
בטומאה (שם): וכן יעשה לאהל מועד. כשם שהיה משניהם בפנים אחת למעלה  
ושבע למטה, כך מזה על הפרוכת מבחוץ משניהם אחת למעלה ושבע למטה (וימא נז):  
השכן אתם בתוך טומאותם. אף על פי שהם טמאים שכינה צנייהם (שם נז):

ולפני הכפרת יזה שבע. הרי אחת למעלה ושבע למטה (שם נה): (טו) אשר  
לעם. מה שהפר מכפר על הכהנים מכפר השעיר על ישראל (שם סא). והוא השעיר  
שעלה עליו הגורל לשם: כאשר עשה לדם הפר. אחת למעלה ושבע למטה (וימא  
נז): (טז) מטמאות בני ישראל. על הנכנסין למקדש בטומאה ולא נודע להם בסוף,

notes below], but it was not necessary for the blood actually to touch the Ark.

16. וְכָפַר עַל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ — [Thus] shall he bring atonement upon the Sanctuary. The sin for which the bull and the he-goat atone is that of *contamination of the Sanctuary and its sanctities*, meaning that someone entered the Temple or ate the flesh of offerings while contaminated (*Rashi*).

וּמִפְשְׁעֵיהֶם לְכָל־חַטָּאתָם — And for their rebellious sins among all their sins. The offerings atone both for sins of contamination that were done intentionally and for חֲטָאִים, sins that were committed unintentionally.

וְכֵן יַעֲשֶׂה . . . — And so shall he do . . . The Kohen Gadol was to sprinkle both bloods — first that of the bull and then that of the he-goat — in the outer chamber of the Temple, just as he had sprinkled them inside the Holy of Holies. In the case of this latter sprinkling, he whipped the blood with his finger toward the *Paroches*, the Curtain that separates the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Sanctuary (*Rashi*).

As in the case of the sprinkling inside the Holy of Holies, it was not required that the blood touch the *Paroches*, merely that it be whipped in that direction (*Yoma* 57a).

הַשֹּׁכֵן אִתָּם בְּתוֹךְ טְמֵאוֹתָם — That dwells with them amid their contamination. God's Presence [*the Shechinah*] remains with His children despite their spiritual contamination. Had this Presence left the Tabernacle completely, no atonement would be possible; only as long as the essence of this holiness remains in the Sanctuary can Israel's sins be cleansed from it (*Rashi*, with *Sefer HaZikaron*, *Maskil L'David*).

17. . . . וְכָל־אָדָם — Every person. The Jerusalem Talmud (*Yoma* 1:5) states that during the Kohen Gadol's inner service, not even angels were permitted to enter the Tabernacle. *Recanati* and *R' Bachya* explain that on Yom Kippur it was necessary for the Kohen Gadol to approach God, as it were, in utter and complete privacy, without any intermediary between them, and that the Divine blessing is most efficacious when it is received in quiet solitude.



בְּקֹדֶשׁ עַד-צֵאתוֹ וְכִפֵּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵד בֵּיתוֹ וּבְעֵד

< and << his < and < for < he shall << his < until < in the  
for household, for himself atone departure; Sanctuary

כָּל-קֹהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל: ❖ שְׁנֵי יֵח וַיֵּצֵא אֶל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר

< that is < the Altar < to < He shall 18 << of Israel. < con- < the  
go out gregation entire

לִפְנֵי-יְהוָה וְכִפֵּר עָלָיו וְלָקַח מִדָּם הַפָּר וּמִדָּם

< and from < of the < from the < He shall << upon it: < and make < HASHEM, < before  
the blood bull blood take atonement

הַשְּׁעִיר וְנָתַן עַל-קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב: ❷ וְהִזָּה עָלָיו מִן-הַדָּם בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ

< with his < the < from < upon < He shall 19 << all < of the Altar < the corners < on < and < of the  
forefinger blood it sprinkle around. place [it] he-goat

שִׁבְעַ פְּעָמִים וְטָהָרוּ וְקִדְּשׁוּ מִטְמְאוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ❸ וְכָלָה מִכִּפֵּר

< bringing < [When] he 20 << of Israel. < of the < from the < and < thus shall << times; < seven  
atonement is finished Children contaminations sanctify it he purify it

אֶת-הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְאֶת-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְהִקְרִיב אֶת-הַשְּׁעִיר הַחַי:

<< that is < the he-goat < [then] he shall << and to the Altar, < of Meeting, < to the Tent < to the Sanctuary,  
alive. bring near

ר"ע

עליו. ומה היא כפרתו, ולקח מדם הפר ומדם השעיר, מעורבין זה לתוך זה (ת"כ שם; יומא נג:). וזהו עליו מן הדם. אחר שנתן מתנות באלבטו על קרנותיו מזה שבע הזאות על גגו (ת"כ שם יב; יומא נח:נט:). וטהרו. ממה שעבר; וקדשו. לטהר

(יוח) אל המזבח אשר לפני ה'. זה מזבח הזהב שהוא לפני ה' בהיכל. ומה ת' לו ולא, לפי שזה הזאות על הפרוכת ועמד מן המזבח ולפניו והזה, ובמתנות המזבח הזקיקו ללאת מן המזבח ולחון, ויתחיל מקרן מזרחית לפניה (ת"כ פרק ד:ז:); יומא נח:; ובפר

18. — *He shall atone.* This verse refers to the incense service, which atoned for the sin of *lashon hara* [evil tongue], i.e., slander and gossip. The Sages say: Let incense — a service that is performed quietly — come and atone for *lashon hara*, that is spoken stealthily, behind someone's back (Yoma 44a).

The Chofetz Chaim noted that this shows us the seriousness of the sin of *lashon hara*. The Kohen Gadol comes into the Holy of Holies only once a year, and his first service in that awesome place and on that awesome day is to seek atonement for the sins of gossip and slander. Those are the sins because of which the prosecuting angel condemns Israel, and for which Israel must have forgiveness before its other sins can be forgiven.

18. — *He shall go out.* The Kohen Gadol leaves the area in front of the Curtain, where he had sprinkled the two bloods.

He then mixed the two bloods together and performed a new blood service upon the four corners of the Golden Altar. This Altar was called *the Altar that is before HASHEM*, because it is inside the Temple, unlike the Outer Altar that was in the Courtyard (Rashi).

19. — *He shall sprinkle upon it.* The Kohen Gadol cleared away incense and ashes from the Altar top until part of its gold surface was exposed (Yoma 59a). Then he sprinkled blood upon it seven times (Rashi; Sifra).

— *Thus shall he purify it and sanctify it.* This service purifies the Altar from past desecrations and sanctifies it for the

future (Rashi; Sifra), so that the offerings that will be brought upon it will be accepted by God (Malbim).

20-22. **The he-goat to Azazel.** The commandment to send a "scapegoat" to Azazel is described by the Sages as a *חוק*, a decree that is beyond human intelligence. Indeed, the concept of an animal carrying away all the sins of a nation does seem incomprehensible. Nevertheless, the later commentators have attempted to offer rationales:

(a) The ritual of the scapegoat inspires the Jews to repent, for it symbolizes to everyone that people can free themselves from the burden of past sins and remove them as far as possible (Rambam).

(b) Two identical he-goats are used for this process to demonstrate that every person must choose between good and evil, and that no one has the luxury of being neutral. Those who do not choose to move toward holiness are inevitably pushing themselves toward a wasteland of spiritual destruction (R' Hirsch).

(c) Rambam, as explained by R' Munk, likens the ritual to the case of a servant preparing a banquet for his king. The monarch orders him to set aside a portion for a loyal follower. Obviously, the meal the servant gives to the follower is not a tribute to him, but to the king who issued the order. Here, too, the Kohen Gadol presents both he-goats to God, Who, in turn, uses the lot to assign one of them as a gift to Azazel, a place that symbolizes

כא ויסמוך אהרן את שתי ידיו [על-ראש  
על ריש צפירא חיא וינדי עלוהי  
ית כל ענית בני ישראל וית כל  
חוביהון לכל חטאיהון ויתן יתהון  
על ריש צפירא וישלח ביד גבר  
דזמין למקה למדברא: כב ויטול  
צפירא עלוהי ית כל חוביהון  
לארעא דלא יתבא וישלח ית  
צפירא למדברא (גאא במדברא):  
כג וייעול אהרן למשכן ומנא וישלח  
ית לבושי בוצא די לבש במעלה

כא וְסִמָּךְ אֶהְרֹן אֶת־שְׁתֵּי יָדָיו [עַל־רֹאשׁ  
< the head < upon < of his hands < both < Aaron shall support 21

הַשְּׁעִיר הַחַי וְהִתְנַחֵה עָלָיו אֶת־כָּל־עֲוֹנוֹת בְּנֵי  
< of the < the < all < upon it < and he shall << that < of the  
Children iniquities confess is alive, he-goat

יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־כָּל־פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם לְכָל־חַטָּאתָם וְנָתַן אֹתָם  
< them < and he << their sins, < among < their < and all << of Israel,  
shall place all rebellious sins

עַל־רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁעִיר וְשִׁלַּח בְּיַד־אִישׁ עֲתִי הַמִּדְבָּרָה: כב וְנָשָׂא הַשְּׁעִיר  
< will the < [Thus,] 22 << into the < appointed < of a < by the < and he shall << of the < the head < upon  
he-goat bear desert. for this, man, hand send [it] away he-goat,

עָלָיו אֶת־כָּל־עֲוֹנוֹתָם אֶל־אֶרֶץ גִּזְרָה וְשִׁלַּח אֶת־הַשְּׁעִיר בַּמִּדְבָּר:  
<< into the < the he-goat < and he shall << that is < a land < to < their < all < upon  
desert. send away uninhabited, iniquities itself

וכא וּבֹא אֶהְרֹן אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּפָשַׁט אֶת־בְּגָדֵי הַכֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לָבַשׁ בְּבֹאוֹ  
< when he < he had < that < of linen < the < he shall << of < the Tent < to < Aaron shall come 23  
entered worn garments remove Meeting,

רש"י

יומא (ת"כ שס יג): (בא) איש עתי. המוכן לכך מיום חתמו (שס פרשתא דהא: יומא  
הערבים. וזהו סדר העבודות. תמיד של שחר בבגדי זהב, ועבודת פר ושעיר הפנימים  
וקטרת של מחתה בבגדי לבן, ואילו ואיל העם ומקטת המוספין בבגדי זהב, והולאת כף  
ומחתה בבגדי לבן, ושירי המוספין ותמיד של בין הערבים וקטורת ההיכל שעל מזבח  
הפנימי בבגדי זהב (ת"כ שס יג; יומא שס). וסדר המקראות לפי סדר העבודות כך הוא.  
ושלח את השעיר במדבר. ורחן את זשור במים וגו' וילא ועשה את עולמו וגו' ואת חלב

לזא (ת"כ שס יג): (בא) איש עתי. המוכן לכך מיום חתמו (שס פרשתא דהא: יומא  
סו): (בג) ובא אהרן אל אהל מועד. אמרו רבותינו שאין זה מקומו של מקרא זה,  
ונתנו טעם לדבריהם במסכת יומא (לז). ואמרו כל הפרשה כולה נאמרה על הסדר,  
חוץ מציאה זו שהיא אחר עשיית עולמו ועולת העם והקטרת אימורי פר ושעיר  
שנעשים בחוץ בבגדי זהב, וטובל ומקדש ופושטן ולבש לבן, ובא אל אהל  
מועד להוֹלִי' את הכף ואת המחטה שהקטיר זה הקטרת לפני ולפנים (ת"כ פרק וז;

the forces of evil. This apparent preoccupation with evil teaches that it is not enough to be sure that we have God's forgiveness and love — we must also recognize and repel the hostile forces that surround and tempt us. There are many examples of such behavior: Though Jacob had complete trust in God, he sent a lavish tribute to Esau to appease his anger. Despite Esther's faith in God, she invited Haman to her table as part of her plan to thwart him (Zohar).

Thus, the scapegoat is a reminder that God wants us to guard against the threats of our enemies by recognizing their existence and appeasing them. *Pirkei d'R'Eliezer* teaches that this tribute on Yom Kippur would cause the Accuser to desist from his condemnation of Israel and testify in their favor.

**21. וְסִמָּךְ אֶהְרֹן** — *Aaron shall support*. As noted in 1:4, the individual who brings an offering must support himself upon it and confess the sin for which he brings it. Communal offerings do not require supporting, with the exception of this one and the sin-offering for an erroneous ruling of the Great Sanhedrin (4:15).

**לְכָל־חַטָּאתָם** — *Among all their sins*. This verse makes no limitations on the sort of sins for which the he-goat of Azazel atones. Consequently, the Sages derive that this he-goat provides

atonement for all sins, grievous and minor (*Shevuos* 2b).

**וְנָתַן אֹתָם** — *And he shall place them*. The sins are removed from the Jewish people and "sent away," never to be recalled again (*Ibn Ezra*).

**אִישׁ עֲתִי** — *A man appointed for this*. The man who would lead the he-goat to the desert was appointed the day before Yom Kippur (*Rashi*).

### 23. Removal of the shovel and ladle.

**וּבֹא אֶהְרֹן** — *Aaron shall come*. Although the verse would seem to be saying that Aaron entered the Sanctuary in order to change his clothes, it is inconceivable that he would have undressed there or that he would have left his clothing there indefinitely, as implied by the last phrase of the verse (*Ramban*). That is why the Sages explain that this verse speaks about two events performed at different times: (a) While wearing his white linen garments, the Kohen Gadol entered the Sanctuary for a purpose not specified in this verse; and, (b) after having done so and having left the Holy of Holies, he removed the white garments and put them away.

Why did he enter the Sanctuary? Upon leaving the Holy of Holies after his incense service (v. 18), he had left the shovel and ladle behind while the incense burned; the first part of this verse

אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְהִנִּיחָם שָׁם: כִּד וְרָחַץ אֶת-בְּשָׁרוֹ בַּמַּיִם  
 < in water < his flesh < He shall 24 << there. < and he shall << the < into  
 wash leave them Sanctuary,

בַּמָּקוֹם קְדוֹשׁ וּלְבַשׁ אֶת-בְּגָדָיו וַיֵּצֵא וַעֲשֶׂה  
 < and perform < he shall << his garments; < and don < that is < in a place  
 [the offering] go out sacred

אֶת-עֹלָתוֹ וְאֶת-עֹלֹת הָעָם וְכִפֶּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵד  
 < and for < for < and he << of the < and the < of his own  
 himself shall atone people, burnt-offering burnt-offering

הָעָם: שְׁלִישִׁי (שְׁנִי) כֹה וְאֵת חֶלֶב הַחֲטָאִת יִקְטִיר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: כִּי וְהִמְשִׁילָהּ  
 < The [appointed] 26 << upon the Altar. < he shall < of the sin-offering < And the fat 25 << the people.  
 one who sent away burn

אֶת-הַשְּׁעִיר לְעֹזָאֵל יִכְבֹּס בְּגָדָיו וְרָחַץ אֶת-בְּשָׁרוֹ בַּמַּיִם וְאַחֲרֵי-כֵן  
 < this < after << in water; < his flesh < and wash < his clothing < shall wash < to Azazel < the he-goat

יָבוֹא אֶל-הַמִּחֲנֶה: כִּי וְאֵת פֶּרֶ הַחֲטָאִת וְאֵת שְׁעִיר הַחֲטָאִת אֲשֶׁר  
 < — that << of the < and the he-goat < of the < The bull 27 << the camp. < into < he may  
 sin-offering sin-offering enter

הוֹבֵא אֶת-דָּמָם לְכִפֹּר בַּקֹּדֶשׁ יוֹצִיא אֶל-מִחוּץ לַמִּחֲנֶה וְשָׂרְפוּ בָאֵשׁ  
 < in fire < and they << of the camp; < the < to < someone << in the < to atone < their blood had been brought  
 shall burn outside shall remove Sanctuary —

רש"י

טבילות הבאות חובה ליום, אבל הראשונה היתה בחול (ס"א בחול) (ת"כ שם ת: יומא לא): ולבש את בגדיו. שמונה בגדים שהם טובע בהן כל ימות השנה: ויצא. מן ההיכל אל החצר שמזבח העולה שם: ועשה את עולתו. ואיל לעולה האמור למעלה, בזאת יבא אהרן וגו' (פסוק ג): ואת עולת העם. ואיל אחד לעולה האמור למעלה, ומאת עדת בני ישראל וגו' (פסוק ה): (בה) ואת חלב החטאת. אימורי פר ושעיר: יקטיר המזבחה. על מזבח החילון, דלילו בפנימי כתיב לא תעלו עליו קטרת זרה ועולה ומנחה (שמות לט: (בו) אשר הובא את דמם. להיכל ולפני ולפנים:

החטאת וגו'. וכל הפרשה עד ואחרי כן יבא אל המנחה, ואחר כך יבא אהרן: והניחם שם. מלמד שטעוין גניזה ולא ישתמש בזה ליום כפורים אחר (ת"כ שם ז: יומא כד:). (בד) ורחץ את בשרו וגו'. למעלה למדנו מורחץ את בשרו ולבשם (לעיל פסוק ד) שכההוא משנה מזגדי זה לבגדי לבן טעון טבילה, ושכחתי טבילה פשט בגדי זה ששעבד בהן עבודת תמיד של שחר ולבש בגדי לבן לעבודת היום. וכן למדנו שכההוא משנה מזגדי לבן לבגדי זה טעון טבילה (ת"כ שם דה: יומא לב:). במקום קדוש. המקדש בקדושת עזרה, והיא היתה בגג בית הפרוה וכן ארבע

tells us that he returned there — wearing his white garments — in order to remove those utensils, after which he would undress and dispose of his white garments.

The reason for this departure from the chronological sequence of the day's service is because the Torah prefers to continue listing all parts of the service that he performed in his white garments. All the services described from verse 4 to this one were done in his white garments, including his entry into the Holy of Holies to remove the shovel and ladle. Thus, rather than describe the day's service in strictly chronological order, the Torah completes the description of everything that he did in his special Yom Kippur garments, and then, in verse 25, proceeds to what he did in his regular eight golden garments (*Rashi*; *Ramban*).

שם וְהִנִּיחָם — *And he shall leave them there.* After he took off his white garments for the last time, they were put away and never used again by anyone, even by a Kohen Gadol on a future Yom Kippur (*Rashi*; *Sifra*).

**24-28. Conclusion of the service.** As noted above, the service described in this passage was performed before that of verse 23. Everything described here was done by the Kohen Gadol in his golden garments.

**24. וְכִפֶּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵד הָעָם —** *And he shall atone for himself and for the people.* A burnt-offering atones for improper thoughts and makes both the Kohen Gadol and the people worthy of their exalted status (*Sforno*).

§ **Additional offerings.**

This chapter does not mention all of the offerings of the day. In addition to the two *tamid* [continual] offerings that are brought every day of the year, including Yom Kippur, there are offerings that are brought as part of the Yom Kippur *mussaf* [additional-offering] service, which are listed in *Numbers* 29:8,11.

**26. יִכְבֹּס בְּגָדָיו —** *Shall wash his clothing.* Even though the he-goat itself is not *tamei* — since no living animal can be contaminated — the Torah decrees that the man leading it to

יֵת מִשְׁכִּיהוֹן וְיֵת בְּסֻדְהוֹן וְיֵת  
אֲכִלְיָהוֹן: כֹּה וְדַמּוּקִיד יִתְהוֹן יִצְבַּע  
לְבוּשׁוֹהִי וְיִסְחִי יֵת בְּסֻדָּה בְּמִיָּא  
וּבְתֵר כֵּן יִיעוֹל לְמִשְׁרִיתָא: כֹּה וְיֵת  
לְכוֹן לָקִים עָלֶם בְּיִרְחָא שְׁבִיעָא  
בְּעִשְׂרָא לְיִרְחָא תַעֲנוּן יֵת נִפְשִׁיתִכוֹן  
וְכָל עֲבִידָא לֹא תַעֲבִדוּן יִצְיָבָא  
וְגִירָא דִּיתְגִּיר בִּינִיכוֹן: לֹאֲרִי  
בְיוֹמָא דְהִין יִכְפֹּר עֲלִיכוֹן לְדִכְפָּא  
יִתְכוֹן מִכָּל חוֹבִיכוֹן קָדָם יֵי תַדְכוּן:

אֶת-עֲרֹתָם וְאֶת-בְּשָׂרָם וְאֶת-פְּרִשָׁם: כֹּה וְהִשְׂרֹף  
< The one 28 >> and their dung. < their flesh, < their hides,  
who burns

אַתֶּם יִכְבֹּס בְּגָדָיו וְיִרְחֹץ אֶת-בְּשָׂרוֹ בַּמַּיִם  
<< in the water; < his flesh < and wash < his clothing < shall wash < them  
וְאַחֲרֵי-כֵן יָבוֹא אֶל-הַמַּחֲנֶה: כֹּה וְהִיתָה לָכֶם  
< for you < This 29 >> the camp. < into < he may < this < after  
shall be enter

לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּעֶשְׂרִי לַחֹדֶשׁ תַּעֲנוּ אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם  
<< yourselves < you shall < of the < on the < In the seventh month, >> for < a decree  
afflict month, tenth eternity:

וְכָל-מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ הָאֶזְרָח וְהַגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם: כִּי-בְיוֹם הַזֶּה  
< on this day < For 30 >> in your midst. < who < and the < both the >> you shall not do, < work < and all  
dwells proselyte citizen

יִכְפֹּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטָהָר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה תִּטְהָרוּ:  
<< you will < HASHEM < before >> your sins, < from all >> you; < to purify < to you < He will grant  
be purified. atonement

Azazel becomes *tamei* as soon as he leaves the wall around Jerusalem, or, in the Wilderness, the outer limit of the camp (*Sifra*).

**29-34. The eternal commandment of Yom Kippur.** Having completed the Yom Kippur ritual, the Torah states that the commandment to observe Yom Kippur is an annual one and that, in addition to the Temple service, which has been the sole focus of the chapter up to this point, there are additional commandments to fast and to refrain from work.

**29. תַּעֲנוּ אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם** — *You shall afflict yourselves.* The Sages expound that the expression *afflict* refers only to abstention from food and drink (*Yoma* 74b). Wherever Scripture associates נָפַץ, *self*, with *affliction*, it refers to fasting. This is how the Sages derive that our verse requires fasting rather than some other form of affliction (*Ibn Ezra*).

It is noteworthy that, in giving the laws of Yom Kippur, *Rambam* does not speak of *fasting* or *affliction*. Rather, he writes: There is a further positive commandment on Yom Kippur. It is to rest from eating and drinking. It is forbidden to bathe, to apply oil to the body, to wear shoes or to cohabit. It is a positive commandment to rest from all of these just as one is commanded to rest from eating (*Hil. Shevisas Asor* 1:4,5).

*Rambam's* choice of words is significant. He states that on Yom Kippur, one "rests" from the listed activities, which indicates that the purpose of fasting is not that one should suffer, but that he should transcend the normal human limitations that prevent him from functioning properly unless he eats. On Yom Kippur a Jew is like an angel who serves God without need for food. In the Yom Kippur *Machzor*, which proclaims that *teshuvah* [repentance] is one of the means of deflecting evil decrees, the word צוּם, *Fast*, is superscribed over the word *Teshuvah*. The

superscription's implication is plain: Fasting's greatest value is when it is associated with repentance, and the purpose of the fast is to elevate Jews, not to cause them physical deprivation.

**30. כִּי-בְיוֹם הַזֶּה יִכְפֹּר** — *For on this day He [God] will grant atonement.* This translation follows *Sifra* which states that in the absence of the sacrificial service *He* will grant atonement. It is in this sense — that God atones on Yom Kippur — that the verse is repeated many times in the Yom Kippur *Machzor*. *R' Hirsch* suggests that the subject is the day of the 10th of Tishrei with its afflictions and forbidden work that atones. *Ibn Ezra* explains that *he* is the Kohen Gadol. *Sforno* combines both of these views: The affliction and cessation of labor mentioned in the previous verse combine with the service of the Kohen Gadol to achieve atonement. The day's sacrificial service can serve only to ameliorate one's sins and make God receptive to one's personal repentance. Then it is up to the sinner to improve himself and become worthy of God's forgiveness. Only through personal repentance and self-purification can a person "be purified of all his sins before God."

**לִפְנֵי ה' תִּטְהָרוּ** — *Before HASHEM you will be purified.* Complete purity and forgiveness is possible only *before HASHEM*, for He alone knows what is within man's heart, and He alone can judge the sincerity of one's confession and repentance. Yom Kippur is a day of total rest so that one can concentrate on this primary task (*Sforno*).

Yom Kippur provides atonement only to those who repent and purify themselves before they come to God to request forgiveness. If they do so, then God Himself will cleanse them (*Kli Yakar*).

From this verse, *R' Elazar ben Azariah* expounds that repentance and the Yom Kippur service can effect atonement only for

שַׁבַּת שְׁבַתוֹן הִיא לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם  
 << yourselves; < and you << for you, < it is < of complete < A 31  
 shall afflict rest Sabbath

חֻקַּת עוֹלָם: לֵב וְכֹפֶר הִכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר-יִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ  
 < has been anointed < — the << The Kohen shall atone 32 << for < a decree  
 one who eternity.

וְאִשֶּׁר יִמְלֹא אֶת-יָדוֹ לְכַהֵן תַּחַת אָבִיו וְלָבַשׁ  
 < and he << of his < in place < to < has been given < or who  
 shall don father — minister the authority

אֶת-בְּגָדֵי הַבֵּד בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ: וְכֹפֶר אֶת-מִקְדָּשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת-אֹהֶל  
 < the Tent < and to < of Holies, < the Holy < to < He shall bring 33 << of < the < of < the garments  
 atonement holiness. garments linen,

מוֹעֵד וְאֶת-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ יִכָּפֵר וְעַל הַכֹּהֲנִים וְעַל-כָּל-עַם הַקֹּהֵל יִכָּפֵר:  
 << he shall < of the < the < all < and for < the Kohanim < and << shall he bring < the Altar < and to < of  
 atone. congregation people for atonement; Meeting

וְהִיְתָה-זֹאת לָכֶם לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְכַפֵּר עַל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל-  
 < for all < of Israel < the < for < to bring << for < a decree < to you < This shall be 34  
 Children atonement eternity,

חַטָּאתָם אֶחָת בַּשָּׁנָה וַיַּעַשׂ בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה:  
 << Moses. < HASHEM < as < And << a year. < once << their sins,  
 commanded [Aaron] did

רש"י

כל הכהנים הגדולים שעמדו מיאשיהו ואילך, שצימיו נגזזה ללוות של שמן המשחה (וימא נצ): לכהן תחת אביו. ללמד שאם בנו ממלא את מקומו הוא קודם לכל אדם (ת"כ ס"ה): (לד) ויעש כאשר צוה ה' וגו'. כשהגיע יום הכפורים עשה כסדר הזה, ולהגיד שזכו של אהרן שלא הי' לובשן לגדולתו אלא כמקיים גזירת המלך (שם י):

(לב) וכפר הכהן אשר ימשח וגו'. כפרה זו של יום הכפורים אינה כפרה אלא ככהן גדול (וימא עג). לפי שנאמרה כל הפרשה באהרן הולך לומר ככהן גדול הבא אחריו שיהא כמוהו (ת"כ פרק תד): ואשר ימלא את ידו. [שיכול] אין לי אלא המשותף בשמן המשחה, מרובה בגדים מגין, ת"ל ואשר ימלא את ידו וגו' (ת"כ ס"ה) והם

sins before HASHEM, meaning sins against God, which have not harmed other people. But if one has sinned against his fellows, God will not forgive him until he first appeases the person whom he has wronged (*Sifra*, Yoma 85b).

וְכֹפֶר ... תְּטַהֲרוּ — *He will grant atonement ... you will be purified.* This verse implies that there are two aspects to the removal of sin: atonement and purifying. When someone transgresses God's will, two things happen. The sinner receives a punishment for disobeying God and, in addition, his resistance to further sins becomes weaker, because sinfulness becomes a habit, and once someone commits a misdeed, it becomes more likely that he will sin again. Atonement removes the liability to punishment, but to the extent that the habitual sinner has become a worse person, the effect of the sin remains. From this encrustation of evil, the sinner must be purified (*R' Gedaliah Schorr*).

31. שַׁבַּת שְׁבַתוֹן — *A Sabbath of complete rest.* Unlike festivals, when the preparation of food and related work is permitted, all labor is forbidden on Yom Kippur. The Torah describes the other festivals as שַׁבָּתוֹן, *day of rest* (23:24,39), while it calls Yom

Kippur שַׁבַּת שְׁבַתוֹן, *a Sabbath of complete rest.*

32. אֲשֶׁר-יִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ — *The one who has been anointed.* The verse tells us three things about the Kohen Gadol: (a) Although the entire chapter mentioned Aaron by name, his *anointed* successors are equally qualified to perform the Yom Kippur service [אֲשֶׁר-יִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ]. (b) In the event the anointment oil prepared by Moses is not available, a Kohen Gadol assumes his office merely if he *has been given the authority* by virtue of wearing the eight golden garments of the Kohen Gadol [אֲשֶׁר] יִמְלֹא אֶת-יָדוֹ; this condition prevailed during the waning years of the First Temple, after King Yoshiahu hid the oil, and throughout the Second Temple era, when High Priests were not anointed. (c) Finally, the verse indicates that the Kohen Gadol's son is first in line to succeed him, provided he is qualified [תַּחַת] (Rashi; *Sifra*).

34. בְּאֶשֶׁר צִוָּה ה'. — *As HASHEM commanded.* Despite the high honor and prestige of performing the Yom Kippur service, Aaron was selfless; he did it only because it was God's command (Rashi; *Sifra*).

אומליל יי עם משה למימר: ב מלל  
עם אהרן ועם בנוהי ועם כל בני  
ישראל ותימר להון דין פתגמא די  
פקיד יי למימר: ג גבר גבר מבית  
ישראל די יבוס תור או אמר או עזא  
במשריטא או די יבוס מבכא  
למשריטא: ד ולתרע משכן זמנא  
לא איתא לקרבא קרבנא קדם יי  
קדם משכנא דיי דמא יתחשב  
לגברא ההוא דמא אשר וישתיצי  
אנשא ההוא מגו עמה: ה בדיל

רביעי [יו] א וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ב דבר

< Speak 2 < saying: < Moses, < to < HASHEM spoke 1 17

אל-אהרן ואל-בניו ואל כל-בני ישראל ואמרת

< and say < of Israel < the < all < and to < his < and to < Aaron < to  
Children sons

אליהם זה הדבר אשר-צוה יהוה לאמר:

< saying: < HASHEM has commanded, < that < the matter < This is << to them:

ג איש איש מבית ישראל אשר ישחט שור או-

< or < an ox, < will < who < of Israel < from the < Any man 3  
slaughter House

כשב או-עז במחנה או אשר ישחט מחוץ למחנה: ד ואל-פתח

< the < and to 4 << the camp, < outside < will < who < or < in the camp, < a goat < or < a sheep,  
entrance slaughter [it]

אהל מועד לא הביאו להקריב קרבן ליהוה לפני משכן יהוה דם

< — as << of < the < before < to < as an < to bring < he has not < of < of the  
bloodshed HASHEM Tabernacle HASHEM offering brought it Meeting Tent

יחשב לאיש ההוא דם שפך ונכרת האיש ההוא מקרב עמו: ה למען

< In order 5 << of his < from the < shall that man be < and cut off << has he < blood << for that man, < it shall be  
people. midst shed, considered

רש"י

(ג) אשר ישחט שור או כשב. צמוקשין הכתוב מדבר, שנאמר להקריב קרבן (ת"כ פרשתא וזה): במחנה. חוץ  
(ד) דם יחשב. כשופך דם האדם שמתחייב צנפשו: דם שפך. לרבות את הזורק דמים בחוץ (וצבים קו).

### 17.

**1-9. Service outside the Tabernacle.** The general rule is that offerings must be slaughtered and their service performed in the Sanctuary area, while non-consecrated animals may be slaughtered anywhere *except* in the Sanctuary area. In the case of offerings, they may not be offered elsewhere, even if the service is dedicated to God. According to *Rashi* and *Sifra*, this passage refers to animals that have been consecrated as offerings, and it commands that their service must be performed in the Sanctuary.

*Baal HaTurim* and *Kli Yakar* offer similar though not identical comments on why the Torah gives this prohibition after the commandment of the Yom Kippur service. One might have thought that if it is required to dispatch the Yom Kippur he-goat to Azazel, then it should be equally permissible to bring offerings outside the Sanctuary, or that it should be permitted to bring offerings to alien forces. Consequently, the Torah stresses that all such offerings are forbidden.

**2. זה הדבר** — *This is the matter* [lit., word]. Moses conveyed the commandments to Israel in God's own words [and then elaborated upon them according to the teachings of the Oral Law (*Chofetz Chaim*)]. This was true not only for this commandment, but for the entire Torah (*Sifra*).

**3. במחנה** — *In the camp* . . . Whether near the Sanctuary, (*in the camp*), or very far away (*outside the camp*), it is forbidden to slaughter consecrated animals anywhere outside of the Court-yard.

**4. דם יחשב** — *As bloodshed it shall be considered*. Until the time of Noah, man was forbidden to kill animals for his own needs; it was only after the Flood that God's covenant with Noah gave man permission to kill animals for food (*Genesis* 9:3). But in an instance where man is not permitted to kill an animal — such as slaughtering a consecrated animal outside the Tabernacle — the act of slaughter reverts back to its status before Noah, and slaughtering such an animal is indeed tantamount to bloodshed (*Ramban*), although, of course, the death penalty applies only to the taking of human life.

When a person kills animals without a legitimate purpose, he allows himself to be influenced by the same bloody characteristics that can cause people to commit murder. Thus, his act is *considered as bloodshed*, since it is his bloody instincts that have taken control of him (*Kli Yakar*).

**ו נכרת האיש ההוא** — *And cut off shall that man be*. As noted in the commentary to 7:20, there are various interpretations of כרת, the Heavenly punishment of excision. According to *Ramban*, who comments that the form of the punishment varies

אֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־זִבְחֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הֵם

< they < that < their offerings < the Children of Israel will bring < that

זִבְחֵיהֶם עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה וְהֵבִיאוּם לִיהוּהָ אֶל־פֶּתַח

< the < to < to < and they shall < field, < the < on < have been  
entrance HASHEM bring them open slaughtering

אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן וְזָבְחוּ זִבְחֵי שְׁלָמִים לִיהוּהָ

< to < of peace- < as < and they shall < the < to < of < of the  
HASHEM offerings sacrifices slaughter Kohen; Meeting Tent

אוֹתָם: וְזָרַק הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוּהָ

< of < the Altar < upon < the blood < The Kohen 6 < those  
HASHEM shall throw [animals].

פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְהִקְטִיר הַחֵלֶב לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לִיהוּהָ: וְלֹא־יִזְבְּחוּ

< They shall 7 < to < that is < for an < the fats < and he shall cause < of < of the < at the  
not slaughter HASHEM. satisfying aroma to go up in smoke Meeting; Tent entrance

עוֹד אֶת־זִבְחֵיהֶם לְשַׁעִירִים אֲשֶׁר הֵם זִנִּים אַחֲרֵיהֶם חֻקַּת עוֹלָם

< that is eternal < a decree < after them; < stray < they < that < to the demons < their offerings < any longer

תִּהְיֶה־זֹאת לָהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם: חֻמֵּי [שְׁלֵשִׁי] ח וְאֵלֵיהֶם תֹּאמַר אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבֵּית

< from the < Any man < you < And to 8 < for their < to them < shall this be  
House shall say: them generations.

יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַגֵּר אֲשֶׁר־יִגּוֹר בְּתוֹכָם אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲלֶה עָלָה אוֹ־זֶבַח: וְאֶל־

< and to 9 < a feast- < or < a burnt- < will < who < among < shall < who < the < and < of Israel  
offering, offering offer up them dwell proselyte from

פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֹא יִבְיֹאֲנוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹ לִיהוּהָ וּנְכַרְתָּ הָאִישׁ הַהוּא

< shall that man be < — cut off < to < its < to perform < he will not < of < of the < the  
HASHEM [service] bring it Meeting Tent entrance

רש"י

(ה) אֲשֶׁר הֵם זִבְחֵיהֶם. אֲשֶׁר הֵם רְגִילִים לַזִּבּוּחַ (שֶׁסָּקוּ): (ז) לְשַׁעִירִים. לַשָּׁמַיִם, כִּמוֹ שֶׁעֲשִׂירִים יִקְדּוּ שֶׁסָּקוּ (עֲשִׂיָּה יג: כ"א); ת"כ פֶּרֶק ט"ח: (ח) אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה עוֹלָה. לַחַיִּיב עַל הַמִּקְטִיר חֲזָרִים בְּחוּץ כְּשֹׁחֵט בְּחוּץ, שֶׁאִם שָׁחַט אֶחָד וְהַעֲלָה חֲזָרִי שֶׁנִּהְיָ חַיִּיבִין (ת"כ פֶּרֶק י"ז; זִבְחֵי קוֹ): (ט) וְנִכְרַת. זָרְעוֹ נִכְרַת וַיִּמּוּ נִכְרַתִּין:

according to how the Torah expresses itself, the *kares* of our verse means that the offender will die an early death, but not that he will lose his share in the World to Come. This is indicated by the term *הָאִישׁ*, *that man*. Since the Torah does not say that the *נַפְשׁ*, *soul*, will be cut off, the implication is that only the physical *man* will be affected.

5. אֲשֶׁר הֵם זִבְחֵיהֶם — *That they have been slaughtering*, that they had been accustomed to slaughter up to now (*Rashi*). The stringent punishment for this sin was necessary to break the people of the ingrained habit of slaughtering offerings wherever it was convenient for them to set up an Altar, a practice that had been followed from the days of Noah and the Patriarchs.

עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה וְהֵבִיאוּם לִיהוּהָ — *On the open field, and they shall bring*

*them to HASHEM*. The verse seems to have two goals, one negative and one positive. The people should withdraw from the *open field*, which implies a lack of restraint, and excessive freedom. Having done that, they should bring their offerings only to God (*R' Hirsch*).

7. וְלֹא־יִזְבְּחוּ עוֹד — *They shall not slaughter any longer*. The people shall no longer follow the practice they learned in Egypt of offering sacrifices to the *שַׁעִירִים*, *demons* of the fields, after which they used to *stray* (*Ibn Ezra*).

זִנִּים — *Stray*. Someone who worships demons, thinking that they have independent power that must be appeased and that they can benefit their worshipers, is *straying* from God, Who alone should be the focus of all human service (*Ibn Ezra*).

מֵעַמּוֹ: יִגְבֵּר גִּבֹּר מִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַגֵּר הַגֵּר  
 גִּיּוֹרָא דִּיתְגֵּינֵר בִּינִיכּוֹן דִּי יִיכּוֹל כָּל  
 דְּמָא וְאַתָּן רוּגְזִי בְּאַנְשָׁא דִּיכּוֹל יִתְ  
 דְּמָא וְאַשִׁיזִי יִתְהָ מִגּוּ עֲמָה: יֵא אָרִי  
 נִפְשׁ בְּסָרָא בְּדָמָא הִיא וְאַנָּא יִהְיֶה  
 לְכוֹן עַל מִדְּבָחָא לְכַפֵּרָא עַל  
 נִפְשִׁיתִיכּוֹן אָרִי דְּמָא הִיא בְּנִפְשָׁא  
 מִכְּפָר: יֵב עַל כֵּן אֲמַרִית לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 כָּל אָנָּשׁ מִנְכּוֹן לֹא יִיכּוֹל דְּמָא  
 וְגִיּוֹרָא דִּיתְגֵּינֵר בִּינִיכּוֹן לֹא יִיכּוֹל  
 דְּמָא: יִגְבֵּר גִּבֹּר מִן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 וּמִן גִּיּוֹרָא דִּיתְגֵּינֵר בִּינִיכּוֹן דִּי יִצּוֹד  
 צִידָא חִיָּה אוֹ עוֹפָא דִּי מִתְאַכֵּל  
 וְיִישׁוֹר יִתְ דְּמָה וִיכְסִינָה בְּעַפְרָא:

מֵעַמּוֹ: יִגְבֵּר גִּבֹּר מִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַגֵּר הַגֵּר  
 < who < the < and < of Israel < from the < Any man 10 << from his  
 dwells proselyte from House people.

בְּתוֹכָם אֲשֶׁר יֹאכַל כָּל־דָּם וְנָתַתִּי פָנַי בְּנִפְשׁ  
 < upon the < My face < —I shall << blood < any < will < who < among them  
 soul set consume

הָאֵכָלֶת אֶת־הַדָּם וְהִכְרַתִּי אֹתָהּ מִקֶּרֶב עַמָּה:  
 << of its < from the < and I will cut it off << the blood, < that is  
 people. midst consuming

כִּי־נִפְשׁ הַבָּשָׂר בַּדָּם הוּא וְאַנִּי נָתַתִּיו לָכֶם עַל־  
 < upon < for you < have < and I << it is, < in the < of the < the soul < For 11  
 assigned it blood flesh,

הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְכַפֵּר עַל־נִפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם כִּי־הַדָּם הוּא בְּנִפְשׁ יִכְפֹּר: יֵב עַל־כֵּן  
 < Therefore 12 << provides < that for < it is < the < for << your souls; < for < to provide < the Altar  
 atonement. the soul blood atonement

אֲמַרְתִּי לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּל־נִפְשׁ מִכֶּם לֹא־תֹאכַל דָּם וְהִגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם  
 < among you < who < and the << blood; < may not < among < person < Any << of Israel: < to the < I have said  
 dwells proselyte consume you Children

לֹא־יֹאכַל דָּם: יֵב וְאִישׁ אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכָם  
 < among < who < the < and < of Israel < from the < Any man 13 << blood. < consume < may  
 them dwells proselyte from Children not

אֲשֶׁר יִצּוֹד צִיד חִיָּה אוֹ־עוֹף אֲשֶׁר יֹאכַל וְשָׁפַךְ אֶת־דָּמּוֹ וְכָסָהּ בְּעַפְרָא:  
 << with < and he < its blood < he shall << may be < that < a bird < or < a beast < as < will hunt < who  
 earth. shall cover it pour out eaten, prey

רש"י

[יב] כל נפש מכם. להזהיר גדולים על הקטנים (סס ו:): (יג) אשר יצוד. אינן  
 לי אלא הַגֵּר, וְנִגְזֵר וְעוֹמֵדִין כְּגוֹן אֲחִיזִין וְתִרְגִּמִּלִּין מִיֵּן, ת"ל צִיד, מכל מקום ואם כן  
 למה נאמר אשר יצוד, שלא יאכל בשר אלא בהזמנה זאת (ת"כ פרק יא:ב; חולין  
 67א): אשר יאכל. פרט למאכלים (ת"כ סס ג:)

(י) כל דם. לפי שנאמר בנפש יכפר (פסוק יא), יכול לא יהא חייב אלא על דם  
 המוקדשים, ת"ל כל דם (ת"כ פרשתא ח:ב): ונתתי פני. פנאי שלי פונה אני  
 מכל עסקי ועוסק זו (סס ד:): (יא) כי נפש הבשר. של כל צריה בדם היא  
 תלויה, ולפיכך נתתי על המזבח לכפר על נפש האדם. תבוא נפש ותכפר על הגשם:

**10-14. Prohibition against eating blood and the commandment to cover it.**

**10. כָּל־דָּם** — Any blood. Although the next verse seems to imply that the subject of the prohibition is only sacrificial blood, the word *כל*, *all*, is an amplification that includes even blood from unconsecrated animals (*Rashi; Sifra*). Even the blood of fowl and kosher species that are unfit for offerings is forbidden (*Kereisos* 20b).

**וְנָתַתִּי פָנַי** — I shall set My face. God says, "I will turn away from all My other pursuits in order to punish him" (*Rashi*).

**11. כִּי־נִפְשׁ הַבָּשָׂר בַּדָּם הוּא** — For the soul of the flesh, in the blood it is. Because life is dependent upon the blood, God designated blood as the medium that goes upon the Altar for atonement, as if to say, "Let one life be offered to atone for another." Conse-

quently, it is not appropriate for it to be eaten (*Rashi; Sifra*).

The life-giving force in animals is borne by the blood, which is why blood is the appropriate agent of atonement, not because God has any desire for blood *per se*, but because it represents man's dedication of his life to God's service (*Sforno*).

**13-14. Covering blood.** The Torah commands that when a Jew slaughters any species of kosher birds or non-domesticated kosher animals, he must cover part of the blood. This commandment does not apply to cattle, sheep, or goats. The *Chinuch* explains that since the soul resides in the blood, it is not proper to eat the flesh of an animal while its blood is still exposed. The species used for offerings are exempted from this commandment because sacrificial blood is never covered, so the Torah did not impose the requirement for them.



יִדְּ כִּי־נִפֶּשׁ כָּל־בָּשָׂר דָּמוֹ בְּנִפְשׁוֹ הוּא וְאָמַר לְבָנֵי

< to the < so I << it is, < [linked] < — its << flesh < of all < the life < For 14  
Children say to its life blood

יִשְׂרָאֵל דָּם כָּל־בָּשָׂר לֹא תֹאכְלוּ כִּי נִפֶּשׁ כָּל־

< of all < the life < for << you shall not consume; < flesh < of any < The blood << of Israel,

בָּשָׂר דָּמוֹ הוּא כָּל־אֲכָלְיוֹ יִכָּרֵת: 15 וְכָל־נִפֶּשׁ אֲשֶׁר

< who < person < Any 15 << will be < who < all << it is < [to] its < flesh  
cut off. consume it [linked], blood

תֹּאכַל נִבְלָה וְטֶרֶפָּה בְּאֶזְרָח וּבִגֵּר וְכִבֹּס בְּגָדָיו

< his < he shall << or among the < — among << or was < a [bird] < will eat  
garments wash proselyte — the native torn that died

וְרִחֵץ בַּמַּיִם וְטָמֵא עַד־הָעֶרֶב וְטָהָר: 16 וְאִם לֹא יִכָּבֵס וּבָשָׂרוֹ

< and his < he does not wash < But if 16 << and then < the < until < he shall remain << in the < and wash  
flesh [his garments] become pure. evening contaminated water; [himself]

לֹא יִרְחֹץ וְנִשְׂא עֲוֹנוֹ: פ [יח] וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: ב דִּבֶּר

< Speak 2 << saying: < Moses, < to < HASHEM spoke 1 18 << his < he shall < he does not  
iniquity. bear wash,

אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ג כְּמַעֲשֵׂה אֶרֶץ־

< of the < Like the 3 << your God. < HASHEM, < I am << to them: < and say < of Israel < the < to  
land practice Children

רש"י

(יד) דמו בנפשו הוא. דמו הוא לו במקום הנפש, שהנפש תלויה בו: כי נפש כל בשר דמו הוא. הנפש היא הדם. דם ובשר לשון זכר, נפש לשון נקבה: (טו) אשר תאכל נבלה וטרפה. כנבלת עוף טהור דבר הכתוב, שאין לה טומאה חלל בשטה שגזלעת צבית הבלעיה. ולמדך כאן שטמאה באכילתה וואינה מטמאה במגע. וטרפה האמורה כאן לא נכתבה חלל לדרוש. וכן שנינו יכול תהא נבלת עוף טמא מטמאה צבית הבלעיה, ת"ל וטרפה, מי שיש צביתו טרפה, ילא עוף טמא שאין צביתו טרפה ות"כ שם

14. דמו בנפשו הוא — *Its blood [linked] to its life it is.* Since life is dependent on the blood, the blood may be said to represent life (Rashi). Noting that the word נִפֶּשׁ is sometimes translated as *body*, Ramban renders the *life of any being is the blood in its body*.

15. נבלה וטרפה — *A [bird] that died or was torn.* Both terms indicate that the death took place in some manner other than through a valid kosher slaughter.

16. וְנִשְׂא עֲוֹנוֹ — *He shall bear his iniquity.* The “iniquity” is that of eating meat of offerings or entering the Temple before purifying himself. The term וְנִשְׂא עֲוֹנוֹ, *he shall bear his iniquity*, always refers to *kares* (Rashi; Sifra).

## 18.

### Immorality and forbidden relationships.

With the exception of a brief passage in Chapter 21 dealing with the physical blemishes that disqualify Kohanim and sacrificial animals, the balance of *Leviticus* does not deal with the laws of the Temple service.

This chapter is the first of two that deal with the laws of immorality and the forbidden sexual relationships. In it the Torah sets forth the prohibitions, in line with the principle that *they do not punish unless they give a warning*. Once the “warning,” the prohibition, has been set forth here, the punishment is related in Chapter 20.

2. אֲנִי ה' — *I am HASHEM.* In using this phrase, Moses seems to be speaking of himself in the first person as if he were “God.” In the simple sense, Moses told the people that he had been commanded to speak to them in God’s Name, and then quoted the words that God Himself had used. Alternatively, it was not necessary for him to make such a declaration. There was nothing confusing about his use of the first person, because it was clear from the circumstances that Godly words were emanating from his mouth. Normally, Moses’ face was covered with a veil, because the people could not tolerate the holiness upon his face (*Exodus 34:29-35*). When he conveyed the word of God to the people, however, he would remove the veil, so that it would be clear to everyone that they were hearing the Divine command.

מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁבְּתֶם-בָּהּ לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וּכְמַעֲשֵׂהָ  
 < and like the << do; < do << there, < you [once] < that < of Egypt  
 practice not lived  
 אֶרֶץ-כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְבִיא אֲתֶכֶם שָׁמָּה לֹא  
 < do << there, < you < am < I < that << of Canaan, < of the  
 not bringing land  
 תַּעֲשׂוּ וּבְחֻקֵּיהֶם לֹא תִלְכוּ: 4 אֶת-מִשְׁפָּטֵי תַעֲשׂוּ וְאֶת-חֻקֵּי תִשְׁמְרוּ  
 < you shall < and My decrees < you shall < My laws 4 << follow. < do not < and their customs << do,  
 safeguard carry out

רש"י

החוקין להם, כגון טרטיאות ולטריאות. ר' מאיר אומר אלו דרכי האמורי שמו חכמים (שבת סז:א; ת"כ ש"ט: (ד) את משפטי תעשו. אלו דברים האמורים בתורה במשפט, שאלו לא נאמרו היו כדאי לאומר: ואת חוקי תשמרו. דברים שהם גזירת המלך, שיר הרע משיב עליהם למה לנו לשומרן, ואומות העולם משיבין עליהן, כגון

(ג) במעשה ארץ מצרים. מגיד שמעשיהם של מצרים ושל כנענים מקולקלים מכל האומות, ואותו מקום שישבו בו ישראל מקולקל מן הכל (ס"ו): אשר אני מביא אתכם שמה. מגיד שאותן עממין שכבשו ישראל מקולקלים יותר מכולם (ס"ז): ובחוקיהם לא תלכו. מה הניח הכתוב שלא אמר, אלא אלו נמוסות שלהן, דברים

Thus, when he said, *I am HASHEM*, it was obvious that the Godliness upon him was addressing the people (*Ramban*).

The opening words of this chapter are similar to those of the Ten Commandments (*Exodus 20:2*). *R' Hirsch* writes that this similarity to the Ten Commandments demonstrates the supreme importance of morality in God's scheme for the Jewish people. Just as the nation cannot exist without the acknowledgment that Hashem is our God, so it must accept upon itself the laws of sexual purity contained in this chapter.

**3. מִצְרַיִם . . . כְּנָעַן — Egypt . . . Canaan.** These two lands, the one where Israel had dwelt for 210 years and the one to which they were going, were the most morally decadent in the world. By stressing the parts of those lands in which the Jews dwelled and to which they would be brought, the verse implies that those areas were the worst sections of the respective countries (*Rashi; Sifra*). God specifically warned the Jews to be alert to the challenge of their past and future homes because people must be especially alert to the lures of their environment. It is tempting to justify sin on the grounds that "everyone" does it.

The deeds of the Canaanites and Egyptians were the most abominable of all the nations. The apparent implication is that there is no harm in imitating the foul deeds of nations that are not evil — but this cannot be so. By singling out these two nations, the Torah teaches Jews never to think complacently that as long as they do not commit the vulgar and obscene sins epitomized by Canaan and Egypt, they will not be corrupted by lesser sins. By focusing on the worst nations, the Torah indicates that sin is a progressive process: "Ordinary" transgressions inevitably lead to more serious ones, until the sinner descends to the morass of Canaan and Egypt. Thus, a Jew must scrupulously avoid even the first step on the road to corruption (*R' Moshe Feinstein*).

**וּבְחֻקֵּיהֶם — And their customs.** Israel is enjoined to avoid the deeply ingrained customs of the nations, such as attending theaters and stadiums to watch gladiators. *R' Meir* says that this refers to the superstitions of the Amorites. [Modern equivalents of such superstitions would be that a black cat or walking under a ladder are "bad luck" (*Rashi; Sifra*; see *Shabbos 67a*).] *Sifra*

adds that the prohibition includes attempts to make oneself look like the nations and to imitate their promiscuous practices.

The exhortation not to follow the customs of the nations is couched in terms of חֻקֵּיהֶם, literally *their decrees*, the same term that is used to describe the commandments of the Torah that defy human logic. It is common for people to think that a nation's culture is predicated upon a set of rational norms, and that any "civilized" person must accept them, unless he is demented. The truth is, however, that culture is an accumulation of practices, many of which are not in the least logical. This explains how different societies have widely divergent cultures, and how so many of them can consider other societies to be comical, primitive, or even barbaric. The difference between Judaism's "decrees" and the "decrees" of other societies is simply that the former are God given, while the latter are devised by man and canonized by his habits. Therefore, the Torah cautions us to avoid falling into the habit-forming, mind-molding trap of imitating the practices of alien societies (*R' Shlomo Wolbe*).

*R' Hirsch (Horeb para. 505)* summarizes the laws of this commandment: "You may imitate the nations among whom you live in everything that has been adopted by them on rational grounds, and not on grounds which belong to their religion or are immoral; but do not imitate anything that is irrational or has been adopted on grounds derived from their religion, or for forbidden or immoral purposes. You may not, therefore, join in celebrating their holy days, or observe customs that have their basis in their religious views. You must not, however, do anything that will disturb their holy days or mar their festival spirit; and do not parade your non-participation in their holy days in a manner that might arouse animosity."

**4-5. מִשְׁפָּטֵי . . . חֻקֵּי / My laws . . . My decrees.** Laws are practices that would be dictated by reason even if they were not commanded by the Torah, such as the prohibitions against robbery, immorality, idolatry, blasphemy, and bloodshed. *Decrees* are those that are unfathomable by human intelligence, such as the prohibitions against the consumption of forbidden meat, wearing mixtures of wool and linen, and the laws of the

לִלְכֶת בָּהֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם

< You shall observe 5 << your God. < HASHEM, < I am << them; < to follow

אֶת־חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטַי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אִתְּם הָאָדָם

<< [must] < carry them out < which << and My laws, < My decrees  
a man do,

וְיָחִי בָהֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה: שִׁשִּׁי וְאִישׁ אִישׁ אֶל־כָּל־שָׂאֵר בְּשָׂרוֹ לֹא תִקְרְבוּ

< you shall not < of his close relatives < any < to < Any man 6 << HASHEM. < I am << by < so that he  
approach them; shall live

רש"י

(יז). דבר אחר, ליתן שמירה ועשייה לחוקים, ושמירה ועשייה למשפטים (שם פרשתא טז:). לפי שלא נתן אלא עשייה למשפטים ושמירה לחוקים (ולעיל פסוק ד: וחי בהם. לעוה"ב, שם תאמר צוה"ל והלא סופו הוא מות (ת"כ שם): אני ה'. נאמן לשלם שכר (שם): (ו) לא תקרבו. להזהיר הנקבה בזכר לכך נאמר לשון רבים (שם פרק יג:א):

removal of contamination. Because these laws are beyond human logic, the verse ends with *I am HASHEM, Your God*, i.e., these are God's decrees and it is not for you to decide whether or not they are worthy of your approval (*Rashi; Sifra*).

Many commentators have noted that the word חק is derived from חקק, *to engrave* into metal or stone. This implies an unyielding permanence that is impervious to changing ideas or conditions. Thus, the Torah's decrees are eternally valid, understood or not. By juxtaposing the logical laws with the metalogical decrees in this verse and the next, the Torah implies a similarity between them, as if even the laws are not subject to human logic. *R' Yosef Dov Soloveitchik* explained that a person commits himself to a *chok* he cannot understand because the inner *tzelem Elokim* [image of God] within the Jew recognizes that there are truths that are above the limited human intellect. Many of life's most important decisions — such as the ideals and people one will love and sacrifice for — are based on considerations that may be called a "light from within," considerations that reflect the person's true inner self. The same sort of commitment is required for a proper acceptance of the Torah's "logical" laws, because human intelligence is not a reliable measuring rod even for such parts of man's legal code. For example, no law is as universally accepted as that against murder, yet "logic" can permit people to nibble at the fringes of the sanctity of life, by arguing that a fetus is less than a true life or that suffering or impaired people are unworthy of life or that human life is no more worthy of preservation than animal life. Consequently the Torah stresses that one must accept the Divine origin and unchanging nature of the Torah's laws with the same faith that one accepts its decrees.

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם . . . תַּעֲשׂוּ — *You shall carry out . . . you shall safeguard.* Carry out means to perform the *mitzvos* as commanded. *Safeguard* implies the responsibility to take any necessary measures to avoid the possibility of transgression. Carry out also has the connotation of performing positive commandments that require active performance, while *safeguard* refers to negative commandments and the need to refrain from violating them.

5. וְיָחִי בָהֶם — *So that he shall live by them.* Ramban writes that the term *by which he shall live* refers particularly to the "social

חכמה חזיר ולצית שטענו וטערת מי חטאת. לכך נא' אני ה' גזרתי עליכם, אי אתם רשאים ליפטר וס' אי גזרתי עליהם, אי אתה רשאי ליפטר (ת"כ שם יז: ללכת בהם. אל תפטר מתוכם. שלא תאמר למדתי חכמת ישראל, אלך ואלמד חכמת האומות (שם יא: (ה) ושמרתם את חקותי. לרצות שאר דקדוקי הפרשה שלא פרט הכתוב וזהו (שם

commandments" between man and his fellow man, such as the laws governing property and debts, and those forbidding murder and robbery. Only if society adheres to this body of law can life be peaceful and stable.

The Sages derive from the expression *he shall live by them* that the commandments were given for the sake of life, not death. Therefore, if the performance of a commandment may endanger life — such as the familiar case of a patient who must be rushed to a hospital on the Sabbath — the need to preserve life supersedes the observance of the Sabbath. The exceptions are the three cardinal sins: idolatry, forbidden sexual relationships, and murder; and cases where violation of commandments would cause desecration of God's Name (*Sanhedrin 74a*).

Homiletically, *Chiddushei HaRim* interpreted this commandment to teach that a person should not perform commandments apathetically. Rather, we are enjoined to find in the commandments our primary source of joy, enthusiasm, and life — *you are to live through the commandments*.

**6-18. Forbidden relationships.** The laws governing sexual relationships are the key to Jewish holiness. As the Sages state, wherever one finds safeguards of chastity, there one finds holiness (*Vayikra Rabbah 24:6*). This concept is expressed in the first step of Jewish marriage, in which the groom betroths his bride and says, *וְהָרִי אֶת מִקְדָּשִׁי לִי, You are consecrated to me.* The formula speaks of consecration because, from its outset, Jewish marriage is founded on holiness.

The name given to these illicit relationships is *ערוה*, *the uncovering of nakedness* or *shame*. *Sforno* comments that it would have seemed logical to permit close relatives to marry, since they would be suited to each other, and their common values and similar personalities would be likely to produce good offspring — witness the union of Amram and his aunt Jochebed, whose children were Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. That would be so if both partners to the marriage were dedicated to noble goals, but, human nature being what it is, the great majority of people seek pleasure, not challenge, and they would use the permissibility of close relatives to indulge their lowest instincts. The result would be not spiritual greatness, but promiscuous hedonism. Consequently, close relatives are for-

לְגִלְיָה עֲרֻתָּא אֲנִי יְהוָה יִי: עֲרִית אָבוֹהַ  
וְעֲרִית אִמָּהּ לֹא תִגְלִי אִמָּהּ הִיא  
לֹא תִגְלִי עֲרִיתָהּ: ה עֲרִית אִמָּהּ  
אָבוֹהַ לֹא תִגְלִי עֲרִית אָבוֹהַ הִיא:  
ט עֲרִית אִמָּהּ בֵּת אָבוֹהַ אוֹ בֵּת אִמָּהּ  
דִּילִידָא מִן אָבוֹהַ מִן אִמָּהּ אַחֲרֵי אוֹ  
מִן אִמָּהּ לְגַבֵּר אַחֲרֵי לֹא תִגְלִי  
עֲרִיתָהּ: י עֲרִית בֵּת בְּנֵהּ אוֹ בֵּת בְּרִתָּהּ

לְגִלְיָה עֲרֻתָּא אֲנִי יְהוָה: ס עֲרֻת אָבִיךָ וְעֲרֻת  
7 The nakedness of your father and the nakedness  
HASHEM. I am nakedness; to uncover

אִמָּהּ לֹא תִגְלִי אִמָּהּ הִיא לֹא תִגְלִי עֲרֻתָהּ: ס  
8 The nakedness of your mother, she is your mother, you shall not uncover; you shall not uncover; nakedness.

ח עֲרֻת אִשְׁת־אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלִי עֲרֻת אָבִיךָ  
9 The nakedness of the wife of your father, you shall not uncover; of your father, the daughter, sister, or to one who may remain in the home born mother, daughter

הוּא: ס ט עֲרֻת אִחֻתְךָ בֵּת־אָבִיךָ אוֹ בֵּת־אִמָּהּ מוֹלְדֶת בֵּית אוֹ  
10 The nakedness of your sister, brother, or to one who must remain outside of it, daughter, daughter son daughter nakedness

מוֹלְדֶת חוּץ לֹא תִגְלִי עֲרֻתָהּ: ס י עֲרֻת בֵּת־בְּנֵהּ אוֹ בֵּת־בָּתְּרָהּ  
11 The nakedness of their daughter, you shall not uncover; to one who must remain outside of it, daughter, daughter son daughter nakedness

רש"י

לאבד קיים את אמה ובין שאומרים לו הולא את אמה (יצמות כג.) כגון ממזרת או נתינה: (ז) ערות בת בן וגו'. צדקו מאנוסו הכחז מדבר (סנהדרין עו.) ובתו וצדקו מאשטו או למדין מערות אשה וצדקו, שנאמר צדק לא תגלה צדק שהיא ממנו צדק שהיא מאיש אחר (יצמות כב): ערות בת בן. קל וחומר לצדק, אלא לפי שאין מזהירין מן הדין למזרה שזה במסכת יצמות (ג.) וס"א כריתות (ה.):

אני ה'. נאמן לשלם שכר (ס: צ: ז) ערות אביו. זו אשת אביו. או אינו אלא כמשמעו, נאמר כאן ערות אביו ונאמר להלן ערות אביו גלה (כ: יח) מה להלן אשת אביו אף כאן אשת אביו (סנהדרין נד): וערות אביו. להביא אמו שאינה אשת אביו (ס: ח) ערות אשת אביו. לרבות לאחר מיתה (ס: ט) בת אביו. אף צדק אנוסה כמשמע (יצמות כב): מולדת בית או מולדת חוץ. צדק שאומרים לו

bidden to marry each other. The Torah classifies the levels of forbidden closeness in terms of blood relationships, and it regards husbands and wives as having the same level of closeness. Therefore, even after the death of fathers, uncles, and brothers, their widows remain forbidden to their former in-laws.

R' Hirsch notes that the name *uncovering of nakedness* or *shame* is well chosen. Sexual relationships among animals are purely physical, instinctive, unbridled acts. For human beings to sink to that level, however, would topple their relationship from the pedestal of holiness and cast it down to the slime of nakedness and shame. They fall from the human to the animal.

In the case of the forbidden relationships listed below, no marital status can exist; even if the two people were to carry out the entire marriage ritual, it would not be binding and none of the marital obligations would apply. They are living in sin and are not man and wife.

6. שֶׁאֵר בָּשָׂרוֹ — *His close relatives*. This is an introductory statement that refers to the following long list of incestuous relationships.

יִי לֹא תִקְרְבוּ — *You shall not approach*. The commandment is in the plural to teach that it applies equally to men and women (Rashi; Sifra).

אֲנִי ה' — *I am HASHEM*. I can be relied upon to reward those who obey Me (Rashi). Although Rashi commented on verse 4 that this declaration is used for commandments whose reasons are unknown, it may also be that the Torah looks thousands of years ahead to times when immorality has become the norm of "sophisticated" people. To such people, the Torah's strictures

regarding morality may well seem like inexplicable decrees.

7. עֲרֻת אָבִיךָ — *The nakedness of your father*. One "exposes his father's nakedness" by cohabiting with one's father's wife, even if the woman is not the mother of the perpetrator: do not live with any woman who was ever married to your father (Rashi; Sanhedrin 54a).

The word עֲרֻתָּהּ can be translated either *nakedness* or *shame*. Although the primary translation is nakedness, in the sense that immorality "exposes" something that should properly be covered, where the context dictates it, we render it *shame*.

8. אִשְׁת־אָבִיךָ — *Of the wife of your father*. The apparent repetition of the prohibition stated in the previous verse teaches a new law: Even after your father's death, when she is no longer married to him, she remains forbidden to you (Rashi; Sanhedrin 54a).

9. בֵּת־אָבִיךָ — *[Whether] the daughter of your father*. Even a daughter born out of wedlock (Rashi).

יִי מוֹלְדֶת בֵּית — *[Whether] born to one who may remain in the home*. Literally *born in the home*, this is a euphemism for a sister born out of wedlock to a woman whom the father would be permitted to marry according to Torah law. Thus, if she and the father chose to sanctify their relationship through marriage, the mother would be permitted to remain in the home. Conversely, the next phrase of the verse, which speaks of a sister *born to one who must remain outside of it*, refers to a child born to a mother who would be forbidden in marriage to the man who fathered her child, for example, a *mamzeres* (Rashi; Yevamos 23a).

10. בֵּת־בְּנֵהּ — *Of the daughter of your son*. The case here is that

לֹא תִגְלֶה עֲרוֹתָן בִּי עֲרוֹתֶיךָ הֵנָּה: ס יא עֲרוֹת

< The 11 << are < your own < for << their < you shall not  
nakedness they. nakedness nakedness; uncover

בֵּת-אִשָּׁת אָבִיךָ מוֹלֶדֶת אָבִיךָ אַחֻתֶיךָ הוּא

<< is < your sister << to your < who << of your < of the < of the  
she; father, was born father, wife daughter

לֹא תִגְלֶה עֲרוֹתֶיהָ: ס יב עֲרוֹת אַחֻת-אָבִיךָ

< of your < of the < The 12 << her < you shall not  
father sister nakedness nakedness. uncover

לֹא תִגְלֶה שְׂאֵר אָבִיךָ הוּא: ס יג עֲרוֹת אַחֻת-

< of the < The 13 << is she. < of your < the << you shall not  
sister nakedness father flesh uncover;

אִמָּךְ לֹא תִגְלֶה בִּי-שְׂאֵר אִמָּךְ הוּא: ס יד עֲרוֹת אַחִי-אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה

<< you shall not < of your < of the < The 14 << is she. < of your < the < for << you shall not < of your  
uncover; father brother nakedness mother flesh uncover; mother

אֶל-אִשְׁתּוֹ לֹא תִקְרָב וְדָתָךְ הוּא: ס טו עֲרוֹת בִּלְתֶּךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה

<< you shall not < of your < The 15 << is she. < your aunt << approach; < do not < his wife < to  
uncover; daughter-in-law nakedness

אִשָּׁת בְּנֶךָ הוּא לֹא תִגְלֶה עֲרוֹתֶיהָ: ס טז עֲרוֹת אִשָּׁת-אָחִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה

<< you shall not < of your < of the < The 16 << her < you shall not << is she; < of your < the wife  
uncover; brother wife nakedness nakedness. uncover son

עֲרוֹת אָחִיךָ הוּא: ס יז עֲרוֹת אִשָּׁה וּבִתָּהּ לֹא תִגְלֶה אֶת-בֵּת-בְּנֶהּ

<< of her < the << you shall not < and her < of a < The 17 << is she. < of your < the  
son daughter uncover; daughter woman nakedness brother nakedness

רש"י

ומה היא ערווה, אל אשתו לא תקרב: (טו) אשת בנך היא. לא אמרתי אלא  
בשם לבדן אישות בזה, פרט לאנוסה ויבמות (ז). ושפחה ונכרית (ח"כ קדושים פרק י"ז):  
(יז) ערוות אשה ובתה. לא אמר הכתוב אלא ע"י נשואי הראשונה, לכך נאמר

prohibition (Rashi; Yevamos 23a).

Who was born to your father. But you are permitted to marry your stepsister, since she is not your sister, either by your father or by your mother (Rambam, Hil. Issurei Biah 2:3).

12. אַחֻת-אָבִיךָ — Of the sister of your father. In both this and the next verse, half sisters have the same status as full sisters (Yevamos 54b), as do sisters born out of wedlock. The same applies to the brother of verse 16 (Rambam, Hil. Issurei Biah 2:5).

14. דָּתָךְ הוּא — Your aunt is she. Even after your uncle's death, she is still regarded as your aunt and remains forbidden.

15. אִשָּׁת בְּנֶךָ הוּא — The wife of your son is she. By specifying that she is the son's wife, the Torah indicates that a man is forbidden only to a woman who had been married to his son; if they lived together out of wedlock, she would not be forbidden to the father (Rashi; Sifra).

the parent of this forbidden granddaughter — your son or your daughter — was born to you out of wedlock. The verse could not be speaking about a granddaughter born of a legitimate child, because that prohibition is found in verse 17, which states clearly that a man is forbidden to live with a woman and her daughter or any of her grandchildren. Such a granddaughter is forbidden to her grandfather (Rashi; Sanhedrin 76a).

11. בֵּת-אִשָּׁת אָבִיךָ — Of the daughter of the wife of your father. Since verse 9 prohibits even a half sister born out of wedlock, why does this verse speak only of your father's wife? The Sages expound that the mother need not be literally married to the father, but she must be eligible halachically to be your father's wife, meaning that if the mother is a non-Jew or a non-Jewish slave — neither of whom can contract a valid marriage to a Jew — her daughter is not considered a sister to her consort's children, and would not be forbidden under this

וַיֵּת בֵּת-בִּתְּהָא לֹא תִסֵּב לְגִלְעָדָה  
עֲרִיתָהּ קָרִיבָן אֲנִי עֶצֶת חֲטָאִין הִיא:  
יח וַיֵּתְהָא עִם אֶחָתָהּ לֹא תִסֵּב  
לְעֵקֶה לְגִלְעָדָה עֲרִיתָהּ עֲלֶיהָ  
בְּחֵיָהָ: יט וְלֹא תֵתָא בְּרִחוּק סוּבְתָהּ  
לֹא תִקְרַב לְגִלְעָדָה עֲרִיתָהּ: כו לֹא תֵת  
חֲבֵרָךְ לֹא תֵתָן שְׂכִבְתָּךְ לְזָרָעָא  
לְאַסְתָּאבָא בָּהּ: כא וּמִבְּנִיךָ לֹא תֵתָן  
לְאַעְבְּרָא לְמַלְךָ וְלֹא תַחֲלִל יֵת  
שְׁמָא דְאַלְהָךְ אֲנָא יי: כב וַיֵּת דְּכוּרָא

וְאֶת-בֵּת-בִּתְּהָא לֹא תִקַּח לְגִלְעָדָה עֲרִיתָהּ שְׂאֵרָה  
close her to you shall not of her or the  
relatives nakedness; uncover marry daughter daughter

הִנֵּה זִמָּה הִוא: יח וְאִשָּׁה אַל-אֶחָתָהּ לֹא תִקַּח  
are they, it is a woman depraved plot.  
you shall not to her in A 18 marry, sister addition

לְצַרֵּר לְגִלְעָדָה עֲרִיתָהּ עֲלֶיהָ בְּחֵיָהּ: יט וְאִל-אִשָּׁה  
to make them rivals, in her upon the the nakedness to uncover  
woman lifetime. other of one

בְּנִיתָ טַמְאָתָהּ לֹא תִקְרַב לְגִלְעָדָה עֲרִיתָהּ: כ וְאִל-אִשָּׁתְּ עַמִּיתָךְ  
of your the wife With 20 her to uncover you shall not in her time of  
neighbor nakedness. approach, unclean separation

לֹא-תֵתָן שְׂכִבְתָּךְ לְזָרָע לְטַמְאָה-בָּהּ: כא וּמִזֶּרְעֶךָ לֹא-תֵתָן לְהַעֲבִיר  
to pass you shall not Any of your 21 with to contaminate you shall not lie carnally,  
through [fire] present children her. yourself

לְמַלְךָ וְלֹא תַחֲלִל אֶת-שֵׁם אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה: שביעי (רביעי) כב וְאֶת-זָכָר  
a man With 22 HASHEM. I am of your God; the Name profane and do not for Molech,

רש"י

שֵׁם גִּרְשָׁה לֹא יֵשֶׁא אֶת אֲחֻתָּהּ כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהִיא בְּחַיִּים: (בא) לְמַלְךָ. עֲבֹדָה זָרָה  
הִיא שְׂמֵמָה מוֹלֵךְ (סנהדרין 70). וְזוֹ הִיא עֲבֹדָתָהּ שְׂמוּסָר בְּנוֹ לְכוּמְרִים וְעוֹשִׂין  
שְׂמֵי מַדּוּרֹת גְּדוּלוֹת וּמַעֲבִירִין אֶת הַבֶּן [בְּרַגְלִיו] בֵּין שְׂמֵי מַדּוּרֹת הָאֵשׁ (שם 37):  
לֹא תֵתָן. וְזוֹ הִיא מַסִּירָתוֹ לְכוּמְרִים (שם): לְהַעֲבִיר לְמַלְךָ. וְזוֹ הַעֲבָרָה הִיא (שם):

לֹא תִקַּח, לְשׁוֹן קִיָּה. וְכֵן לַעֲנִין הַעוֹשֶׂה, אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח אֶת אִשָּׁה וְאֵת אִמָּהּ (להלן כ"ד)  
לְשׁוֹן קִיָּה. אֲזַל אִם אִשָּׁה מוֹסֵר לִישָׁא בָּתָהּ (יְצִמּוֹת ז'): [שְׂאֵרָה הִנֵּה. קְרוֹבוֹת וְזוֹ  
לְזוֹ: זִמָּה. עֲלֵה, כְּתַרְגֻּמוֹ עַל חֲטָאִין, שִׁירָךְ יוֹעֵלךְ לַחֲטָאִין: (יד) אֵל אֲחֻתָּהּ.  
שְׂמִיָּה כְּלַחַת (קְדוּשִׁין נ'): לְצַרֵּר. לְשׁוֹן לָרֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת זוֹ לָרֶה לְזוֹ: בְּחֵיָהּ. לְמַדְךָ

**18. וְאִשָּׁה אַל-אֶחָתָהּ** — *A woman in addition to her sister.* As the verse states below, the prohibition applies as long as the first married sister is still alive, even if she had been divorced. Upon the death of the first sister, however, the ex-husband may marry the surviving sister (*Rashi*).

**לְצַרֵּר** — *To make them rivals.* This phrase indicates the reason for the prohibition. Sisters should live in love and harmony, not rivalry and strife. That is why the prohibition is removed upon the death of the first sister (*Ramban*).

**19. בְּנִיתָ טַמְאָתָהּ** — *In her time of unclean separation.* This law applies to both the regular monthly period and to a *zavah*, as discussed above in 15:19-30.

**21. Molech.** Molech was an idol whose worship, as described below, was prevalent in Canaan. It is the only sin in the entire chapter that does not involve sexual conduct, but it is included because, like immorality, its practice contaminated the Land and led directly to the Divine expulsion of the Canaanites (vs. 24-28). Molech is mentioned here as an example of the idol worship that made the inhabitants of the Land so contemptible in God's eyes (*Ramban*). It may be that Molech was juxtaposed with the chapter of immorality because its worship involved children; like immorality, it demonstrated people's readiness to debase future generations to satisfy their own passions.

*R' Bachya* explains the juxtaposition between Molech and immorality. Both the idol worshiper and the person who en-

gages in immorality are similar in that they are treacherous to the one entitled to their loyalty. In forbidding idol worship, God refers to Himself as a *jealous God* (*Exodus 20:5*). The concept of jealousy refers to the outrage someone feels when another person takes a thing that is rightfully his. The Torah uses the term to describe God's anger when someone transfers his reverence from God to an idol, and also that of a husband when his wife is unfaithful (*Numbers 5:14*).

*Sforno* explains that Molech is more contemptible than any other form of idol worship. The Jew who serves Molech may bring his animal-offerings to God's Temple, but his children — who are the most precious to him — he brings to Molech, thus demonstrating conclusively where his loyalties are.

**לֹא-תֵתָן שְׂכִבְתָּךְ לְזָרָע לְהַעֲבִיר** — *You shall not present to pass through [fire].* According to *Rashi*, the worship of Molech involves two sins, one by the parents and one by the priests. The parents hand their child to the priests, who, in turn, make two bonfires and walk the child between the fires. *Ramban* (*Hil. Avodah Zarah 6:3*) maintains that the parents present their child to the priests, who then return him to them. Then, the parents themselves pass their child through the flames. *Ramban* agrees, but adds that the child was actually burned to death and consumed by the flames.

**וְלֹא תַחֲלִל** — *And do not profane.* The service of Molech is an egregious profanation of the Name, because gentiles will find it incomprehensible that Jews offer animals to God, but offer their children to an idol (*Ramban*).

לֹא תִשְׁכַּב מִשְׁכַּבִּי אִשָּׁה תּוֹעֵבָה הוּא: כִּי וּבְכָל-

< With any 23 << it is. < an << with a < as one lies < you shall not lie  
abomination woman;

בְּהֵמָה לֹא-תִתֵּן שְׁכַבְתָּ לְטִמְאַה-בָּהּ וְאִשָּׁה

< and a << with it; < to be < lie carnally < do not < animal  
woman contaminated

לֹא-תַעֲמֹד לִפְנֵי בְהֵמָה לְרִבְעָה תִּבֶּל הוּא:

<< it is a perversion. << to mate with it; < an animal < before < stand < shall not

כִּי אֶל-טִמְאֹת בְּכָל-אֵלֶּה כִּי בְכָל-אֵלֶּה נִטְמָאוּ

< were < of < through < for << of < through < become < Do not 24  
contaminated these all these; any contaminated

הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי מִשְׁלַח מִפְּנֵיהֶם: כִּי וַתִּטְמָא הָאָרֶץ וַאֲפָקַד עֲוֹנָהּ עָלֶיהָ

<< upon it, < its < and I < The Land became 25 << before you. < expel < I < that < the nations  
iniquity recalled contaminated

וַתִּקַּא הָאָרֶץ אֶת-יֹשְׁבֶיהָ: כִּי וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת-חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי

<< and My laws, < My decrees < But you shall safeguard 26 << its inhabitants. < and the Land spewed out

וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ מִכָּל הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵלֶּה הָאֶזְרוּחַ וְהַגֵּר וְהַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם:

<< among you. < who < and the < [both] the << of these abominations, < any < commit < and not  
lives proselyte native

ר"ע

(בג) תבל הוא. לשון קדש וערוה וניאוף, וכן ואפי על תבליתם (ישעיה יכח). [ד"א], תבל הוא לשון כלילה וערבות, זרע אדם זרע בהמה:

**22-23. Sodomy and bestiality.** The chapter of immorality ends with two forms of sexual perversion: homosexuality and bestiality. The harshness with which the Torah describes them testifies to the repugnance in which God holds those who engage in these unnatural practices.

**22. תועבה** — *An abomination.* None of the relationships given above are described with this term of disgust, because they involve normal activity, though with prohibited mates. Homosexuality, however, is unnatural and therefore abominable.

**24-30. The holiness of the Land.** The concluding verses of the chapter provide an important insight into the nature of *Eretz Yisrael*. The Land's holiness is such that it cannot tolerate the sort of sins described in this chapter, and it was about to vomit out its Canaanite inhabitants because they persisted in these activities. In *Rashi's* parable, the Land is like a prince, a young man with a delicate constitution, who was given spoiled food. He cannot digest it and so he disgorges it. Similarly, the Holy Land cannot abide sinners in its midst and, as the Books of the *Prophets* proclaim, when the Jews themselves began to indulge in such behavior, they, too, were disgorged.

Though the sins set forth in this chapter apply everywhere in the world, their perpetrators are not expelled from any other land. Only *Eretz Yisrael* expels those who contaminate it, because the immediate guardianship of *Eretz Yisrael* is not assigned to the heavenly forces. God uses such intermediaries as the conduits of

His providence to other lands, but *Eretz Yisrael* is God's own province, and as such it demands a higher standard of behavior.

This explains why the Samaritans who were resettled in *Eretz Yisrael* (see *II Kings* 17:26) and continued to serve their idols were punished by God. Although idolatry is forbidden to gentiles, they were punished for it only when they did it in *Eretz Yisrael*. The sin was the same, but the holiness of the place was different.

The Sages teach that the holiness of *Eretz Yisrael* is so great that someone who lives outside it is regarded as if he had no God, in comparison to someone who lives there (*Kesubos* 110b). For this reason, too, the Patriarchs recognized that the holiness of the Land required a higher standard of behavior, so they observed all the commandments in *Eretz Yisrael*, even before the Torah was given. Thus, Jacob married two sisters in Charan, and soon after he and his family arrived in the Land, Rachel died. Because of her righteousness, she was privileged to die in the Land; because of his righteousness, he did not live with sisters once he had arrived in *Eretz Yisrael* (*Ramban*).

**25. וַתִּקַּא הָאָרֶץ** — *And the Land spewed out.* Although the expulsion of the Canaanites had not yet taken place, the verse speaks of it in the past tense. Once a person or a nation has reached a point where God's wisdom determines that an outcome is certain, Scripture speaks of it as if it already happened.

**26. וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֹתָם** — *But you shall safeguard.* The suffix תם means *you*; thus the word אֹתָם, *you*, is superfluous. The word is

כֹּה אָרִי יֵת כָּל תּוֹעֵבֹתָא הָאֵלִין עֲבָדוּ  
אֲנָשִׁי אֶרֶצָא דִּי קְדָמִיכוֹן וְאַסְתָּאבֹת  
אֶרֶצָא: כֹּה וְלֹא תִרְוֹקוּן אֶרֶצָא יִתְכוֹן  
בְּסִטְאִיכוֹן יִתְהָ כְּמֵא דְרוֹקִינֵת יֵת  
עֲמִמָּא דִּי קְדָמִיכוֹן: כֹּה אָרִי כָּל דִּי  
יַעֲבֹד מִכָּל תּוֹעֵבֹתָא הָאֵלִין  
וְיִשְׁתִּיצוֹן בְּפִשְׁתָּא דִּיעֲבָדוֹן מְגוּ  
עֲמָהוֹן: וְתִטְרֹוֹן יֵת מִטְּרַת מִימְרֵי  
בְּדִיל דְּלֹא לְמַעֲבֹד מְנִימוֹסֵי  
תּוֹעֵבֹתָא דִּי אֲתַעֲבִידוּ קְדָמִיכוֹן וְלֹא  
תִסְתָּאבֹוֹן בְּהוֹן אָנָּא יִי אֱלֹהִיכוֹן:

כֹּה אֶת-כָּל-הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵל עָשׂוּ אֲנָשֵׁי-הָאָרֶץ  
of the < — the << they < these abominations < all < For 27  
Land inhabitants committed

אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵיכֶם וַתִּטְמָא הָאָרֶץ: מִפְּטִיר כֹּה וְלֹא-  
Let not 28 << and the Land << before you — < who were  
became contaminated.

תִּקְיֵא הָאָרֶץ אֶתְכֶם בְּטִמְאַכֶּם אֹתָהּ בְּאֲשֶׁר קָאָה  
it spewed < as << it, < for having < the Land spew you out  
out contaminated

אֶת-הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵיכֶם: כֹּה אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה מִכָּל הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵלֶּה  
of these abominations, < any < commits < who < anyone < For 29 << before you. < that was < the nation

וְנִכְרְתוּ הַנַּפְשׁוֹת הַעֲשׂוֹת מִקֶּרֶב עַמָּם: וְשִׁמְרָתֶם אֶת-מִשְׁמְרָתִי  
My charge < You shall 30 << their < from < doing [so] < the people < cut off will be  
safeguard people. among

לְבַלְתִּי עֲשׂוֹת מַחֲקוֹת הַתּוֹעֵבֹת אֲשֶׁר נַעֲשׂוּ לִפְנֵיכֶם וְלֹא תִטְמָאוּ  
contaminate < and not < before you, < were < that < that are < any of the < to do < not  
yourselves done abominable, customs

בָּהֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: פָּפָה פ' פסוקים. כ"י כ"ל סימן. עד"ו סימן.  
your God. < HASHEM, < I am << through  
them;

רש"י

(ל) ושמרתם את משמרתִי. להזהיר בית דין על כך (שם פרק יג:כז):  
ולא תטמאו בהם אני ה' אלהיכם. הא אם תטמאו איני אלהיכם ואתם  
נפסלים מאחרי, ומה הגאון יש לי בכס ואתם מתחייבים כלייה. לכך נאמר אני  
ה' אלהיכם (שם):

(בח) ולא תקיא הארץ אתכם. משל לכן מלך שהאכילוהו דבר מאוס, שאין  
עומד במעיו אלא מקיאו. כך ארץ ישראל אינה מקיימת עובדי עזירה  
(ת"כ קדושים פרק יז:ד) ותרגומו ולא תרוקן, לשון ריקון, מריקה עלמה מהם:  
(בט) הנפשות העשות. הזכר והנקבה במשמע (ת"כ פרשתא ט:כ):

directed at the courts and the leaders, placing upon them the  
responsibility to prevent others from sinning.

29. וְנִכְרְתוּ — *Cut off will be.* All the sins mentioned in this  
chapter incur *kares*, even those that are subject to the death  
penalty. The death penalty is imposed only if the sinner was  
warned that his act was forbidden and that it was a capital  
offense. Otherwise, if he committed the act intentionally, he is  
punished by *kares*.

30. וְשִׁמְרָתֶם אֶת-מִשְׁמְרָתִי — *You shall safeguard My charge.* It is  
incumbent upon the local courts and the Sages to impose any  
restrictions that may be necessary to prevent transgression of  
the Torah's commandments. For example, in order to prevent  
violation of the forbidden liaisons of this chapter, the Sages  
forbade the *שְׁנוּיֹת לְעָרִיּוֹת*, *secondary arayos*. Among them are: a  
grandmother, a grandfather's wife, great-granddaughter, etc.

The complete list may be found in *Even HaEzer* 15.

אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם — *I am HASHEM, your God.* But if you contaminate  
yourselves with these sins, I cannot be your God; you will have  
cut yourself off from Me. What pleasure can I have from you?  
You will deserve annihilation. Therefore, Scripture stresses, *I  
am your God (Rashi; Sifra).*

— This Masoretic note  
means: There are 80 verses in the *Sidrah*, numerically corre-  
sponding to the mnemonics כ"ל and עד"ו.

The first mnemonic means "for everything," because this  
*Sidrah* includes the extremes of spiritual purity — which is  
achieved on Yom Kippur — and spiritual contamination, the  
immorality that can cause Israel to be expelled from its Land.  
The second mnemonic, עד"ו, means "strayed" in Aramaic, an  
allusion to the sin of immorality (*R' David Feinstein*).



## PARASHAS KEDOSHIM / פרשת קדושים

אונקלוס

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: בְּמִלָּל  
 [יט] אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: בְּמִלָּל  
 < Speak 2 << saying: < Moses, < to < HASHEM spoke 1 19  
 אֶל-כָּל-עֵדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדָשִׁים תִּהְיוּ בִּי קְדוֹשׁ  
 < holy < for < shall < Holy << to them: < and you < of Israel < of the < assembly < the < to  
 you be, shall say Children entire

רש"י

העבירה, שכל מקום שאתה מוצא גדר ערוה אתה מוצא קדושה, חשה זונה וחללה וגו'  
 אני ה' מקדשכם (להלן כא:יח). ולא יחלל זרעו אני ה' מקדשו (שם טו). וקדושים יהיו,

(ב) דבר אל כל עדת בני ישראל. מלמד שנאמרה פרשה זו בהקהל מפני שרוב  
 גופי תורה תלוין בה (ת"כ פרשתא א:א): קדשים תהיו. הווי פרושים מן העריות ומן

## PARASHAS KEDOSHIM

19.

**1-4. Holiness, parents, Sabbath, and idols.** It was God's will to rest His Presence among the Jewish people so that they could rise to their calling to be a holy nation of His servants (*Exodus 19:6*). In order to make this possible, Israel was enjoined to avoid the spiritual contaminations that would result from the sexual and religious practices listed in the previous several chapters. This *Sidrah* begins by explaining that the reason for these prohibitions was to make it possible for the nation to become holy by emulating its Creator as much as possible. Furthermore, the purpose of this holiness is for people to become elevated in their lives on this world, and the way to do this, our passage teaches, is by scrupulous adherence to the commandments found on the first tablet of the Ten Commandments — but these commandments demand more than minimum observance, for as one makes his required climb up the ladder of holiness, one must elevate his concept of what the Torah requires. Thus, the Torah teaches here that respect for parents ordains not only that they be honored through personal service, but that it be done in a respectful manner. The definition of Sabbath observance goes beyond the seventh day of the week and includes the seventh-year sabbatical of fields and loans, for they, too, testify that God is the Creator and Master of the universe. And we are exhorted that the prohibition against idolatry includes not only acts of worship, but anything that shows them credence or respect, even when there could be some personal advantage in doing so (*Sforno*).

**2. כָּל-עֵדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל** — *The entire assembly of the Children of Israel.* The regular procedure of transmitting the *mitzvos* to Israel was that Moses would teach them privately to Aaron; Nadab and Abihu would join them and Moses would repeat the teaching; the Elders would enter and Moses would repeat it again. Then, finally, he would teach it to the entire nation (*Erwin 54b*). Here, however, the order was changed; Moses assembled the entire nation and taught this chapter to everyone simultaneously, because the majority of the Torah's essential laws are contained here, either explicitly or by allusion (*Rashi; Sifra*). *Maharzu* explains that these essential laws are the Sabbath, reverence for parents, the prohibitions against stealing, taking revenge, or bearing grudges, and the

commandment to love one's fellows.

In the case of the other commandments, it was not required that every Jew come to listen to Moses' teaching; they were free to rely on the Elders and leaders to teach them, or to answer their halachic inquiries whenever they came up. Here, however, because of the extreme importance of this chapter, everyone was required to attend (*Sefer HaZikaron; Panim Yafos*).

*Alshich* explains that Moses called all the people together to impress upon them that the *mitzvos* are incumbent upon everyone equally. Judaism does not subscribe to the idea that "holy people" are obligated in commandments that do not apply to "ordinary" people, or that they have a greater responsibility than others to observe them scrupulously. Thus the command to be holy applies to everyone, and this being so, it is axiomatic that every Jew has the potential for holiness.

**2. קְדָשִׁים תִּהְיוּ** — *Holy shall you be.* [The root קדש connotes separation due to a difference in kind from something else. On one end of the spectrum, the Sanctuary is קדש, *holy*, because it is on a different spiritual plane from the secular. At the opposite end, an immoral person is called a קדש, because his spiritual degradation sets him apart from moral people.] The injunction to be holy calls upon Jews to avoid the illicit relationships described in the previous chapter, because wherever there is a separation from immorality, there is holiness (*Rashi; Vayikra Rabbah 24:6*).

*Ramban* maintains that the concept of holiness is not limited to the observance of any particular category of commandments. Rather, it is an admonition that one's approach to life be governed by moderation, specifically in the area of what is permitted. In *Ramban's* memorable phrase, someone who observes only the letter of the law can easily become נָכַל בְּרִשּׁוֹת, *a degenerate with the permission of the Torah*, for such a person can observe the technical requirements of the commandments while surrendering to self-indulgence, gluttony, and licentiousness. But God demands more of a Jew than obedience to the letter of the law. The commandment to be holy tells us, as the Sages put it, קְדַשׁ עֲצֻמָּה בְּמִתְרָךְ, *Sanctify yourself in what is permitted to you* (*Yevamos 20a*), by refraining not only from what is expressly forbidden, but from too much of what is permitted.

אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אִישׁ אָמוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ  
 < you shall < and his < His < Every 3 << your God. < HASHEM, < am I,  
 revere father mother man:  
 וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ: אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: אֶל־  
 < Do not 4 << your God. < HASHEM, <—I am << you shall keep < and My Sabbaths  
 תִּפְנוּ אֶל־הָאֱלִילִים וְאֱלֹהֵי מִסְכָּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:  
 << your God. < HASHEM, <—I << for < make < do not < of cast < and gods << the idols, < to < turn  
 am yourselves metal

רש"י

אז, אם יאמר לך חלל את השבת אל תשמע לו, וכן בשאר כל המצוות (ת"כ שם י; יצמות ה"ז; ז"מ ל"ז): אני ה' אלהיכם. אתה ואביך חייבים בכבודי (שם) לפיכך לא תשמע לו לבטל את דברי. איזה מורא לא ישב במקומו ולא ידבר במקומו ולא יסור את דבריו. ואיזה כבוד מאכיל ומשקה מלביש ומנעיל מכנים ומוציא (ת"כ שם; קידושין לא: ד) אל תפנו אל האלילים. לעבדם (ת"כ שם) אלילים לשון אל כלא הוא חשוב: ואלהי מסכה. תחילתן אלילים הם, ואם אתה פונה אחריהם סופך לעשותן אלהות (שם יא): לא תעשו לכם. לא תעשו לאחרים ולא אחריהם לכם (שם יב). וא"ת לא תעשו לעצמכם

אשה זונה וחללה וגו' (שם ר"ז): (ג) איש אמו ואביו תיראו. כל אחד מכם תיראו אביו ואמו. זה פשוט. ומדרשו, אין לי אלא איש, אשה מנין, כשהוא אומר תיראו הכי כאן שנים. אם כן למה נאמר איש, שהאיש סיפק בידו לעשות אבל אשה רשות אחרים עליה (ת"כ שם ג; קידושין לז): אמו ואביו תיראו. כאן הקדים אם לא לפני שגלוי לפניו שהבן ירא את אביו יותר מאמו, ובכבוד הקדים אז לאם (שמות כ"ב) לפי שגלוי לפניו שהבן מכבד את אמו יותר מאביו, מפני שמדלתו בדברים (קידושין ל"ז). ואת שבתתי תשמרו. סמך שמירת שבת למורא אז, לומר, אע"פ שהזהרתיך על מורא

3. אָמוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ — *His mother and his father you shall revere.* Reverence or fear means that one should act toward his parents as he would toward a sovereign with the power to punish those who treat him disrespectfully (*Rambam, Sefer HaMitzvos; Chinnuch*). Specifically, this commandment prohibits a child from sitting in his parents' regular places, interrupting them, or contradicting them [in an abrupt or disrespectful manner]. Honor, as mandated in the Ten Commandments, refers in general to serving one's parents, such as feeding and dressing them, or assisting them if they find it difficult to walk (*Rashi; Sifra*).

וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ — *And My Sabbaths you shall keep.* From the juxtaposition of these two commandments — to revere parents and to observe the Sabbath — the Sages derive that if a parent commands a child to desecrate the Sabbath [or to do anything else in violation of the Torah], the order must not be obeyed. Thus, the flow of the verse is as follows: You are to revere your parents, but My commandments take precedence over the wishes of your parents, because *I am HASHEM*, and all people — you and your parents alike — are required to respect Me (*Rashi; Sifra; see Yevamos 6a*).

The Torah equates reverence for God (*Deuteronomy 6:13*) with that for parents, because all three — God, father, and mother — are partners in a person's existence (*Sifra*). When someone honors his parents, the "third Partner" says, "I consider it as if I had lived among them and they had honored Me as well" (*Kiddushin 30b*).

*Chasam Sofer* explains that revering one's parents and observing the Sabbath represent, in fact, opposite conceptions. The parents have the ability to start the child on the right path; they are there at the beginning. On the Sabbath, however, we acknowledge the completion of Creation. The juxtaposition indicates that both the beginning and the end are worthy of honor and respect.

שַׁבְּתֹתַי — *My Sabbaths.* The Torah speaks of Sabbaths in the plural, a very unusual usage. The *Zohar (Terumah)* explains that this alludes to a "higher" and a "lower" Sabbath. In addition to

its mystical connotations, the "higher" Sabbath alludes to the holiness of the Sabbath, the day on which God permits His Presence to be more apparent and accessible, so that the Jew can unite himself with Godliness. The "lower" Sabbath is its practical aspect as a day of rest, when the Jew can forget the cares and demands of his workday life and devote himself to higher pursuits. This verse likens Sabbath observance to the reverence due to parents, because the same two aspects are present in the relationship of children to their parents. The "lower" aspect is that a son or daughter who respects a parent can expect care and respect in return; and, of course, parental sacrifices for their children are too obvious to be recounted. In addition, there is a "higher" aspect, for parents are the conveyers of God's tradition. The Sages say that the Torah likens the honor due to parents to that due to God Himself, and the Talmud states that when R' Tarfon heard his mother's footsteps, he would say, "The Divine Presence is coming" (*R' Yosef Dov Soloveitchik*).

4. אֶל־תִּפְנוּ אֶל־הָאֱלִילִים — *Do not turn to the idols.* Having exhorted all Jews to show regard for the three partners — God, father, and mother — who brought them into being, the Torah forbids anyone to add false deities to this partnership.

The prohibition against actual idol worship appears above (*Exodus 20:5*); this verse prohibits even the very thought of such worship (*Rashi*, as explained by *Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh*). According to *Rambam*, this verse forbids the study or discussion of the rites and philosophy of idolatry (*Hil. Ovdei Kochavim 2:2*). *Panim Yafos* adds that this prohibition extends even to someone who seeks to learn about idols only to disparage them. Human nature — and history — demonstrate that many people have thought they were strong enough to control their thoughts and desires, only to become ensnared by the very creeds they railed against.

הָאֱלִילִים וְאֱלֹהֵי מִסְכָּה — *The idols, and gods of cast metals.* The word for idol — אֱלִיל — contains the syllable אֵל, not, or nothing, because these gods have no power and no value. But if someone

וְכִי תִזְבַּחוּ זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים לַיהוָה לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם  
 < to find favor << to HASHEM, < of a < a < you < When 5  
 for yourselves peace-offering sacrifice slaughter  
 תִּזְבַּחְהוּ: בְּיוֹם זִבְחֵכֶם יֵאָכַל וּמִמָּחָרָת וְהַנּוֹתָר  
 < and whatever << and on < it shall < of your < On the 6 << you shall  
 remains the next day, be eaten slaughtering [it] day slaughter it.  
 עַד-יוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בָאֵשׁ יִשָּׂרֵף: וְאִם הָאָכַל יֵאָכַל בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי פְּגוּל  
 < rejected << on the third day, < it shall be eaten < But if 7 << it shall be < in fire << the third day, < until  
 in any way burned.

רש"י

שליח שיתכוין לשחוט (חולין יג.): (ו) ביום זבחכם יאכל. כשתזבחוהו תשחטוהו על מנת זמן זה שקבעתי לכם כבר: (ז) ואם האכל יאכל וגו'. אם אינו ענין לחון לזמנו, שהרי כבר נאמר ואם האכל יאכל מבשר זבח שלמיו וגו' (לעיל ז:יח) תנאו ענין לחון למקומו (ת"כ ש"ס ד; זכאים כח. דכח): יכול יהיו חייבין כרת על אכילתו, ת"ל והגשש האוכלת ממנו עונה תשא (לעיל ז:יח) ממנו ולא מחזירו, ילא הגשש במחשבת חוץ למקומו (זכאים כט.): פגול. מתועב כמו ומרק פגולים כליהם (ישעיה סה:ד):

אכל אחרים עושין לכם, הרי כבר נאמר לא יהיה לך (שמות כג) לא שלך ולא של אחרים: (ה) ובי תזבחו וגו'. לא נאמרה פרשה זו אלא ללמד שלא תהא זביחתן אלא על מנת להאכל בתוך הזמן הזה (ת"כ פרק א:א) שאם לקבוע להם זמן אכילה הרי כבר נאמר ואם נדר או נדבה זבח קרבנו וגו' (לעיל ז:טז): לרצונכם תזבחוהו. תחלת זביחתו תהא על מנת נחת רוח שיהא לכם לרצון, שאם תחשבו עליו מחשבת פסול לא ירצה עליכם לפני: לרצונכם. אפימינ"ט. זהו לפי פשוטו. ורבותינו למדו מכאן למחשבת פסול בקדשים,

is foolish enough to *turn* to idols, he will begin to respect them as if they were truly *gods* (Rashi; Sifra).

**5-8. Piggul/Rejected offerings.** Offerings can be disqualified by improper intentions at the time of the service. This teaches that it is not enough to carry out the commandments mechanically; one must perform them with the right intentions, as well (*Sforno*).

Every offering has its specified time limitations for being eaten or burned on the Altar. This passage deals with two disqualifications: (a) If at the time of the service the Kohen has in mind that the offering will be eaten or burned after the proper time, the offering becomes *piggul*, rejected; its service may not be continued. If the blood service is concluded, one who eats the flesh of the offering is punished by *kares*. (b) If the Kohen has in mind that the offering will be eaten or burned in the wrong *place*, it becomes disqualified, but the punishment for eating it is not *kares*.

Only during one of the four parts of the blood service can an offering become *piggul*. The four parts are: slaughter [שחיטה]; receiving the blood in a vessel as it flows from the slaughter cut [קבלה]; bringing the vessel to the Altar [הולכה]; and sprinkling or throwing the blood upon the Altar [זריקה]. Once the blood service has been concluded satisfactorily, the offering has achieved its purpose of atonement and is not subject to this disqualification.

The law of *piggul* teaches an important ethical concept. There are other violations in the procedure of the sacrificial service that render an offering invalid, but *piggul* is uniquely serious in that one who eats it is liable to *kares*, or spiritual excision. The Talmud teaches that an offering cannot become *piggul* unless every part of its service was performed properly, with the exception of the improper intent that invalidated it. This is an illustration of the axiom that the more sacred something is, the more serious the Torah regards an infraction. Thus, only an offering that was perfect in every other way can become *piggul*. People should conduct themselves with this in mind. The better a person's reputation and the more responsible his position, the

more he must guard against even the slightest infraction (*R' Yaakov Kamenetsky*).

**5. לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם.** — *To find favor for yourselves.* An offering must be slaughtered in such a way that you will find favor in God's eyes, but if it is slaughtered with the improper intentions described above, the offering is rejected.

We derive the requirement that every offering must be brought willingly, from the verse (1:3) regarding the burnt-offering. *Oznayim LaTorah* asks why the law here that every offering must be brought with the correct intention — *to find favor* — is stated instead in the context of the peace-offering. He explains with an analogy to Yom Kippur: Although the Rabbis derive that one who eats on Erev Yom Kippur is considered as if he fasted both Erev Yom Kippur and Yom Kippur, it is easier to fast with the right intention than to eat with the right intention. Since one derives enjoyment from eating, the intention of that enjoyment is constantly threatening to intrude on his mitzvah intention. Similarly, those offerings, such as the burnt-offering and the sin-offering, from which the owner does not eat, are obviously being brought for the proper reason. However, the peace-offering that is eaten by the one who brings it requires special effort to insure that his intention is pure from the very beginning.

**6. בְּיוֹם זִבְחֵכֶם.** — *On the day of your slaughtering [it].* This verse cannot refer to the actual time of eating, because that requirement has been given in 7:16. Rather, it means that if the Kohen intends at the time of the slaughter that it will be eaten after the deadline, it becomes disqualified immediately (*Rashi; Sifra*).

**7. וְאִם הָאָכַל יֵאָכַל.** — *But if it shall be eaten in any way.* The Sages interpret this verse as referring to a different, but similar, sort of disqualification: that of a Kohen who has in mind that the offering will be eaten in an impermissible *place*. For example, a peace-offering may be eaten only within the walls of Jerusalem — it becomes disqualified if the Kohen has in mind that it will be eaten elsewhere. However, the Sages derive that there is no *kares* in this case (*Rashi; Sifra*).

הוא לא יהי לרענא: הודייכלה  
חובה יקבל ארי ית קודשא דיני אהל  
וישתיצי אנשא יהוא מעמה:  
טובמחצרון ית חצרא דארעבון  
לא תשיצי פאתא דחלקה למחצר  
ולקטא דחצרה לא תלקט: יוכרמך  
לא תעלל ונתרא דכרמך לא  
תלקט לעני ולגורי תשובוק  
יתהון אנא יי אלהבון: יא לא תגנבון

הוא לא ירצה: וְאִכְלִיוּ עֹנֹו יִשָּׂא כִּי-אֶת-קֹדֶשׁ

< what is sacred < for << he will < his < Anyone of those 8 << — it shall not << it is  
bear, iniquity who eat it, be accepted.

יהוה חלל ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מעמיה:

<< from its < will that soul be < and cut off << he has < to  
people. desecrated; HASHEM

ט וּבְקִצְרְכֶם אֶת-קִצִּיר אֲרֻצְכֶם לֹא תִכְלֶה פֶּאֶת

< [unto] < complete < do << of your land, < the harvest < When you reap 9  
the corner not

שְׂדֶךְ לִקְצֹר וּלְקַט קִצִּירְךָ לֹא תִלְקֹט: , וּבְכֶרְמְךָ לֹא תַעֲוִלֵּל וּפְרֹט כְּרָמְךָ

< of your < and the fal- << pick the iso- < — do << Your 10 << gather. < do < of your < and the << the < of your  
vineyard len grapes lated grapes; not vineyard not harvest fallen stalks reaping; field

לֹא תִלְקֹט לְעָנִי וּלְגֵר תַּעֲזֹב אֹתָם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ❖ יא לֹא תִגְנֹבוּ

<< steal, < Do not 11 << your God. < HASHEM, < — I << them < shall you < and for the < for the << gather; < do not  
am leave proselyte poor

רש"י

שחן לה לא כתף ולא נטף (ת"כ פרק גג; פאה ז:ד): ופרט ברמך. גרגרי ענבים  
הנושרים בשעת זריה (ת"כ ש"ב; פאה ש"ג): אני ה' אלהיכם. דין להפרע, ואני  
גובה מכס חלא נפשות, שנאמר אל תגזל דל וגו' כי ה' יריב ריבם וקבע את קבעיהם  
נפש (משלי כב:כז; ת"כ ש"ז): (ויא) לא תגנבו. אזהרה לגונב ממון, אבל לא  
תגנב שבעשר הדברות אזהרה לגונב נפשות, דבר הלמד מענינו, דבר שחיבין עליו

(ח) ואכליו עונו ישא. צוטר גמור הכתוב מדבר. ואינו ענוש כרת על הנשחט חוץ  
למקומו שכבר מיעטו הכתוב. וזה צוטר גמור מדבר, וזממסת כריתות (ה) למדורו  
מגורה שיה: (ט) לא תכלה פאת שדך. שנית פאה בסוף שדה (ת"כ ש"י; פאה  
אג): ולקט קצירך. שכלים הנושרים בשעת קצירה אחת או שתיים, אבל שלג אינן  
לקט (פאה ויה): (י) לא תעולל. לא תעולל עוללות שבה וכן ניכרות איזהו עוללות כל

**8. חלל** — *He has desecrated.* A person who disregards the laws that specify when an offering may be eaten implies that he considers the sacrificial meat to be nothing more than a means of gratifying his appetite (*Haamek Davar*).

**9-10. Gifts to the poor.** We have been commanded to emulate God's holiness to the extent humanly possible, to honor parents, His "partners," and to respect His sacred offerings. This passage continues the progression. God is merciful and charitable, so He commands His people to display kindness by setting aside part of their crops for the poor. This is why this passage ends with the words *I am HASHEM, your God*. Then, the Torah continues with the laws of honest business dealings among all categories of people, between the authorities and the people, and the social relationships of love and consideration (*Sforno*).

A Jew must discharge his responsibilities to others before his crops are truly his own. Even at the harvest, when a full season of labor comes to its climax, he must leave part of his crop for the poor before he takes it for himself and his family (*R' Hirsch*).

**9. לא תכלה** — *Do not complete.* An edge of the field must be left unharvested, and the poor are to be permitted unhindered access to take the leftover produce (*Rashi; Sifra*).

**10. וּלְקַט קִצִּירְךָ** — *And the fallen stalks of your harvest.* If one or two ears fall to the ground at any one point during the harvest, they must be left for the poor, but if three or more ears fall together, the farmer may retrieve them (*Rashi; Sifra*).

**10. לא תעולל** — *Do not pick the isolated grapes,* the single grapes that have not formed clusters (*Rashi*).

**And the fallen grapes.** This is the equivalent of the law of the fallen stalks in the field as it applies to vineyards: the poor are entitled to take one or two grapes — but not three — that fall during the harvest (*Pe'ah 6:5,7:3*).

**And the proselyte.** Poor proselytes are singled out because their lonely plight calls out for compassion (*Sifra*).

**Shall you leave them.** These gifts to the poor must be left in the field or orchard, for the poor to take as they please (*Sifra; Chullin 131b*).

**11-15. Honest dealings with others.** Theft, robbery, false oaths, etc. are never the norm in an entire nation; if they were, society would break down. But there are other, subtler manifestations of such sins. It is not at all uncommon for a society to be lax in its ethics. People may look for ways to deceive others in business, to deny obligations that cannot be proven, to invoke God's Name to convince others that lies are true, to underpay laborers, or to seek personal gain through unctuous flattery. Such conduct is wrong, even though the courts may not be able to deal with it. By using the plural in condemning such practices, God implies that He wants Israel as a whole to look to its general standards of honesty and upright conduct (*R' Hirsch*).

**11. לא תגנבו** — *Do not steal.* The prohibition applies not only to the person who actually steals, but also to those who abet it, such as: a witness who remains silent though he has seen a theft or knows that someone is withholding property, or someone who accuses falsely, or someone who falsely claims money that is not owed him, or unjustifiably demands an oath (*Ibn Ezra*).

וְלֹא־תִכְחֹשׁוּ וְלֹא־תִשְׁקְרוּ אִישׁ בְּעַמִּיתוֹ: יֵב וְלֹא־

< Do not 12 >> to his fellow. < a man < lie < and do not >> deny falsely, < do not

תִּשָּׁבְעוּ בִשְׁמִי לִשְׁקֹר וְחַלְלֵתָ אֶת־שֵׁם אֱלֹהֶיךָ

>> of your < the Name < thereby >> falsely, < by My < swear  
God desecrating Name

אֲנִי יְהוָה: יֵב לֹא־תִעְשֶׂק אֶת־רֵעֶךָ וְלֹא תִגְזֹל לֹא־

< do not >> rob; < and < your fellow < withhold < Do 13 >> HASHEM. < —I  
do not what is due not am

תָּלִין פְּעֻלַּת שְׂכִיר אִתָּךְ עַד־בֹּקֶר: יֵב לֹא־תִקְלַל חֵרֶשׁ וְלִפְנֵי עוֹר לֹא

< do < a blind < and < [even] < curse < Do not 14 >> morning. < until < with < of a < the < keep  
not person before the deaf you worker wages overnight

תִּתֵּן מִכְשַׁל וְיִרְאֶתָ מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה: ❖ שְׁנֵי [חֲמִישִׁי] טו לֹא־תַעֲשׂוּ עוֹל

< a < commit < Do not 15 >> HASHEM. < —I >> your God < you shall >> a stumbling < place  
perversion am fear block;

רש"י

השחר, לפיכך זמן גבוי שכרו כל היום (ת"כ שס יב; ז"מ קי:) לפי שנתנה תורה זמן  
לבעל הבית עונה לבקש מעות: (יד) לא תקלל חרש. אין לי אלא חרש, מניין לרבות  
כל אדם, ת"ל בעמך לא תאר (שמות כב:כז) אם כן למה נאמר חרש, מה חרש מיוחד  
שהוא בחיים אף כל שהוא בחיים, ילא המה שאינו בחיים (ת"כ שס יג): ולפני עור לא  
תתן מבשול. לפני הסומא בדבר לא תתן ענה שאינה הוגנת לו. אל תאמר מכור  
שדך וקח נדך חמור ואתה עוקף עליו ונוטלה הימנו (שס יד): ויראת מאלהיך. לפי  
שהדבר הזה אינו מסור לבריות לידע אם דעתו של זה לטובה או לרעה, ויכול להשמיט  
ולומר לטובה נתכוונתי, לפיכך נאמר זו ויראת מאלהיך, המכיר מחשבותיך. וכן כל  
דבר המסור ללב של אדם העושהו, ואין אחר הבריות מכירות זו, נאמר זו ויראת  
מאלהיך (שס פרק ז:יד): (טו) לא תעשו עול במשפט. מלמד שהדין המקלל את  
הדין קרוי עול, שנאוי ומשוקץ, חרש ותועבה (שס פרק ד:א). שהעול קרוי תועבה

מיתת ז"ד (מכילתא בחדש ח): ולא תבחושו. לפי שנא' וכחש זה משלם קרן וחומש  
(לפיל הכבד) למדנו עונש, אזהרה מנין, ת"ל ולא תכחשו (ת"כ פרשתא ב:ג): ולא  
תשקרו. לפי שנאמר ונשבע על שקר יסלם קרן וחומש (לעיל שס) למדנו עונש, אזהרה  
מנין, ת"ל ולא תשקרו: לא תגבבו ולא תבחושו ולא תשקרו ולא  
תשבעו. אם נגבת סופך לכחש, סופך לשקר, סופך לישבע לשקר (ת"כ שס ה): (יב)  
ולא תשבעו בשמי. למה נאמר, לפי שנא' לא תשא את שם ה' אלהיך לשוא (שמות  
כז: כז) יכול לא יהא חייב אלא על שם המיוחד, מנין לרבות כל הכנויין, ת"ל ולא תשבעו  
בשמי לשקר, כל שם יש לי (ת"כ שס ו): (יג) לא תעשק. זה הכובש שכר שכיר (שס  
ט): לא תלין. לשון נקבה מוסב על הפעולה: עד בקר. בשכיר יום הכתוב מדבר,  
שיזיאתו משקעה חמה, לפיכך זמן גבוי שכרו כל הלילה. ובמקום אחר הוא אומר ולא  
תבוא עליו השמש (דברים כד:טו) מדבר בשכיר לילה, שהשלמת פעולתו משיעלה עמוד

12. וְלֹא־תִכְחֹשׁוּ וְלֹא־תִשְׁקְרוּ — *Do not deny falsely, and do not lie.* Do not deny that you possess property that someone has left in trust with you, and do not lie, by backing up your denial with a false oath (Rambam, *Sefer HaMitzvos*).

The progression of sins listed in the verse illustrates the defense mechanism of human nature, which takes control of a person once he allows himself to sin. If someone steals, he will seek to defend himself by denying that it ever happened, and he may well go so far as to swear falsely to cover up his guilt (Rashi).

12. וְחַלְלֵתָ אֶת־שֵׁם — *Thereby desecrating the Name.* Someone who swears falsely demonstrates that he has no respect for God's Name (Ibn Ezra).

13. לֹא־תִעְשֶׂק — *Do not withhold what is due,* by depriving a worker of his earnings (Rashi; Sifra), or by deceitfully or forcibly withholding anything belonging to another person, such as an article that was left for safekeeping (Rambam, *Sefer HaMitzvos*).

עַד־בֹּקֶר — *Until morning.* If a worker was hired by the day, his employer has until morning to pay him; if he was hired for the night, he must be paid by the next evening (Rashi; Sifra). The prohibition applies from the time the wage becomes payable; thus, if a worker is hired by the week, his wage is payable at the end of the week, not on a daily basis (Choshen Mishpat 339:3-5).

14. חֵרֶשׁ — *[Even] the deaf.* Even though he cannot hear the curse and be angered or embarrassed by it, it is forbidden to curse him. Surely, therefore, it is forbidden to curse those who are aware of what is being done to them (Ramban).

וְלִפְנֵי עוֹר — *Before a blind person.* [In addition to the literal meaning,] the verse means allegorically that one should not give bad advice to an unsuspecting person, particularly if the adviser stands to benefit from the other's error (Rashi; Sifra). It is also forbidden to cause someone to sin (Rambam, *Sefer HaMitzvos*). The message of this law is that we are responsible for the welfare of others and may do nothing to undermine it.

וְיִרְאֶתָ מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ — *You shall fear your God.* Someone who gives bad advice can easily hide his perfidy by saying he was sincere and meant well. But the Torah warns him that he cannot deceive God. If he was indeed treacherous to his friend, God can be trusted to punish him (Rashi; Sifra).

One who preys on the deaf and blind should beware, for God can punish him by making him deaf or blind (Ibn Ezra).

15. לֹא־תַעֲשׂוּ עוֹל — *Do not commit a perversion.* A judge who rules falsely is guilty of a perversion of justice and what he has done is an abomination (Rashi). But if litigants deceive the judges by lying, they are responsible for the perversion of justice that they will have caused (Or HaChaim).

בְּמִשְׁפָּט לֹא-תִשָּׂא פָנֶי-דָל וְלֹא תִהְדָּר פָּנֵי גָדוֹל

« of the < to the < show < and do < of a < to the < show < do << of justice;  
great; face [preferential] not poor face favor not  
honor person

בְּצֶדֶק תִּשְׁפֹּט עִמִּיתְךָ: לֹא-תֵלֵךְ רְכִיל בְּעַמֶּיךָ

« among < as a < go < Do not 16 « your < you shall < with  
your people; gossip about fellow. judge righteousness

לֹא תַעֲמִיד עַל-דָּם רֵעֶךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה: לֹא-תִשְׂנֵא אֶת-אֲחִיךָ בְּלִבְּךָ

« in your < your brother < hate < Do not 17 « HASHEM. <—I « of your fel- < the < while < stand < do not  
heart; am low [is shed] blood inactive

רש"י

אומר שהלשון [לשון] הולך ומרגל, שה"ק נחלפת בגימ'ל, שכל האותיות שמואלים ממקום אחד מתחלפות זו בזו. כי"ת צפ"ח וצו"ח, וגימ'ל צכ"ק וקו"ף [צכ"ק], וכו' בלמ"ד, ורי"ש [ו"י] בלד", וכן וירגל בעצדך [שמואל צ יט: כח] רגל ותר מה לאמר עלי רעה. וכן לא רגל על לשונו [תהלים טו:ג] וכן רוכל, הסוחר ומרגל אחר כל סחורה, וכל המוכר בשמים להתקשט בהם הנשים, על שם שמחזר תמיד בעצירות נקרא רוכל לשון רוגל. ותרגומו לא תיכול קורטין, כמו ואכלו קרטיהון די יהודיא [דניאל ג:ח] אבל קורטא צי מלכא [צרכות נח]. נראה בעיני שהיה משפטם ללכוד צבית המקבל דבריהם שום הלעטה, והוא גמר חזוק שדבריו מקיימים ויעמידם על האמת. ולאותה הלעטה נקראת רכילת קורטין, לשון קורץ בעיניו [משלי ו:יג] שכן דרך כל הולכי רכיל לקרוע בעיניהם ולרמוז דברי רכילותן שלא יצינו שאר השומעים: לא תעמוד על דם רעך. לראות במיתתו ואתה יכול להגילו, כגון טובע בנהר, וזוהי או לסטים באים עליו [ת"כ פרק ד:ה; סנהדרין עג:]. אני ד'. כאמן לשלם שכר ונאמן להפרע:

Do not show favor to the face of a poor person. — *לֹא-תִשָּׂא פָנֵי-דָל*. Do not say that since the wealthy man is obligated to help the poor one, it is proper for a judge to rule in favor of the poor litigant so that he will be supported in dignity. The Torah insists that justice be rendered honestly; charity may not interfere with it (*Rashi; Sifra*).

With righteousness you shall judge your fellow. — *בְּצֶדֶק תִּשְׁפֹּט עִמִּיתְךָ*. In addition to its simple meaning, the verse teaches that one must always give people the benefit of the doubt (*Rashi; Shevuos 30a*).

R' Hirsch notes that the apparent contradiction — that judges must be objective while members of society as a whole should seek to justify their fellows — is no contradiction at all. A judge may not consider extraneous factors that explain why someone acted as he did, but do not absolve him from payment. But in the social sphere, we must be careful not to condemn. That someone acted improperly and is liable for it does not necessarily make him worthy of rejection by his peers.

Do not go about as a gossip. — *לֹא-תֵלֵךְ רְכִיל*. It is forbidden to tell someone what others have said or done behind his back, if there is even the slightest possibility that it may cause ill will.

The word רכיל is related to *peddler*, because a gossip goes from person to person and house to house "peddling" his slander and gossip (*Rashi*).

Gossiping is a great sin and has been the cause of much bloodshed. This is why the Torah follows up this commandment by warning against standing aside while someone's blood is shed (*Rambam, Hil. Dei'os 7:1*).

Do not stand inactive while the blood of

שנאמר כי תועבה ה' וגו' כל עושה עול (דברים כה:טז) והתועבה קרוי שקן וחרס של ולא תביא תועבה אל ביתך והיית חרס כמוהו שקן תשקלנו וגו' (שם ז:כו): לא תשא פני דל. שלא תאמר עני הוא זה והעשיר חייב לפרנסו, אזכנו דבין וגמלא מתפרנס בנקיות (ת"כ שם ז:): ולא תהדר פני גדול. שלא תאמר עשיר הוא זה, בן גדולים הוא זה, היאך אביינו וזרעו צדוק, עושה יש צדק. לכך נאמר ולא תהדר פני גדול (ת"כ שם ג:): בצדק תשפוט עמיתך. כמשמעו. דבר אחר, היו דן את חצירך לכף זכות (שם ז:): (טז) לא תלך רכיל. אני אומר על שם שכל משלחי מדנים ומספרי לשון הרע הולכים צבתי רעיהם לרגל מה יראו רע או מה ישמעו רע לספר בשוק, נקראים הולכי רכיל, הולכי רגילה אישפי"מנט בלעז. וראיה לדברי, שלא מינו רכילות שאין כתוב בלשון הליכה. לא תלך רכיל, הולכי רכיל נחשת וברזל (ירמיה ו:כח), [הולך רכיל מגלה סוד (משלי יא:ג)]. ושאר לשון הרע אין כתוב בו הליכה, מלשני בסיסר רעהו (תהלים קא:ה), לשון רמיה (שם קכ:ז), לשון מדברת גדולות (שם יד:ז). לכך אני

your fellow [is shed]. If someone's life is in danger, you must try to save him (*Rashi; Sifra*). Although one is not required to endanger his own life to save another, he should not be overly protective of his own safety (*Choshen Mishpat 426:2; S'ma; Pischei Teshuvah*).

R' Simchah Zissel of Kelm explained, in the name of R' Chaim Volozhin, that the reason those two laws are in the same verse is that when one is required to tell negative information about someone (such as to save him from a business loss or a bad marriage), not passing on the information is considered as a violation of *not standing inactive while the blood of his fellow is shed*.

Do not hate . . . in your heart. — *לֹא-תִשְׂנֵא . . . בְּלִבְּךָ*. The verse speaks of your antagonist as *your brother*. Even though he wronged you, think of him as a brother and do not fall prey to hatred (*R' Hirsch*).

And do not bear because of him a sin. — *וְלֹא-תִשָּׂא עָלָיו חַטָּא*. Although you are required to reprove wrongdoers, you will be sinning if you do it the wrong way. Be careful not to embarrass them (*Rashi; Sifra*).

R' Yaakov Kamenetsky explained that the requirement to reprove wrongdoers is not as many think — that we are God's morality guardians and our obligation is to God. Rather it derives from our obligation to our fellow Jew, as can be seen from the context of the *mitzvah*. For this reason also one is not obligated to reprove — if the sinner curses or hits you (*Arachin 16b*). You would not be exempt from wearing *tefillin* because someone cursed you for it. Since the sinner is to be made to feel that you are doing him a favor in preventing him from

הוֹכִיחַ תּוֹכִיחַ אֶת-עַמִּיתְךָ וְלֹא-תִשָּׂא עָלָיו חֶטְא׃

« a sin. < because < bear < and < your fellow < you shall repeatedly admonish  
of him do not

לֹא-תִקֶּם וְלֹא-תִטֹּר אֶת-בְּנֵי עַמְּךָ וְאַהֲבַת לִרְעֶךָ יח

< your < you shall < of your < against the < bear a < and < take < Do 18  
fellow love people; members grudge do not revenge not

כְּמוֹךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה׃ יט אֶת-חֻקֹּתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ בְּהִמָּתְךָ לֹא-תִרְבִּיעַ כְּלָאִים

<< [to create] < mate < do not < your animal << you shall keep: < My decrees 19 « HASHEM. < —I << as  
a crossbreed; am yourself

רש"י

לו הא לך, ואינו כמותך שלא השלאתני, זו היא נמירה, שומר האביה בלבו חף על פי שחינו נוקם (ת"כ שם יא; יומא כג): ואהבת לרעך כמוך. אמר רבי עקיבא זה כלל גדול בתורה (ת"כ שם יב; ויט) את חקתי תשמרו. ואילו הן בהמתך לא תרביע בלאים וגו'. חקים אלו גזרות מלך שאין טעם לדבר:

(יו) ולא תשא עליו חטא. לא תלצין את פניו בדברים (ת"כ שם, ערכין טז): (יח) לא תקום. אמר לו השליני מנגלך, אמר לו לאו. למחר אמר לו השליני קרדומך, אמר לו חייני משליך, כדרך שלא השלאתני, זו היא נקימה. ואילו היא נמירה, אמר לו השליני קרדומך, אמר לו לאו. למחר אמר לו השליני מנגלך, אמר

sinning, if he hits or curses you that is proof that you have failed in your obligation to reprove.

**18. לֹא-תִקֶּם וְלֹא-תִטֹּר** — *Do not take revenge and do not bear a grudge.* Revenge consists of retaliating against someone who has displeased you, by attempting to do him some harm, or by refusing to do him a favor that you would normally have done. Even if someone does not retaliate, it is forbidden to bear a grudge, by saying, for example, "I will lend you the tool you need even though you refused me when I needed something." God wants us to purge the insult or misdeed from our hearts (*Rashi; Ramban*).

#### Love your fellow.

**וְאַהֲבַת לִרְעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ** — *You shall love your fellow as yourself.* R' Akiva said that this is the fundamental rule of the Torah (*Rashi; Sifra*). Hillel paraphrased the commandment, saying, "What is hateful to you, do not do to others" (*Shabbos 31a*). The Sages based a variety of rules on this verse, illustrating the sort of sensitivity that is demanded of all Jews. For example, this precept requires that the least painful death be used for capital offenders (*Kesubos 37b, Sanhedrin 45a*); and a husband may not put his wife into situations that might make her distasteful to him (*Kiddushin 41a; Niddah 17a*).

*Ramban* explains that it is impossible for all but the saintliest people to feel literally the same love for others that they feel for themselves. The Torah does not demand that; in fact, if someone is in danger, his own life comes before that of someone else. Rather, God demands that we want others to have the same degree of success and prosperity that we want for ourselves and that we treat others with the utmost respect and consideration. It is human nature to say that we wish others well, but to want less for them than for ourselves. The Torah says no. A Jew can and should condition himself to want others to have the fullest degree of success he wants for himself.

R' Avraham Yehoshua Heschel of Kopitchinitz used to say that the commandment to love your fellow does not mean to love saintly and righteous people — it is impossible *not* to love such people. God commands us to love even people whom it is *hard* to love.

The *Alter of Slobodka* said, "The commandment is to love others *as you love yourself*. Just as you love yourself instinctively, without looking for reasons, so you should love others, even without reasons."

#### How to love another.

*HaKesav VeHaKabbalah* offers a list of realistic examples of how one can fulfill this commandment in ways that are possible: (a) Your affection for others should be real, not feigned. (b) Always treat others with respect. (c) Always seek the best for them. (d) Join in their pain. (e) Greet them with friendliness. (f) Give them the benefit of the doubt. (g) Assist them physically, even in matters that are not very difficult. (h) Be ready to assist with small or moderate loans and gifts. (i) Do not consider yourself better than them.

#### 19. Kil'ayim/Forbidden mixtures.

The prohibitions not to crossbreed or to wear mixtures of wool and linen are the quintessential חקים, *decrees*, commands of the King for which man knows no reasons (*Rashi*).

*Ramban* clarifies the above point. God surely has reasons, but since man does not know them, he does not feel the same satisfaction in performing these decrees that he has when he performs precepts that he feels he understands. In the case of *kil'ayim*, *Ramban* offers a reason. God created the world with certain distinct species, and His wisdom decreed that these species remain intact and unadulterated. For man to take it upon himself to alter the order of Creation suggests a lack of faith in God's plan. Moreover, each species on earth is directed by a Heavenly force, so that the earthly species represent profound spiritual forces. To tamper with them is to cause harm that earth-bound man cannot fathom.

It should be noted that these laws of mixtures are limited to specific matters, and do not limit the infinite number of alloys and combinations that are so much a part of modern life. To the contrary, man is duty bound to improve the world and, in a sense, "complete" the work of Creation.

**בְּהִמָּתְךָ** — *Your animal.* Any two species of animals, domestic or wild, may not be mated.

חֲקֹלֶךָ לֹא תִזְרַע עֲרוּבִין וּלְבוּשׁ  
עֲרוּבִין שְׁעִטְנָא לֹא יִסַּק עָלֶיךָ:  
כַּגִּבֵּר אָרִי יִשְׁכּוּב עִם אֶתְמָא שְׂכִבְתָּ  
וְרָעָא וְהִיא אֶתְמָא אֲחִידָא לְגִבֵּר  
וְאֶתְפָּרְקָא לֹא אֶתְפָּרִיקָת בְּכִסְפָּא או  
חֲרוּתָא לֹא אֶתְהִיבְתָּ לָּהּ בְּשִׁטֵּר  
בְּקָרְתָּא תְּהִי לֹא יוֹמִתוֹן אָרִי לֹא  
אֶתְחַרְבֵּת: כֹּא וְיִתִּי יֵת אֲשָׁמָה קָדָם  
יְיָ לְתִרְעַ מִשְׁכּוֹן וּמָנָא דְּכֵר לְאֲשָׁמָ:  
כַּב וְיִכְפֵּר עֲלוּהִי כְּהֵנָּא בְּדִכְרָא  
דְּאֲשָׁמָ קָדָם יְיָ עַל חֻבֵּתָהּ דִּי  
חָב וְיִשְׁתַּבֵּק לָהּ מִחֻבֵּתָהּ דִּי חָב:

שְׂדֶךָ לֹא-תִזְרַע בְּלֵאִים וּבְגֵד בְּלֵאִים שְׁעִטְנָו  
combined < that is a mixture < and a << of different < plant < do not < your  
in any way of fibers garment species; [with] seeds field

לֹא יַעֲלֶה עָלֶיךָ: כִּי־אִישׁ כִּי־יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־אִשָּׁה  
with a woman < he lies < if < A man 20 << upon you. < come < shall not  
שְׂכִיבַת־זָרַע וְהוּא שְׂפִיחָה נִחְרַפֶּת לְאִישׁ וְהַפְּדִיָּה  
and as for < for [another] < who has < a slave- < and << carnally,  
redemption man, been designated woman she is

לֹא נִפְדֹּתָהּ או חֲפָשָׁה לֹא נָתַן־לָהּ בְּקָרְתָּא תְּהִיָּה  
shall < an << to < been < has < her < or < she has not  
there be investigation her; granted not freedom been redeemed,

לֹא יוֹמִתוּ כִּי־לֹא חֲפָשָׁה: כֹּא וְהִבִּיא אֶת־אֲשָׁמוֹ לִיהוָה אֶל־פֶּתַח  
the < to < to < his < He shall 21 << she has not < for < — they shall not  
entrance HASHEM, guilt-offering bring been freed. be put to death,

אֶהְיֶה מוֹעֵד אֵיל אֲשָׁם: כַּב וְכִפֹּר עָלָיו הַכֹּהֵן בְּאֵיל הָאֲשָׁם לִפְנֵי  
before < of the < with the < shall the < for him < Provide 22 << [as a] guilt- < a ram << of < of the  
guilt-offering ram Kohen atonement offering. Meeting, Tent

יְהוָה עַל־חַטָּאתוֹ אֲשֶׁר חָטָא וְנִסְלַח לוֹ מִחַטָּאתוֹ אֲשֶׁר חָטָא: פ  
he had < that < for his sin < for < and it shall << he had < that < his sin < for < HASHEM  
committed. him be forgiven committed;

רש"י

יא: והפדה לא נפרתה. פדויה ואינה פדויה. וסתם פדיון בכסף (ת"כ שם ג:) או חפשה. כשטר (ס:) בקרת תהיה. יש על בית דין לצקר הדבר שלא לחייבה מיתה, כי לא חפשה, ואין קידושה קידושין גמורין. ורבותינו למדו מכאן שהיא צמלקת, תהא צקריאה, שהדיינים המלקין קורין על הלוקה אם לא תשמור לעשות וגו' והפלה ה' את מכותך וגו' (דברים כח:גח:גט:) תהיה. היא לוקה ולא הוא (ת"כ שם ד:) כריתות (ס:) כי לא חפשה. לפיכך אין חייב עליה מיתה שאין קידושה קידושין, הא אם חופשה קידושה קידושין וחייבין מיתה (ת"כ שם ה:) (כב) ונסלח לו מחטאתו אשר חטא. לרבות

ובגד בלאים. למה נאמר, לפי שנה' לא תלכש שעטניז' אמר ופשתים יחדו (דברים כב:יא) יכול לא ילכש גיז' אמר ואנילי פשתן, ת"כ צד. מנין לרבות הלכדים, ת"כ ששטנו, דבר שהוא שט טווי וגו' (ת"כ פרק ד:יח). ואומר איני נזן לשון דבר הגמלל ושזור זה עם זה לחברו, מישט"ר בלע"ז, כמו חזין לגאזי דאית צהון (מו"ק יב:) שאנו מפרשין לשון כמוש, פלישטר"א. ולשון ששטנו פי' מנחם מחברת אמר ופשתים: (ב) נחרפת לאיש. מיועדת ומיועדת לאיש ואינו יודע לו דמיון צמקרא וצשפחה כנענית שפחה שפחה וחלי' צת חורין המאורסת לעד עברי שמוטר בשפחה הכתוב מדבר (ת"כ פרק ה:ב:) כריתות

שְׂדֶךָ — *Your field*. It is forbidden to plant mixtures of seeds (unless the different varieties are separated by a fence or are far enough apart so that each can draw its own nourishment from the ground without impinging on the other) and it is forbidden to graft a different species onto a tree.

שְׁעִטְנָו — *Combined in any way*. The fibers in question are wool and linen, as specified in *Deuteronomy* 22:11, and the word *shaatnez* indicates fibers that are pressed or woven together in the same piece of cloth or garment.

The *Gra* suggests that the essence of the prohibition is related to the conflict between Cain and Abel: Cain, the farmer, brought flax as his offering to God, while Abel, the shepherd, brought wool. Mixing them together threatens to rekindle their conflict and destroy the world.

**20-22. The designated maidservant.** Briefly, as elucidated by the Sages, the verse deals with a non-Jewish slavewoman owned by two partners. As a slave, she was forbidden to live with

a Jew, but her master was allowed to have her live with a Jewish or non-Jewish slave. When a Jewish-owned, non-Jewish slave goes free, he or she automatically has the status of a full-fledged proselyte. Now, this woman was freed by one of her masters, so that she is half free and half slave. Her free half prohibits her to a non-Jewish slave, while her slave half prohibits her to an Israelite. If a Jew — slave or free — betroths her, since she is not completely free, she does not have the full status of a married woman; there is no death penalty for "adultery" with her. This passage teaches that if a Jew cohabits with her, and both of them are aware of their sin, her penalty is lashes, and he is required to bring a guilt-offering.

**20. לא נִפְדֹּתָהּ** — *She has not been redeemed*; no one has purchased her freedom and she has not been freed by both of her masters. Had she been freed by both, she would have the status of a Jewish convert, and would be the full-fledged wife of any Jew who would betroth her (*Rashi*).



שְׁלִישִׁי כֹּג וְכִי־תָבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ וּנְטַעְתֶּם כָּל־עֵץ

< tree < any < and you shall plant < the Land < to < you shall come < When 23

מֵאֲכָל וְעַרְלָתָם עָרְלָתוֹ אֶת־פְּרִיֹו שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים

< years < for three << from < blocked < you shall consider << with its fruit; [from benefiting] as if it is covered, edible fruit,

יְהִיָּה לָכֶם עֲרָלִים לֹא יֵאָכֵל: כֹּד וּבִשְׁנָה הָרְבִיעִית

< In the fourth year, 24 << they shall << as if < to you < it shall be not be eaten. covered over,

יְהִיָּה כָּל־פְּרִיֹו קֹדֶשׁ הֵלֹוִלִים לִיהוָה: כֹּה וּבִשְׁנָה הַחֲמִישִׁית תֹּאכְלוּ

< you may eat < And in the fifth year 25 << to < to give < shall be < its fruit < [that] < it shall be HASHEM. praise sanctified all

אֶת־פְּרִיֹו לְהוֹסִיף לָכֶם תְּבוּאָתוֹ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: כֹּו לֹא תֹאכְלוּ

< eat < Do not 26 << your God. < HASHEM, < — I << its produce < for you < — so that it << its fruit will increase

עַל־הַדָּם לֹא תִנְחָשׁוּ וְלֹא תַעֲוִנוּ: כֹּו לֹא תִקְפוּ פְּאֵת רִאשְׁכֶם וְלֹא

< and < of your scalp < [the hair] < round < Do 27 << act on aus- < and < act on super- < do << the < over do not at the edge off not picious times. do not stitious omens not blood;

רש"י

תורה כנגד יצר הרע, שלא יאמר אדם הרי ארבע שנים אני מנטער צו חנם, לפיכך נאמר להוסיף לכם תבואתו (ת"כ ס"ג: א"י ה' א"י המצטיה על כך וגאמור הבטחתי: (ב) לא תאכלו על הדם. להרבה פנים נדרש בסנהדרין (ס"ג: ת"כ פרק ו'א) הזהרה שלא יאכל מבשר קדשים לפני זריקת דמים, והזהרה לאכול מזהמת חולין טרם שתלא נפשה, ועוד הרבה: לא תנחשו. כגון אלו המנחשין בחולדה ובעופות (ת"כ ס"ג: פתו נפלה מפיו לזי הפסיקו בדרך (סנהדרין ס"ה: ולא תעונו. ל' עונות ושעיות שאומר יוס פלוני יפה להתחיל מלאכה, שעה פלונית קשה לזאת (סנהדרין ס"ג: (ב) לא תקיפו פאת ראשכם. זה המשוה לזעזוע לאחורי אזנו ולפדחתו (מכות כ: וגמלא הקק ראשו

את המזיד כשנג (ת"כ ס"ג: ז' כריתות ט:). (בג) וערלתם ערלתו. ואטמתם אטימתו. יהא אטום ונסתם מליהנות ממנו: שלש שנים יהיה לכם ערלים. מאימתי מונה לו, משעת נטיעתו (ת"כ פרשת נג: י) יכול אם הנטיעו לאחר שלש שנים יהא מותר, ת"ל יהיה, צהוייתו יהא (ס"ג: ד: (בד) יהיה כל פרי קדש. כמעשר שני (קידושין נ"ד: שכתוב בו וכל מעשר הארץ וגו' קדש לה' (להלן כ"ג: מה מעשר שני אינו נאכל חוץ לחומת ירושלים אלא בפדיון אף זה כן. ודבר זה הלולים לה' הוא, שגשאו שם לשבח ולהלל לשמים (ת"כ ס"ג: ט: צרכות לה:). (בה) להוסיף לכם תבואתו. המלה הזאת שתשמרו תהיה להוסיף לכם תבואתו, ששכרה אני מצרך לכם פירות הגטיעות. היה רבי עקיבא אומר דברה

**23-25. Orlah/The first three years of trees.** All fruit from the first three years of a newly planted tree or its grafted shoots are forbidden for any use, and those of the fourth year are holy and are to be eaten in Jerusalem. [Although, in general, all land-related commandments apply only in *Eretz Yisrael*, *orlah* is an exception (*Kiddushin* 36b-37a), by a tradition taught to Moses at Sinai (*ibid.* 38b).] *Ramban* suggests a reason for the prohibition. The first fruits of a tree should be used for the holy purpose of praising and thanking God. Since the first three years' fruits are not yet mature enough to be worthy for that purpose, the Torah ordains that none of the fruit may be used until the fourth year.

**24. קדש — Shall be sanctified.** This word teaches that רְבִיעִי, *fourth-year fruit*, is treated like the second tithe; it must be safeguarded against contamination and eaten in Jerusalem. If the owner lives outside the Holy City, he may redeem the fruit for money, which he must bring to Jerusalem and use to buy food, which he and his guests will eat there (*Rashi*; *Sifra*).

**25. להוסיף לכם תבואתו — So that it will increase for you its produce.** In the merit of observing the commandment to deprive yourself of the profits and enjoyment of your crops for four years, your future crops will be increased (*Rashi*; *Sifra*).

*I am HASHEM.* Although I have promised you increased prosperity in return for your performance of this commandment, do not perform it for that reason. Fulfill all commandments because *I am HASHEM*, and you wish to do My will (*Haamek Davar*).

**26. לא תאכלו — Do not eat . . .** In its literal meaning, the verse refers to a practice of sorcerers, who would gather blood in a ditch, and, by means of incantations, would foretell future events (*Ramban*).

The Sages (*Sanhedrin* 63a) derive several laws from the phrase *Do not eat over the blood*. Among them are: (a) After *shechitah*, one may not eat an animal's flesh as long as there is some life [blood] left in it; (b) sacrificial meat may not be eaten until after the blood service; (c) a *beis din* must fast on the day it pronounces a death sentence (see *Rashi*).

**לא תנחשו — Do not act on superstitious omens.** Do not base your decisions on superstitions, such as that black cats crossing your path or that walking under a ladder will cause bad luck.

**27. לא תקפו — Do not round off . . .** Rounding off refers to the removal of hair from the sideburns area — the *edges* — of the head. One is forbidden to remove this hair, thereby making a

תִּשְׁחִית אֶת פִּאת זָקְנֶךָ: כֹּחַ וְשָׂרֵט לִנְפֶשׁ לֹא תִתֵּן  
עַל מִית לֹא תִתֵּן בְּבִסְרוֹךְ וְרוֹשְׁמִין  
חֲרִיתִין לֹא תִתֵּן בְּכוֹן אֲנָא יִי:  
כֹּחַ לֹא תִחַל יֵת בְּרִתְךָ לֹא טְעִינָה  
וְלֹא תִטְעִי אֶרֶץ וְתִתְמְלִי אֶרֶץ  
עֲצַת חֲטָאִין: לִיִּת יוֹמֵי שְׁבִינָא  
דִּילִי תִטְרוֹן וְלִבִּית מִקְדָּשִׁי תִהוֹן  
דִּחְלִין אֲנָא יִי: לֹא לֹא תִתְפַּנּוּן  
בְּתֵר בְּדִין וּדְכוּרוֹ לֹא תִתְבָּעוֹן

תִּשְׁחִית אֶת פִּאת זָקְנֶךָ: כֹּחַ וְשָׂרֵט לִנְפֶשׁ לֹא תִתֵּן  
make do not for the A gash 28 of your [the hair] destroy  
dead beard. at the edge

בְּבִשְׂרֵכֶם וּכְתַבְתָּ קַעֲקָע לֹא תִתֵּן בְּכֶם אֲנִי  
am yourselves upon make do not and tattoo markings in your flesh,

יִהְיֶה: כֹּחַ אֶל-תִּחַלֵּל אֶת-בִּתְּךָ לְהַזְנוֹתָהּ וְלֹא-  
lest to make her your daughter profane Do not 29 HASHEM.  
a prostitute,

תִּזְנֶה הָאָרֶץ וּמִלָּאָה הָאָרֶץ וּמָה: אֶת-שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וּמִקְדָּשִׁי  
and My you shall My Sabbaths 30 with will the and filled the Land be sexually  
Sanctuary keep depravity. land be immoral,

תִּירָאוּ אֲנִי יִהְיֶה: לֹא אֶל-תִּפְנוּ אֶל-הָאֲבֹת וְאֶל-הַיִּדְּעֹנִים אֶל-תִּבְקְשׁוּ  
seek do not [the oracles of] and [the necromancy to turn Do 31 HASHEM. I you shall  
the Yid'onim; to of] the Ovos not am reverse

רש"י

לשם קידושין (ת"כ פרק זא; סנהדרין עו). ולא תזנה הארץ. אם אדם עושה כן  
הארץ מזנה את פירותיה לעשותן במקום אחר ולא בארצם וכן הוא אומר וימנעו  
רביצים וגו' וירמיה נגז; ת"כ שם ג"ד: (ל) ומקדשי תיראו. לא יכנס לא במקלו  
ולא במנעלו ובאפונדתו ובאזק שכל רגליו (ת"כ שם ט; ברכות נד). ואע"פ שאני  
מזהירכם על המקדש את שבתותי תשמורו אין בנין בית המקדש דוחה שבת (ת"כ שם  
ז; יצמות ו). (לא) אל תפנו אל האבות. אזהרה לבטל אוב וידעוני. בטל אוב זה  
פיתוס המדבר משחיו. וידעוני מכניס עלם חיה ששמה ידוע לתוך פיו והעלם מדבר  
(ת"כ שם י: סנהדרין סה"סה): אל תבקשו. להיות עסוקים בם שאם תעסקו בם

עגול סביב, שכל אחורי ארצו עקרי שטרו למעלה מלדעיו הרבה: פאת זקנך. סוף  
הזקן וגבוליו. והן חמש, שהם בכל לחי ולחי למעלה אל הראש שהוא רחב ויש בו שתי  
פאות, ואחת למטה בסנטרו מקום חבור שני הלחיים יחד (שם כז:). (בח) ושרט  
לנפש. כן דרכן של אמוריים להיות משרטין בשרם כשמת להם מת: וכתבת קעקע.  
כתב המחוקק ושקוע שאינו נמחק לעולם, שמקעקעו במחט והוא משחיר לעולם (ת"כ  
שם י; מכות כח:). קעקע. ל' והוקע אותם (במדבר כה:ד) והוקענום (שמואל ב כח:ז).  
תוחזין עץ בארץ ותולין אותם עליהם וגמלאו מחוקין ותחזין בקרקע, פורפויניט  
בלע"ז: (בט) אל תחלל את בתך להזנותה. במוסר בתו פנויה לביאה שלא

straight line from the hairline behind the ear to the hairline at the front of the head. Were one to do so, the hair at the top of the head would look as if it were rounded off. [One transgresses upon removing at least two hairs from this area] (Rashi).

וְלֹא תִשְׁחִית — And do not destroy. There are five edges of the beard, each of which it is forbidden to shave (Rashi). But as a practical matter, since the exact areas of these edges are not clearly defined, it is forbidden to shave the entire beard.

It is forbidden to remove the sideburns even by means of plucking or with scissors. Regarding the beard, however, the Torah forbids one to destroy it and to shave it (21:5). This is interpreted by the Sages to mean the use of a razor, meaning an implement that both shaves [גליוח] and "destroys" by cutting to the level of the skin [הַשְׁחָתָה] (see Yoreh Deah 181:3,10).

28. וְשָׂרֵט לִנְפֶשׁ — A gash for the dead. It was an ancient custom for people to cut their flesh in mourning for the dead. In Deuteronomy 14:1, the Torah states that this is forbidden because, You are children to HASHEM, implying that it is disgraceful to God for His children to inflict wounds on their bodies as signs of mourning.

29. אֶל-תִּחַלֵּל — Do not profane. Rashi and Sifra comment that the outcome of such treacherous conduct — וְלֹא-תִזְנֶה הָאָרֶץ, lest the Land be sexually immoral — is that the earth itself will become guilty of harlotry, in the sense that it will be unfaithful to its people. Instead of producing bumper crops in the Land of

Israel, the earth will give forth those crops elsewhere. This is uniquely true of Eretz Yisrael, whose holiness cannot tolerate immorality, as in 18:25-29.

30. שַׁבְּתֹתַי — My Sabbaths . . . The Torah speaks very frequently about both the Sabbath and idolatry, because both are reckoned as equal to all the commandments of the Torah. Idol worship is a clear denial of God. Sabbath desecration, too, is a denial that God created for six days and rested on the seventh — the eternal reminder of God as the Creator (Ramban).

וּמִקְדָּשִׁי תִירָאוּ — And My Sanctuary you shall revere. One is forbidden to enter the Sanctuary area with his walking stick, wearing shoes or a money belt, or with the dust on his feet (Rashi).

The Talmud (Shabbos 118b) states that if only Israel would observe two Sabbaths according to their law, they would be redeemed immediately. Homiletically, Knesses Yechezkel derives this statement from our verse: If you keep My Sabbaths (plural) you will merit [to experience reverence for] and see the rebuilt Temple.

31. אֶל-תִּפְנוּ אֶל-הָאֲבֹת וְאֶל-הַיִּדְּעֹנִים — Do not turn to [the necromancy of] the Ovos and to [the oracles of] the Yid'onim. These are magical practices that purport to foretell the future. The punishment of the practitioner of these acts is sekilah, stoning (Mishnah Sanhedrin 53a), and if there were no witnesses or warning — kares (see 20:6); the penalty of those who consult them is lashes (Sifra).

לְטַמְּאָה בָּהֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: לִבּ מִפְּנֵי שִׁיבָה

< an old person < Before 32 << your God. < HASHEM, < — I << through < to be am them contaminated

תָּקוּם וְהִדְרַת פָּנֶי זָקֵן וִירָאת מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲנִי יְהוָה:

<< HASHEM. < — I << your God < and you << of a < the < and you shall << you am shall fear sage, presence honor shall rise,

ס רביעי [שש] לג וְכִי־יִגּוֹר אֶתְּךָ גֵּר בְּאַרְצְכֶם לֹא תוֹנֶה

< taunt < do not << in your land, < a < with < there shall < When 33 proselyte you dwell

אֹתוֹ: לִדּ בְּאֶזְרַח מִכֶּם יִהְיֶה לָכֶם הֶגֶר וְהָגֵר אֶתְכֶם וְאַהֲבַת לוֹ כְּמוֹךְ

<< like < him < and you << with < who < — the << to < shall < from < Like a native 34 << him. yourself, shall love you — dwells proselyte you he be among you

כִּי־גֵרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ עוֹל

< evil < commit < Do not 35 << your God. < HASHEM, < — I am << of Egypt < in the land < you were < aliens < for

בַּמִּשְׁפָּט בַּמִּזְחָה בַּמִּשְׁקָל וּבַמִּשׁוּרָה: לוֹ מֵאֲזֵנֵי צֶדֶק אֲבִנֵי־צֶדֶק אֵיפֹת

< dry < that are < weights < that are < Scales 36 << or volume. < weight, < in [measures < in justice, measures honest, honest, of] length,

\* מ' דגושה

רש"י

תאמר לחברך (שם נט): אני ה' אלהיכם. אלהיך ואלהיו אני: (לה) לא תעשו עול במשפט. אם לדיין הרי כבר נא' לא תעשו עול במשפט (ולעיל פסוק טו) ומהו משפט השני כאן, היא המדה והמשקל והמשורה. מלמד שהמודד נקרא דיין, שאם ישקר במדה הרי הוא כמקלקל את הדין, וקראוי עול שנאוי ומשוקץ חרס ותועבה, וגורם לחמשה דברים האמורים בדיין, מטמא את הארץ ומחלל את השם ומסלק את השכינה ומפיל את ישראל בחרב ומגלה אותם מארצם (ת"כ שם ה) במדה. זו מדת הארץ (שם ו): במשקל. כמשמטו: ובמשורה. היא מדת הלל והיבש: (לו) אבני צדק. הם המשקולות שזוקקין כנגדן (שם): איפת. היא מדת היבש:

אדם מיטמאין לפני ואני מתעב אדם (ת"כ שם יא): אני ה' אלהיכם. דעו את מי אתם מחליפין בני (שם): (לב) מפני שיבה תקום. יכול זקן אשמאי, ת"ל זקן, אין זקן אלא שקנה חכמה (שם יב): קידושין לב: והדרת פני זקן. איהו הדור, לא ישב במקומו ואלא ידבר במקומו ולא יסתור את דבריו, יכול יעזים עיניו כמי שלא ראהו, לכך נאמר ויראת מאלהיך, שהרי דבר זה מסור ללבו של עושהו שאין מכיר בו אלא הוא וכל דבר המסור ללבו נא' זו ויראת מאלהיך (ת"כ שם יד): (לג) לא תונו. אונאת דברים לא תאמר לו אדם היית עובד עבודה זרה ועכשיו אתה באללמוד תורה שנתנה מפי הגבורה (שם פרק חז: ב"מ נח:): (לד) כי גרים הייתם. מוס שזך אל

ה' אָנִי — I am HASHEM. Be aware Whom you are discarding in order to pursue knowledge of the future by turning to the prophets of *Ov* and *Yid'oni* (Rashi).

32. מִפְּנֵי שִׁיבָה — Before an old person. According to Rashi, following one view in *Kiddushin* 32b, the two halves of the verse explain each other, meaning that the commandment is to rise and honor a sage who is both elderly and righteous. Others hold that these are two separate commandments: to rise for and honor anyone over the age of 70, even if he is not learned, and to rise for and honor a sage, even if he is young. The halachah follows the latter view. All agree that there is no such requirement for a wicked person (*Yoreh Deah* 244:1).

וִירָאת מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ — And you shall fear your God. The commandment to show respect is an easy one to violate: One can simply pretend that he did not notice. Therefore, the Torah cautions us to fear God. He knows our true intentions. This fear of God is invoked when a mitzvah depends on the intentions within someone's heart (Rashi; *Sifra*).

33. גֵּר — A proselyte. It is forbidden to taunt a proselyte by reminding him of his non-Jewish past and suggesting that this

makes him unfit to study God's Torah (*Rashi*; *Sifra*). As the next verse states: Who, more than a Jew, should understand the hurt felt by an unwanted stranger? (*Sifra*).

34. וְאַהֲבַת לוֹ — And you shall love him. Aside from the commandment to love all Jews, proselytes included, there is a special commandment to love proselytes. God, Himself, has a special love for proselytes (*Rambam*, *Hil. Dei'os* 6:4).

35-36. **Weights and measures.** The Torah illustrates the great importance of proper weights and measures with a powerful comparison. The passage begins by exhorting against a perversion of justice — a commandment that is generally directed toward judges, as in verse 15 above — yet our verse applies this principle to the businessman in his shop or the farmer in his field. Thus, the Torah likens a person doing business to a judge, and someone who falsifies weights and measures is like a judge who perverts judgment. Furthermore, *Sifra*, as explained by the *Chofetz Chaim*, notes that the passage connects the commandment of weights and measures to the Exodus from Egypt, to teach that one who falsifies them is considered as if he denies that there is a God Who sees all. Such

דקשט ויהינן דקשט יהוה לכוֹן אָנא  
 יי אֶלְהֵכוֹן די אֶפְקִית יִתְכוֹן מֵאַרְעָא  
 דְּמִצְרַיִם: לֹא וְתִטְרוֹן יִתְּ כָּל קִנְיֵי יִתְּ  
 כָּל דִּינֵי וְתַעֲבִדוֹן יִתְּהוֹן אָנא יי:  
 א וּמִלִּיל יי עִם מֹשֶׁה לְמִימְרֵי: ב וְעַם  
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּמְלֹל (בִּי־א) וְלִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 תִּימֹר (ג) גִּבֹּר גִּבֹּר מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן  
 גִּיּוֹרָא דִּיתְגִּיר בִּישְׂרָאֵל דִּי יִתּוֹן  
 מִזְרַעָה לְמַלְךְ יִתְקַטֵּלָא יִתְקַטֵּל  
 עֲמָא בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל יִרְגָּמָהּ בְּאַבְנָא:  
 ג וְאַנָּא אֶתְּוֹן יִתְּ רוּגְזֵי בְּגִבְרָא  
 הַהוּא וְאַשִּׁיזֵי יִתְּהּ מִגּוֹ עֲמָהּ אָרִי

צֶדֶק וְהִין צֶדֶק יִהְיֶה לָכֶם אָנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם  
 < your God, < HASHEM, < – I << for you < shall < that are < and liquid < that are  
 am there be honest measures honest,

אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: לֹא וְשִׁמְרֶתֶם  
 < You shall keep 37 << of Egypt. < from the land < took you out < Who  
 אֶת־כָּל־חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת־כָּל־מִשְׁפָּטַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם  
 << them < and you shall < My < and all < My decrees < all  
 perform ordinances,

אָנִי יְהוָה: פ חֲמִישִׁי [כ] א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה  
 < Moses, < to < HASHEM spoke 1 20 << HASHEM. < – I am

לֵאמֹר: ב וְאֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תֹּאמַרְ אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן־הַגֵּר ו  
 < the < and < of Israel < from the < Any man << you shall < of Israel < the < To 2 << saying:  
 proselyte from Children say: Children

הַגֵּר בִּישְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן מִזְרְעוֹ לְמַלְךְ מוֹת יוּמָת עִם הָאָרֶץ יִרְגָּמָהּ  
 < shall pelt him < of the < the << shall certainly < to < of his seed < shall < who < in Israel < who  
 [to death] land people be put to death; Molech, give dwells

בְּאַבְנֵי: ג וְאָנִי אֶתְּוֹן אֶת־פָּנַי בְּאִישׁ הַהוּא וְהִכַּרְתִּי אֹתוֹ מִקֶּרֶב עַמּוֹ כִּי  
 < for << of his < from the < and I shall cut him off << upon that man, < My attention < shall < And I 3 << with  
 people, midst focus too stones.

רש"י

הין. זו היא מדת הלח: אשר הוצאתי אתכם. על מנת כן (שם י). ד"א אני  
 הבחנתי במלכים בין טפה של זכור לטפה שאינה של זכור ואני הנחמן להפריע ממי  
 שטומן משקלותיו במלח להוות את הצריה שאין מכירים בהם (בבא מיעט סא:)  
 (ב) ואל בני ישראל תאמר. עושין על הזהירות: מות יומת. בבית דין, ואם  
 חין כח לבית דין עם הארץ מסייעין אותו (ת"כ פרשתא יז: עם הארץ. עם  
 שבגינו נזרחת הארץ. דבר אחר, עם שעתידין לירש את הארץ ע"י מוות הללו (שם):  
 (ג) אתן את פני. פנאי שלי, פונה אני מכל עסקי ועוסק בו (שם ה): באיש. ולא  
 בלזכור (שם) שאין כל הלזכור נכרתין:

א person, if it suited him, could also deny God's intervention to  
 save Israel from Egypt. It is noteworthy that the *Chofetz Chaim's*  
 first published work was an anonymous pamphlet on weights  
 and measures, which he composed in response to negligence  
 that he witnessed personally in the markets of his own town.

36. אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם — *Who took you out.* I took you out of  
 Egypt only on the condition that you would be honest in your  
 business dealings. Alternatively, lest you think that you can be  
 dishonest and go undetected, think back to Egypt. There, when  
 I killed the firstborn of Egypt, I knew the difference between the  
 firstborn Egyptians and others. So, too, I will know if you have  
 false weights, and I will punish those who use them (*Rashi*).

37. וְשִׁמְרֶתֶם — *You shall keep . . .* If you study the command-  
 ments you will realize that they are perfect, and then you will  
 surely observe them. Recognize, however, that *I am HASHEM*,  
 Who has given you the laws. By definition, therefore, you cannot  
 improve upon them. You may neither add to them nor subtract  
 from them (*Sforno*).

20.  
 § Punishments.  
 The Torah does not decree a physical punishment for a sin

unless there is a negative commandment enjoining us not to  
 commit that deed. Chapters 18 and 19 contained a long series of  
 negative commandments, and this chapter, primarily, gives the  
 punishments for those sins.

2-5. *Molech.* In giving the punishment for serving Molech  
 (18:21), the Torah discusses at length the evil of the sin. Not only  
 has the perpetrator sinned against God, he has profaned the  
 sanctity of the Jewish people — *My Sanctuary* — which  
 the Sages interpret as God's holy nation (v. 3). *Ramban* com-  
 ments that the degraded worship of Molech deprives the Jewish  
 people of its holiness; therefore, the Torah stresses that it is the  
*nation* that bears responsibility for executing the death penalty  
 against the one who has harmed it so significantly.

2. *עם הארץ* — *The people of the land.* By using this unusual  
 term to identify the people, the Torah suggests why they should have  
 the particular responsibility of executing the sinner. A father  
 who offers his own children to Molech has brought contamina-  
 tion to the land.

3. *והכרתי אתו* — *And I shall cut him off.* The punishment has two  
 tiers. If the transgressor was properly warned and witnessed, and  
*beis din* imposed the death penalty, he gains atonement for his

מִזְרְעוֹ נָתַן לְמֹלֶךְ לְמַעַן טַמֵּא אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי

< My Sanctuary < to defile < in order < to Molech < he had < from his  
given offspring

וְלַחֲלֹל אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשִׁי: 4 וְאִם הֶעֱלִימוּ עֵם

< — the << they shall avert < But if << that is < My Name < and to  
people holy, desecrate

הָאָרֶץ אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם מִן־הָאִישׁ הַהוּא בְּתַתּוֹ מִזְרְעוֹ

< from his < when he < that man < from < their eyes << of the  
offspring gives land —

לְמֹלֶךְ לְבַלְתִּי הִמִּית אֹתוֹ: 5 וְשִׁמְתִּי אֲנִי אֶת־פָּנָי

< My < I shall, < — then I << to put him < not << to Molech,  
attention shall focus, to death

בְּאִישׁ הַהוּא וּבְמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ וְהִכְרַתִּי אֹתוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־הַזִּנִּים אֲחֵרָיו לְזִנוֹת

< — to << after him < who stray < and all < him < I will cut off << and upon his < upon that man  
stray family;

אֲחֵרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מִקֶּרֶב עַמָּם: 6 וְהִנָּפֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּפְנֶה אֶל־הָאֲבֹתָ וְאֶל־

< and to < [the necromancy] < to < shall turn < who < And the << of their < from the << the < after  
of the Ovos person people. midst Molech —

הַיִּדְעֹנִים לְזִנוֹת אֲחֵרֵיהֶם וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־פָּנָי בִּנְפֹשׁ הַהוּא וְהִכְרַתִּי אֹתוֹ

< and I shall cut < upon that person < My < — I shall << after them < to stray < [the oracles]  
him off attention focus of the Yid'onim

מִקֶּרֶב עַמּוֹ: 7 וְהִתְקַדְּשְׁתֶּם וְהִיִּיתֶם קְדָשִׁים כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

<< your God. < HASHEM, < I am < for << holy, < and you < You shall sanctify << of his < from the  
shall be yourselves people. midst

רש"י

מה חטאה, אלא ללמדך שאין לך משפחה שיש בה מוכס שאין כולם מוכסין, שכולם מחפין עליו (שם יג' שבוטות לו): והברתי אותו. למה נא', לפי שנה' ובמשפחתו יכול יהיו כל המשפחה בהכרת, ת"ל אותו. אותו בהכרת ולא כל המשפחה בהכרת אלא ציבורין (שם יד'): לזנות אחרי המולך. לרבות שאר עבודה זרה (שם טו) שעבדה בכך ואפילו אין זו עבודה זרה (ז) והתקדשתם. זו פרישות עבודה זרה (שם פסוק יז:)

בי מזרעו נתן למלך. לפי שנה' מעביר בנו ובתו באש (דברים יח:): בן בנו ובתו מניין, ת"ל כי מזרעו נתן למולך. זרע פסול מניין, ת"ל בתו מזרעו למולך (ת"כ יז:): [למען טמא את מקדשי. את כנסת ישראל היא מקודשת לי, כלשון ולא יחלל את מקדשי (ולכן כא:כג:)] (ד) ואם העלים יעלימו. אם העלימו בדבר אחד סוף שיעלימו בדברים הרבה (ת"כ שם י). אם העלימו סנהדרי קטנה סוף שיעלימו סנהדרי גדולה (שם יא:): (ה) ובמשפחתו. אמר ר"ש וכי משפחה

sin. If, however, he sinned intentionally but was not punished by the court, God imposes *kares*.

4. אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם . . . הֶעֱלִים יְעִלִּימוּ — *They shall avert* [lit., *avert they will avert*] . . . *their eyes*. The double expression teaches a moral lesson. If the people avert their eyes once, they will avert their eyes again. If the court attempts to discharge its responsibility, violators will protest: "You did not punish the last violator, is it fair to punish this one?" Only if the courts and the people are consistent can they function properly (*Rashi*; *Or HaChaim*).

5. וּבְמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ — *And upon his family*. The family is responsible if it was their influence that shielded the sinner from punishment by the court (*R' Bachya*). Nevertheless, the punishment of *kares* is imposed only upon the sinner — *him* — not

upon his relatives (*Rashi*; *Sifra*).

7-8. וְהִתְקַדְּשְׁתֶּם — *You shall sanctify yourselves*. According to *Rashi*, this commandment refers to the previous exhortations against idolatry; one who refrains from idol worship sanctifies himself.

The sequence of verses alludes to the teaching that the very thought of idol worship — he merely *turns* to it (verse 6) — is regarded by God as if someone had actually worshiped idols (*Kiddushin* 39b). But how can someone control his thoughts? Therefore, the Torah teaches that what is incumbent upon a Jew is to attempt to sanctify himself by performing the commandments and by avoiding evil to the best of his ability. God promises that in reward for the Jew's sincere efforts, והייתם

ח ותטרונו ית קימי ותעבדון יתהוה  
אנא יי מקדשכון: ט ארי גבר גבר די  
ילוט ית אבוהי וית אמה אתקטלא  
יתקטל אבוהי ואמה לט קטלא חיב:  
יגבר די יגוף ית אתת גבר די יגוף  
ית אתת חברה אתקטלא יתקטל  
גיפא וגיפתא: יא וגבר די ישכוב  
עם אתת אבוהי עריצא דאבוהי  
גלי אתקטלא יתקטלון תרויהון  
קטלא חיבין: יב וגבר די ישכוב עם  
כלתה אתקטלא יתקטלון תרויהון  
תבלא עבדו קטלא חיבין: יג וגבר  
די ישכוב עם דכורא משכבי  
אתתא תועבתא עבדו תרויהון

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־חֻקֹּתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם אֲנִי  
ששי [שביעי] ח < I am >> them < and perform < My decrees < You shall keep 8

יְהוָה מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם: ט כִּי־אִישׁ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקְלַל  
< will < who < any man < For 9 >> Who sanctifies < HASHEM, < you.

אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָת אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ קָלַל  
<< he has < or his < his >> shall certainly < or his mother < his father < cursed, mother father be put to death;

דָּמָיו בּוֹ: , וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנְאַף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר  
< who >> of a < the < with < will commit < who < A man 10 >> is upon < his < himself. blood

יִנְאַף אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ רֵעֵהוּ מוֹת יוּמָת הַנָּאֵף וְהַנָּאֶפֶת: יא וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב  
< shall lie < who < A man 11 >> and the < — the < they shall certainly >> of his < the wife < with < will commit < adulteress. adulterer be put to death fellow; adultery

אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אָבִיו עֲרוֹת אָבִיו גָּלָה מוֹת יוּמָתוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם דְּמֵיהֶם בָּם:  
<< is upon < their >> — both >> they shall certainly >> he has < of his < the >> of his < the wife < with < themselves. blood of them — be put to death uncovered; father nakedness father,

וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־כַּלְתּוֹ מוֹת יוּמָתוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם תָּבַל עָשׂוּ דְמֵיהֶם  
< their >> they have < a per- >> — both >> they shall certainly < his daughter- < with < shall lie < who < A man 12 >> blood committed, version of them; be put to death in-law,

בָּם: יב וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת־זִכְרָא מִשְׁכְּבֵי אִשָּׁה תוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם  
<< — both >> have < an abom- >> with a < as one lies < a man < with < lies < who < A man 13 >> is upon < themselves. of them; they done ination woman,

רש"י

אשר ינאף את אשת איש. פרט לאשת קטן (שם). למדנו שאין לקטן קידושין. ועל חיו אשת איש חייבתי לך, אשר ינאף את אשת רעהו, פרט לאשת גוי (שם). למדנו שאין קידושין לגוי: מות יומת הנואף והנואפת. כל מיתה האמורה בצורה סתם אינה אלא חנק (שם): (יב) תבל עשו. גנאי: ל"א מזלזלין זרע האב זרע הבן: (יג) משכבי אשה. מכניס כמכחול בשפופרת:

(ט) אביו ואמו קלל. לרבות לאחר מיתה (סנהדרין פה:): דמיו בו. זו סקילה (ת"כ שם ז) וכן כל מקום שנא' [דמיו בו] דמיהם צם, ולמדנו מלואו וידענו שנא' צהם צאבן ירגמו אותם דמיהם צם (להלן פסוק כז; ת"כ פרק ט"ז; כריתות ה.). ופשוטו של מקרא כמו דמו בראשו (יהושע צ"ט) חין נענש על מיתתו אלא הוא, שהוא גרם לעלמו שיהרג: (י) ואיש. פרט לקטן (ת"כ שם ח; סנהדרין נב:):

and you shall be holy; God will assist him in cleansing his thoughts (Be'er Yitzchok; Meshech Chochmah).

9. כי — For. This conjunction implies that our verse gives the reason for an earlier commandment. It refers back to the commandment to revere parents (19:3), and explains that one who shows gross disrespect to parents can incur the death penalty. Alternatively, the word כי should be translated *therefore*, meaning that because it is God Who sanctifies us — and a person's father and mother are His partners in bringing a person into the world — God decrees the death penalty upon those who curse them (Ramban).

אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ קָלַל — His father or his mother he has cursed. The repetition teaches that one is liable for cursing his parents even if he does so after their death (Rashi).

דָּמָיו בּוֹ — His blood is upon himself. The Sages derive that this

term always means death by stoning. In its simple meaning, the term means that the violator brought the punishment upon himself (Rashi).

10-21. Penalties for forbidden relationships. The following passage sets forth the punishments for the transgressions that were given in 18:6-23. In many cases, the relative laws have been explained in the commentary to the previous passage.

10. מוֹת יוּמָת — They shall certainly be put to death. The Sages derive that this term indicates the death penalty of חֲנָק, strangulation (Rashi).

12. תָּבַל עָשׂוּ — A perversion they have committed. It is against the natural order of things for a father and a son to live with the same woman, just as, in 18:23, it is against the natural order for a human to live with an animal. This is the sense of Rashi, who explains the phrase in terms of "shamefulness" and "mixture."

מוֹת יוֹמְתוֹ דְּמִיָּהֶם בָּם: יִי אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח

< takes < who < A man 14 >> is upon < their blood >> they shall certainly be put to death, themselves.

אֶת־אִשָּׁה וְאֶת־אִמָּהּ וְזֶמָּה הוּא בָּאֵשׁ יִשְׂרְפוּ

< they shall < in fire >> it is; < a depraved >> and her mother, < a woman burn plot

אֹתוֹ וְאֶתְהֶן וְלֹא־תִהְיֶה זִמָּה בְּתוֹכְכֶם: יִי אִישׁ

< A man 15 >> in your midst. < depravity > and there shall not be >> and them, < him

אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן שְׁכָבְתוֹ בְּבִהֶמָּה מוֹת יוֹמֵת

>> shall certainly < with an animal < shall lie carnally < who be put to death;

וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה תִּהְרֹגוּ: יִי אִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרַב אֶל־כָּל־בְּהֵמָה לְרִבְעָה

< for it to mate < animal < any < unto < approaches < who < And a woman 16 >> you shall kill. < and the animal

אֹתָהּ וְהִרְגַּת אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה מוֹת יוֹמְתוֹ דְּמִיָּהֶם בָּם:

>> is upon < their >> they shall certainly < and the animal; < the woman < you shall kill >> with her, them. blood be put to death,

וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח אֶת־אֶחָתוֹ בֶּת־אָבִיו אֹיֶת־אִמּוֹ וְרָאָה אֶת־עֲרוֹתָהּ

< her nakedness < and he >> of his < the < or < of his < the < his sister, < shall take < who < A man 17 shall see mother, daughter father daughter

וְהָיָא־תִּרְאָה אֶת־עֲרוֹתוֹ חֶסֶד הוּא וְנִכְרְתוּ לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי עַמָּם עֲרוֹת

< the >> of their < of the < in the < and they shall < it is < a >> his nakedness, < shall see < and she nakedness people; members sight be cut off disgrace

רש"י

עבירה (ת"כ פרק יא:ה). כיוצא בדבר אשה חומר אצל תאבדון את כל המקומות (דברים יב:ז) הרי דברים ק"ו מה חילנות שאין רואין ואין שומעין, על שזאת תקלה על ידם אמרה תורה השחת שרוף וכלה, המטה את חזירו מדרך חיים לדרכי מיתה על אשת כמה וכמה (ת"כ שם ו; סנהדרין נה:). (יוז) חסד הוא. לשון ארמי חרפה (בראשית לד:ז) חסודא. ומדרשו, אש תאמר קין נשא אחותו, חסד עשה המקום לבנות עולמו ממנו, שנא' עולם חסד יבנה (תהלים פט:ג; ת"כ שם יא; סנהדרין נה:).

14. אֲשֶׁר יִקַּח — *Who takes*. This term refers to marriage. Only if someone was married to a woman is he forbidden to live with her mother or daughter (*Sifra*).

וְזֶמָּה הוּא — *A depraved plot it is*. The same term was used in 18:17 regarding a relationship with one's wife and her daughter. The similarity of terms [גזירה שווא] teaches that both offenses incur the penalty of death by fire (*Sifra*).

וְאֶתְהֶן — *And them*. The plural implies that more than one woman is put to death, but the man's lawful wife clearly is not punished because her husband sinned with her close relative. Rather, the plural form teaches that the penalty applies to the mother-in-law and her mother, should they both sin with him (*Rashi; Sanhedrin 76b*).

15. וְאֶת־הַבְּהֵמָה תִּהְרֹגוּ — *And the animal you shall kill*. The animal is removed from the world because it was a source of

(ויד) ישרפו אותו ואתה. אי אשה יכול לומר אשתו הראשונה ישרפו, שהרי נשאה זהיתר ולא נאסרה עליו. אלא אשה ואמה הכתובות כאן שתיקן לחיסור, שנשא את חמותו ואמה. ויש מרבותינו שאומרים אין כאן אלא חמותו, ומהו אשה, את אשת מן. ולשון יוני הוא, הן אחת (סנהדרין עו:). (טו) ואת הבהמה תהרגו. אם אדם חטא צהמה מה חטאה, אלא מפני שזאה לאדם תקלה על ידה לפיכך אמר הכתוב חסד, ק"ו לאדם שידע להבחין בין טוב לרע וגורם רעה לחזירו לעצור

enticement that caused a person to sin. Surely, then, a rational person who causes his fellow to sin is worthy of punishment (*Rashi; Sifra*). Alternatively, the animal must be killed so that it should not walk down the road and have people say, "This animal caused a man to be stoned" (*Sanhedrin 54a*).

17. חֶסֶד — *A disgrace*. Literally, the word means "kindness," a strange term in relation to incest. It is intended to answer the question, "If it is immoral for a brother and sister to live together, then why did God permit Cain and Abel to marry their sisters?" The answer is that it was a *kindness* for God to allow that, so that the human race could go on (*Rashi; Sifra*).

According to *Radak*, the word חֶסֶד has two meanings: *kindness* and *disgrace*. The two are related, because the disgrace of immorality is the product of overindulgence. Someone who is too anxious to give pleasure and is reluctant to discipline herself

אֶחָתָהּ גִּלְהָ עֹנֹוּ יִשָּׂא: יִהְיֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת-  
 יִשְׁכּוּב עִמָּהּ אֶתְמָהּ מִסָּבָא וְיִגְלִי יֵת  
 עֲרִיתָהּ יֵת קִלְנָהּ גִּלְהָ וְהִיא תִגְלִי יֵת  
 סוֹאֶבֶת דְּמָהָ וְיִשְׁתִּיצוֹן תִּרְוִיהוֹן  
 מִגּוּ עֲמִהוֹן: יִטְוֶעֲרִית אֶחָת אִמָּהּ  
 וְאֶחָת אָבוֹהָ לֹא תִגְלִי אֲרִי יֵת  
 קִרְיָבָה גִּלְהָ חוּבָהּ וְקִבְלוֹן: כֹּהֲגֵבֶר דִּי  
 יִשְׁכּוּב יֵת אֶתְמָהּ אֶחָ אָבוֹהִי עֲרִית  
 אֶחָ אָבוֹהִי גִלְהָ חוּבָהּ וְקִבְלוֹן בְּלֹא  
 וְלֹד יִמּוּתוֹן: כֹּהֲגֵבֶר דִּי יִסֵּב יֵת אֶתְמָהּ  
 אֶחָהּ מִרְחָקָהּ הִיא עֲרִיתָהּ דְּאֶחָהּ  
 גִּלְהָ בְּלֹא וְלֹד יֵת: כֹּהֲגֵבֶר דִּי  
 כָּל קִימִי יֵת כָּל דִּינִי וְתַעֲבָדוֹן יִתְהוֹן  
 וְלֹא תִרְוִקוֹן יִתְכּוֹן אֶרְעָא דִּי אֲנִי  
 מַעַל יִתְכּוֹן תִּמְנָן לְמַתְבָּה: כֹּהֲגֵבֶר

אֶחָתָהּ גִּלְהָ עֹנֹוּ יִשָּׂא: יִהְיֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת-  
 < with < shall lie < who < A man 18 << he shall < his << he has < of his  
 bear. iniquity uncovered, sister

אִשָּׁה דָּוָה וְגִלְהָ אֶת-עֲרִיתָהּ אֶת-מִקְרָהּ הָעֵרָה  
 < he has < her source < her nakedness, < and has < in her < a woman  
 bared uncovered infirmity

וְהָיָה גִלְתָּהּ אֶת-מִקְוֹר דָּמֶיהָ וְנִכְרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם  
 << – both of << they will be << of her < the source < has < and she  
 them – cut off blood; uncovered

מִקְרָב עַמָּם: יִטְוֶעֲרִית אֶחָת אִמָּהּ וְאֶחָת אָבִיהָ  
 < of your < or the < of your < of the < The 19 << of their < from the  
 father sister mother sister nakedness people. midst

לֹא תִגְלֶה כִּי אֶת-שָׂאֲרוֹ הָעֵרָה עֹנֹם יִשָּׂאוּ: כֹּהֲגֵבֶר אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב  
 < lies < who < And a 20 << they < their << he is < his own flesh < for << uncover, < do not  
 man shall bear. iniquity baring;

אֶת-דִּדְתָּו עֲרֹות דָּדוֹ גִּלְהָ חֲטָאֵם יִשָּׂאוּ עֲרִירִים יָמָתוֹ: כֹּהֲגֵבֶר אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר  
 < who < A man 21 << shall < childless << they < their sin << he has < of his < the << his aunt, < with  
 they die. shall bear, uncovered; uncle nakedness

יִקַּח אֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶחָיו נָדָה הִוא עֲרֹות אֶחָיו גִּלְהָ עֲרִירִים יִהְיוּ:  
 << shall < childless < he has < of his < the << it is; < loathsome << of his < the wife < takes  
 they be. uncovered, brother nakedness brother,

וְשִׁמְרַתֶּם אֶת-כָּל-חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת-כָּל-מִשְׁפָּטַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא-תִקְיָא  
 < then it will << them; < and you shall < My < and all < My < all < You shall keep 22  
 not disgorge perform ordinances decrees

אֹתְכֶם הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מֵבִיא אֹתְכֶם שָׁמָּה לְשֹׁבֶת בָּהּ: שְׁבִיעִי כֹהֲגֵבֶר וְלֹא  
 < Do not 23 << in it. < to dwell < there < you < bring < I < that < – the << you  
 Land

רש"י

שהוא בשוגג הליכת ערירי: ערירים. כתרומתו, בלא ולד. ודומה לו ואנכי הולך  
 ערירי (בראשית טו:ב) יש לו בנים קוצרן, אין לו בנים מת בלא בנים (ח"כ פרק יב:ז)  
 לכך שנה בשני מקראות אלו, ערירים ימותו, ערירים יהיו. ערירים ימותו, אם  
 יהיו לו בשעת עבירה לא יהיו לו כשימות, לפי שקוצרן בחייו. ערירים יהיו, שאם  
 אין לו בשעת עבירה יהיה כל ימיו כמו שהוא עכשיו (עי' יצמות נה:). (בא) נדה  
 היא. השכיבה הזאת מנוחה היא ומאוסה. ורבותיו דרשו לאסור הערלה זה  
 כנדה, שהערלה מפורשת זה, את מקורה הערה (לעיל פסוק יח; יצמות נד:).

(יח) הערה. גלה, וכן כל לשון ערוה גלוי הוא, והוא "יורדת בתיבה לשם דבר, כמו  
 זעורה מגזרת וולא קס) ולא זע (אסתר ה:ט) וכן אחיה מגזרת אח. והערלה זו נחלקו  
 זה רבותינו, יש אומרים זו נשיקת שמש ויש אומרים זו הכנסת עטרה (יצמות נה:)  
 (יט) וערות אחות אמו וגו'. שנה הכתוב בלזוהרתו (לעיל יח:יג) לומר  
 שהזהר עליהן בין על אחות אביו ואמו מן האב בין על אחיותיהן מן האם, אבל  
 ערות אשת אחי אביו לא הוזהר אלא על אשת אחי אביו מן האב (יצמות נד:)  
 (כ) אשר ישכב את דדתו. המקרא הזה בא ללמד על כרת האמור למעלה

or others is in danger of lapsing into the sin of immorality. [See ArtScroll Genesis pp. 371-3.]

אֶחָתָהּ גִּלְהָ עֹנֹוּ יִשָּׂא — In the sight of the members of their people... his iniquity he shall bear. The consequences of the sin will attach themselves to the sinner in the form of a series of misfortunes that will make it obvious to the members of their people that he has incurred God's wrath (Ramban to v. 9).

18. אִשָּׁה דָּוָה — A woman in her infirmity, during her menses.

20. דִּדְתָּו — His aunt, the wife of his father's brother (Sifra). The wife of a mother's brother is prohibited Rabbinically (Yevamos 21a).

22-24. The Land and immorality. Having given the penalties for the relationships that were prohibited in Chapter 18, the Torah repeats the message of 18:26-30, that the sanctity



תִּלְכוּ בַּחֲקֵת הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר-אֲנִי מִשְׁלַח מִפְּנֵיכֶם כִּי

< for < from < expel < I < that < of the < the < follow  
before you, nation traditions

אֶת-כָּל-אֱלֹהֵי עֲשׂוּ וְאֶקֶץ בָּם: כֹּד וְאָמַר לָכֶם אַתֶּם

< You < to you: < So I 24 < with < and I was < they < of these < all  
said them. disgusted did [abominations]

תִּירְשׁוּ אֶת-אֲדָמָתָם וְאֲנִי אֶתְּנֶנָּה לָכֶם לְרִשְׁתָּ

< to inherit < to you < will give it < and I < their Land, < shall inherit

אֹתָהּ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חָלָב וְדִבְשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

< your God, < HASHEM, < —I < and < with < flowing < a land < it,  
am honey milk

אֲשֶׁר-הִבְדַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִן-הָעַמִּים: מִפְּטִיר כֹּה וְהִבְדַּלְתֶּם בֵּין-הַבְּהֵמָה

< the < between < You shall 25 < the < from < you < has separated < Who  
animal distinguish peoples.

הַטְּהוֹרָה לַטְּמֵאָה וּבֵין-הָעוֹף הַטָּמֵא לַטְּהוֹר וְלֹא-תִשְׁקְצוּ אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם

< your souls < render < and < and the < that is < the bird < and < and the < that is clean  
abominable do not clean; unclean between unclean,

בַּבְּהֵמָה וּבָעוֹף וּבְכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמַשׁ הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר-הִבְדַּלְתִּי לָכֶם

< for you < I have < that < on the ground < creeps < that < and through < and birds, < through  
set apart anything [such] animals

לַטְּמֵא: כִּי וְהִיִּיתֶם לִי קְדוֹשִׁים כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֶבְדַּל אֶתְכֶם מִן-

< from < you < and I have < HASHEM; < am I < holy < for < holy, < for Me < You shall be 26 < to render  
separated unclean.

רש"י

להיות לי. אם אתם מוצללים מהם הרי אתם שלי ואם לאו אתם של נבוכדנצר וחזיריו. רבי אלעזר בן עזריה אומר, מנין שלא יאמר אדם נפשי קלה צבצר חזיר, אי אפשי לנבז כלאים, אבל יאמר אפשי, ומה אעשה ואזי שבשמים גזר עלי, ת"ל ואבדיל אתכם מן העמים להיות לי, שיהא הבדלתכם מהם לשמי. פורש מן העבירה ומקבל עליו עול מלכות שמים (שם י):

(בג) ואקץ. לשון מילוס, כמו קלתי בחיי (בראשית כז:מו) כהם שהוא קץ בזמנו (ת"כ פרק ט:ד: כה) והבדלתם בין הבהמה הטהורה לטמאה. חז"ל לרד"ק לומר בין פרה לחמור שהרי מוצללים ונכרין הם, אלא בין טהורה לך לטמאה לך, בין שנשחט רובו של סימן לנשחט חזיו. וכמה בין רובו לחזיו, מלא שטרה (שם ז): אשר הבדלתי לכם לטמא. לאסור (שם ח): (כו) ואבדל אתכם מן העמים

of Eretz Yisrael cannot tolerate immorality. Thus the gift of the Land is conditioned upon the people maintaining their high level of sanctity.

**25-26. Holiness and kashrus.** The chapter concludes with an exhortation to avoid forbidden foods, as a prerequisite of holiness, as set forth in 11:44.

**26.** להיות לי. . . ואבדל אתכם — And I have separated you . . . to be Mine. If you keep yourselves apart from the nations and their ways, you will be Mine; otherwise you will belong to Nebuchadnezzar and his cohorts. R' Elazar ben Azariah taught, "Do not say, 'I cannot stand pig meat!' Rather you should say, 'I would like to savor pig meat, but what can I do — God forbade it, and commanded me to separate myself from the nations in order to be His, and to accept His sovereignty upon myself!' " (Rashi).

R' Chaim of Volozhin used to comment that if Jews sanctify themselves, then — as this verse guarantees — God will separate us from the nations to be His. What will happen if we do *not* sanctify ourselves? Then the *nations* will separate us from their midst — for persecution and expulsion, God forbid!

In a similar vein, a Jew once came and lamented to R' Mordechai of Lechovitch that his Russian landlord, with whom he had always had a very friendly relationship, had begun to hate him and was constantly persecuting him. The rabbi answered, "You should have maintained a distance between yourself and your landlord. You are a Jew and you have the responsibility of being holy. You wanted to be like him, so now he is separating himself from you."

עממיא למהוי פלחין קדמי: כווגבר  
או אתתא ארי יהי בהון בדין או  
דבורו אתקטלא יתקטלון באבנא  
ירגמון יתהון קטלא חביבין:

הַעַמִּים לְהִיּוֹת לִי: כֹּז וְאִישׁ אִו-אִשָּׁה כִּי-יִהְיֶה  
< there < if < woman < or < Any man 27 << Mine. < to be < the peoples  
should be

בָּהֶם אֹב או יִדְעֵנִי מוֹת יוֹמָתוֹ בְּאֶבֶן יִרְגְּמוּ  
< they < with << they shall certainly << the [oracles < or < the [necro- < among  
shall pelt stones be put to death; of] Yid'oni, mancy of] Ov them

אַתֶּם דְּמִיָּהֶם בָּם: פפפ ס"ד פסוקים. ונג"ה סימן. מ"י זה"ב סימן.  
<< is upon < their << them  
themselves. blood [to death],

## הפטרה / HAFTARAH

We give this reading as the *Haftarah* of *Acharei* based on the ruling of Rama (*Orach Chaim* 428:8), with which most authorities concur. The version found in most *Chumashim*, that this is the *Haftarah* of *Kedoshim*, is in error. Although the general rule is that when two *Sidros* are read together, the *Haftarah* is that of the second one, the *Sidros* of *Acharei* and *Kedoshim* are exceptions. When *Acharei* and *Kedoshim* are combined, the *Haftarah* of *Acharei* is read. Similarly, when *Acharei* falls on the day before Rosh Chodesh or on *Shabbos HaGadol*, which have special *Haftaros*, the *Haftarah* of *Acharei* is read on the Sabbath of *Kedoshim*. See *Mishnah Berurah* 428:26.

According to the *Sephardic* custom, the *Haftarah* of *Acharei* can be found below as the *Ashkenazic Haftarah* of *Kedoshim* (Ezekiel 22:1-16). According to the *Ashkenazic* custom, the following *Haftarah* is read.

עמוס ט:ז-טו / Amos 9:7-15

אָפֶס כִּי לֹא הִשְׁמִיד אֲשַׁמִּיד אֶת-בֵּית  
< the House < I will not totally destroy < however,  
יַעֲקֹב נְאֻם-יְהוָה: ט כִּי-הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי מִצְוָה  
< decree < I < indeed, < For 9 << of < — the << of Jacob  
HASHEM. word

וְהִנֵּעוֹתִי בְּכָל-הַגּוֹיִם אֶת-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
<< of Israel, < the House < the nations < among all < that I will scatter  
בְּאֲשֶׁר יִנּוּעַ בַּבֶּבְרָה וְלֹא-יִפּוֹל צֶרֶוֹר  
< a < fall < and there << in a sieve, < one sifts < as  
pebble shall not [grain]

אֶרֶץ: י בַּחֶרֶב יָמוּתוּ כָל חַטָּאֵי עַמִּי  
<< of My < the < all < will die < By the 10 << to the  
nation, sinners sword ground.

הָאֲמָרִים לֹא-תִגִּישׁ וְתִקְדִּים בְּעֵדֵינוּ  
< because < or come < draw < There << those  
of us earlier near will not who say,

[ט] הֲלוֹא כְּבָנִי בְּשֵׁיִם אַתֶּם לִי בְנֵי  
< O < to < you < of the < that like < Is it 7 [9]  
Children Me, are Cushites the children not so,  
יִשְׂרָאֵל נְאֻם-יְהוָה הֲלוֹא אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל  
< that Israel < Is it << of < — the << of Israel  
not so, HASHEM. word

הָעֲלִיתִי מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּפְלִשְׁתִּיִּים  
< the Philistines < of Egypt, < from the land < I brought up  
מִכַּפְתּוֹר וְאֶרֶם מְקִיר: ח הִנֵּה עֵינֵי  
< the eyes < Indeed, 8 << from Kir. < and Aram < from Caphtor  
אֲדֹנִי יְהוָה בַּמַּמְלָכָה הַחַטָּאָה  
<< that is sinful, < are upon < HASHEM/ELOHIM < of the  
the kingdom Lord

וְהִשְׁמַדְתִּי אֹתָהּ מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה  
<< of the < the < from < it < and I will destroy  
earth; face upon

רש"י

(כז) כי יהיה בהם אוב וגו'. כאן נאמר בהם מיתה ולמעלה (פסוק ו) כרת. עדים והתראה  
בסקילה, מויד בלא התראה בהכרת, ושגגתם חטאת. וכן בכל חייבי מיתות שנאמר בהם כרת:

27. אוב או ידעני — *The [necromancy of] Ov or the [oracles of] Yid'oni*. The chapter ends with this sin because it symbolizes the difference between Israel and the nations. If Israel serves God properly, it will deserve to have prophets and have no need for these magical ways of foretelling the future (*Baal HaTurim*).

— This Masoretic note means: There are 64 verses in the *Sidrah*, numerically

corresponding to the mnemonics ונג"ה and מ"י זה"ב.

As *Rashi* comments at the beginning of the *Sidrah*, the majority of the Torah's essential laws are here, which is alluded to by the first mnemonic, which means *glow*, spiritual luster. The second mnemonic means "what good is gold," for, as *Rashi* (to *Genesis* 36:39) comments, someone can be so rich that gold becomes meaningless. So, too, gold pales beside the wealth of the Torah (*R' David Feinstein*).

עֲסִיס וְכָל-הַגְּבָעוֹת תִּתְמוּגְגָנָה:  
 < will melt. < the hills < and all << with juice,

וְיִשְׁבְּתִי אֶת-שְׁבוֹת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 << Israel, < of My < the captivity < I will return 14  
 nation

וּבָנוּ עָרִים נִשְׁמוֹת וַיִּשְׁבּוּ וַיִּנְטְעוּ  
 < they will << and they will < that are < cities < and they  
 plant settle [them]; desolate will rebuild

כְּרָמִים וְשָׂתוּ אֶת-יַיִנָּם וְעָשׂוּ גִזְוֹת  
 < gardens < they will << their wine; < and they < vineyards  
 make will drink

וְאָכְלוּ אֶת-פְּרִיָהֶם: וַיִּנְטְעֵתִים עַל-  
 < upon < I will plant them 15 << their fruits. < and they will eat

אֲדָמָתָם וְלֹא יִנְתָּשׁוּ עוֹד מֵעַל  
 < from < again < and they will << their land,  
 upon not be uprooted

אֲדָמָתָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָהֶם אָמַר יְהוָה  
 < HASHEM, <—said << them < I have < that < their land  
 given

אֱלֹהֶיךָ:  
 << your God.

הָרָעָה: יֵא בַיּוֹם הַהוּא אָקִים אֶת-סֶכֶת  
 < the tabernacle < I will raise up < On that day 11 << [any] evil.

דָּוִיד הַנִּפְלֹת וְגִדְרָתִי אֶת-פְּרִצֵּיהֶן  
 << their breaches, < I will repair << that is fallen; < of David  
 וְהִרְסָתִיו אָקִים וּבְנִיתִיָּה כִּימֵי עוֹלָם:  
 << of old, < as in < and I will << I will < and his ruins  
 days rebuild it raise up,

לְמַעַן יִירָשׁוּ אֶת-שְׂאֲרֵית אֶדוֹם וְכָל-  
 < and all < of Edom < the remnant < [My people] < so that 12  
 may inherit then

הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר-נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עֲלֵיהֶם נָאִם-  
 < — the << upon < My Name is <—[My people] << the  
 word them called whom nations

יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה זֹאת: » הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים  
 << are < days < Indeed, 13 << this. < Who < of  
 coming shall do HASHEM

נָאִם-יְהוָה וְנִגַּשׁ חוֹרֶשׁ בְּקֶצֶר וְדֶרֶךְ  
 < and the one << the < when the plowman << of < — the  
 who treads reaper, will approach HASHEM— word

עֲנָבִים בְּמִשְׁךְ הַזֶּרַע וְהִטִּיפוּ הַהָרִים  
 < will the < drip << the seed < to the one < on grapes  
 mountains [for sowing]; who carries

#### Haftaras Acharei

God took the prophet Amos from his flock and sent him to chastise the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In particular he criticized them for persecuting the poor and helpless and for indulging themselves in the pursuit of luxuries. In keeping with the final theme of the *Sidrah*, the *Haftarah* stresses that sinfulness results in expulsion from the Land.

In this *Haftarah*, the prophet tells the sinful nation that their transgressions have made them strangers to God, and, if so, there is no reason why He should not punish them in accord with their misdeeds. That He once took them out of Egypt *should* have made them His loyal servants, but they act no better than do the Philistines and Arameans, who were redeemed from subjugations

of their own. Nevertheless, God promises that it is only the corrupt monarchy, the aristocracy, that He will destroy, not the nation as a whole. He uses the simile of a sieve, which releases only kernels of grain, but holds back the useless pebbles. So too, the good people of Israel will suffer only dispersion, but — unlike the “pebbles” among them — will not be lost.

As is customary in even the harshest prophecies, Amos concludes with stirring words of consolation as he paints a picture of a re-established Davidic dynasty, which he calls “David’s fallen booth,” and a prosperity so dazzling that people will not even be finished with the harvest when it is already time to plow for the new season.