HALAKHA

Just as he disqualifies teruma foods, etc. – Even if he touches sacrificial food, it is merely disqualified, assuming fourth-degree impurity status, but it cannot impart impurity to other sacrificial food. This is in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot She’ar Avot HaTumot 10:3).

Rabbi Meir says: One who immersed that day is considered impure with second-degree impurity, even vis-à-vis sacrificial food, and as such renders one item impure and disqualifies one additional item. And the Rabbis say: Just as he is merely disqualified teruma foods" and teruma liquids, without transferring to them impurity that can then be transferred further, so too, he merely disqualifies sacrificial foods and sacrificial liquids. In other words, the impurity imparted by one who immersed that day can reach only third-degree impurity and not fourth-degree impurity, contrary to the opinion of Rabbi Yosei.

Rav Pappa objects to Rabbi Yohanan’s argument: From where is the presumption derived that Rabbi Yosei holds in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis? Perhaps he holds in accordance with the opinion of Abba Shaul, who says that one who immersed that day is able to render two items of sacrificial food impure, and to disqualify one additional item.

The Gemara answers: If it enters your mind that Rabbi Yosei holds in accordance with the opinion of Abba Shaul, he should have brought proof for the existence of a fourth degree of ritual impurity with regard to sacrificial food from the case of food whose impurity came from one who immersed that day, as follows:

Just as with regard to food whose impurity came from one who immersed that day, while the one who immersed that day is himself permitted to consume non-sacred food, nevertheless you say that the food imparts fourth-degree impurity status upon sacrificial food, then with regard to food whose third-degree impurity came from contact with an item of second-degree impurity, in which case the item with the second-degree impurity is itself forbidden, i.e. impure, even if it is non-sacred food, isn’t it logical to infer that it should be able to impart fourth-degree impurity upon sacrificial food?

As it is taught in a baraita (Tosefta, Taharot 1:4) that Abba Shaul says. With regard to one who immersed that day, until sunset he is treated as one who is impure with first-degree impurity vis-à-vis sacrificial food, in that he is able to render two items of sacrificial food impure and to disqualify one additional item. In other words, the first item of sacrificial food that he touches assumes the status of a second-degree impurity. A second item that comes into contact with the first one assumes third-degree impurity. A third item that comes into contact with the second assumes fourth-degree impurity and is therefore disqualified from being eaten, though it cannot impart impurity to other items.
An item of second-degree impurity status cannot impart third-degree impurity status to non-sacred items. A non-sacred item with first-degree ritual impurity status imprimes impurity upon other items with which it comes into contact. A non-sacred item with second-degree ritual impurity status cannot impart impurity to another non-sacred item, as non-sacred food cannot contract third-degree impurity status (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot She'ar Avot HaTumot 11:2).

Anything that requires immersion in water, etc. – The Sages decreed that if one’s head and most of his body are immersed in drawn water, he assumes second-degree impurity status until he immerses himself in a ritual bath. If this individual, or any other person who is impure due to a similar rabbinic decree, touches teruma, he imparts upon the teruma third-degree impurity status. If he touches sacrificial food, he imparts upon it fourth-degree impurity status (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot She’ar Avot HaTumot 10:2–3).

But the Rabbis prohibit the second tithe – It is prohibited to partake of the second tithe if one is ritually impure. Even if he is rendered impure merely due to rabbinically enacted ritual impurity, it is still prohibited for him to partake of the second tithe (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Tumat Okhalin 16:8).

One who eats food with first-degree impurity – The Sages decreed that one who eats food of first- or second-degree impurity status assumes second-degree impurity status, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot She’ar Avot HaTumot 8:10).

One who eats food with third-degree impurity assumes second-degree impurity vis-à-vis sacrificial food, etc. – The Sages decreed that one who eats food with third-degree impurity status, which can be either teruma or non-sacred food that has been kept to the standards of teruma, although he remains ritually pure in that he does not render teruma he touches impure, nevertheless he is considered as one who has second-degree impurity status vis-à-vis sacrificial food. One who eats non-sacred food that has been kept to the standards of sacrificial food and has contracted third-degree impurity status cannot impart impurity to sacrificial food (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot She’ar Avot HaTumot 11:12).

Rabbi Asi said that Rav said, and some say Rabba ben Isi said that Rav said: Rabbi Meir, and Rabbi Yosei, and Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Elazar, and Rabbi Eliezer all hold that an item of second-degree ritual impurity status cannot impart third-degree ritual impurity status to non-sacred items. Rav proceeds to prove this by attributing support from the rulings of each of these tanna’im.

Rabbi Meir is of this opinion, as we learned in a mishna (Para 11:5): Anything that requires immersion in water by rabbinic law renders sacrificial food impure upon contact, with second-degree impurity, and disqualifies teruma, meaning that it renders the teruma itself impure, but not to the extent that the teruma can render other teruma impure. And anything that requires immersion in water by rabbinic law is permitted for non-sacred food and for the second tithe, i.e., it does not render these items impure. This is the statement of Rabbi Meir. But the Rabbis prohibit one who has this degree of impurity from partaking of the second tithe.

From the fact that Rabbi Meir permits him to partake of the second tithe, it is inferred that he maintains that an item of second-degree impurity cannot impart third-degree impurity upon non-sacred items.

It is evident that Rabbi Yosei is of this opinion from that which we have stated above, that he derives that sacrificial food can contract fourth-degree impurity, because if he holds that non-sacred items can contract third-degree impurity, he should have derived through his a fortiori inference that there is fourth-degree impurity vis-à-vis teruma and fifth-degree impurity vis-à-vis sacrificial food, since each of these categories has a unique level of impurity.

Rabbi Yehoshua is of this opinion, as we learned in a mishna (Teharot 2:1): Rabbi Eliezer says: One who eats food with first-degree impurity assumes first-degree impurity. One who eats food with second-degree impurity assumes second-degree impurity. One who eats food with third-degree impurity assumes third-degree impurity. Rabbi Yehoshua says: One who eats food with first-degree impurity or food with second-degree impurity assumes second-degree impurity. One who eats food with third-degree impurity assumes second-degree impurity vis-à-vis sacrificial food, and he does not assume second-degree impurity vis-à-vis teruma.
Jews are assumed to be ritually impure, and places less than an egg-bulk, etc. – separated from the dough and burned, and the rest of the dough must be removed. Why is it necessary to separate the dough, which is declared as impure, from any of the types of grain, provided that the quantity of flour of the batch is at least a tenth of an ephah in volume. If the dough is not taken, the dough has the status of unmitted produce and may not be eaten.

The Torah commands the separation of a portion of one’s dough, which is declared as hala, and is later given to the priests (see Numbers 15:20). This portion of hala is governed by all the halakhot pertaining to teruma; the portion of produce set aside for the priests. Hala must be taken from all dough made from any of the five types of grain, provided that the quantity of flour of the batch is at least a tenth of an ephah in volume. If hala is not taken, the dough has the status of unmitted produce and may not be eaten.

The Torah does not specify a measure for hala. However, the Sages required an individual baking for personal use to give one twenty-fourth of his dough as hala, and a commercial baker to give one forty-eight. Nowadays, as all Jews are assumed to be ritually impure, hala is governed by halakhot similar to impure teruma; it cannot be eaten and therefore must be burned. Accordingly, the measures mentioned above no longer apply; only a small portion is separated from the dough and burned, and the rest of the dough may then be used. A blessing is recited for the separation of hala. The halakhot of this mitzva, which is one of the mitzvot performed particularly by women, are discussed comprehensively in tractate Hala.

**BACKGROUND**

**Hala** — הַלָּה The Torah commands the separation of a portion of one’s dough, which is declared as hala and is later given to the priests (see Numbers 15:20). This portion of hala is governed by all the halakhot pertaining to teruma; the portion of produce set aside for the priests. Hala must be taken from all dough made from any of the five types of grain, provided that the quantity of flour of the batch is at least a tenth of an ephah in volume. If hala is not taken, the dough has the status of unmitted produce and may not be eaten. The Torah does not specify a measure for hala. However, the Sages required an individual baking for personal use to give one twenty-fourth of his dough as hala, and a commercial baker to give one forty-eight. Nowadays, as all Jews are assumed to be ritually impure, hala is governed by halakhot similar to impure teruma; it cannot be eaten and therefore must be burned. Accordingly, the measures mentioned above no longer apply; only a small portion is separated from the dough and burned, and the rest of the dough may then be used. A blessing is recited for the separation of hala. The halakhot of this mitzva, which is one of the mitzvot performed particularly by women, are discussed comprehensively in tractate Hala.

**NOTES**

**Hala** can be taken from ritually pure dough on behalf of ritually impure dough — הלָּה מִדַּקְתֶּה יַךְ מְפֹרֶשֶׂה עַל מַסָּה מַלְאֹן: Why is it necessary to separate hala from ritually pure dough on behalf of ritually impure dough? Rashi explains that according to Rabbi Eliezer, the separation of hala from dough is not necessary if the dough is destined for the priests. However, Rabbi Akiva argues that hala should be separated from all dough, as it is taught in a gemara in tractate Teruma. Rabbis Eliezer and Akiva both agree that hala should be taken from all dough, as it is taught in a gemara in tractate Teruma. Rabbis Eliezer and Akiva both agree that hala should be taken from all dough, as it is taught in a gemara in tractate Teruma.

And places less than an egg-bulk, etc. — הלָּה מַדַּקְתֶּה יַךְ מְפֹרֶשֶׂה. The way in which this process is performed would seem to indicate that it is not considered as if two batches of dough are situated near each other unless they are actually touching, and it would not be sufficient to just place the two batches in the same basket to group them together, as otherwise this whole process would be unnecessary. The Maharam of Rothenburg, however, states that this procedure needs to be done only in such a situation where one of the batches of dough is pure and the other impure, since one clearly does not want to combine the two batches, in order to separate hala for both of them together it is necessary that they actually touch. Otherwise, placing different batches of dough in the same basket would suffice.

Eating an item with third-degree impurity is possible only in the case of non-sacred items, as eating impure teruma or sacrificial food is prohibited. However, generic non-sacred food cannot contract third-degree impurity at all. Therefore, the case of one who eats food with third-degree impurity refers specifically to non-sacred food items that were prepared as if their level of purity were on the level of the purity of teruma. By means of a vow, one can establish the purity status of non-sacred food items to be treated on the level of purity necessary for teruma. The Gemara infers from Rabbi Yehoshua’s statement that yes, one is able to prepare items as if their level of purity were on the level of the purity of teruma; but one is not able to prepare items as if their level of purity were on the level of the purity of sacrificial food, and such items would not contract third-degree impurity.

The Gemara concludes: Apparently, Rabbi Yehoshua holds that an item of second-degree impurity cannot impart third-degree impurity upon ordinary non-sacred items that were not prepared on the level of the purity of teruma.

Rabbi Elazar is of this opinion, as it is taught in a mishna (Teharot 2:7): Rabbi Elazar says: The three of these are equal in their ability to impart ritual impurity to other items: An item of first-degree impurity, whether it is an item of sacrificial food, or of non-sacred food, or of teruma.

With regard to sacrificial food, such an item renders impure two additional levels of contact, enabling the items that contracted ritual impurity from it to transfer that impurity to items that they in turn touch afterward. And it disqualifies one level afterward, imparting upon the food fourth-degree impurity, which cannot impart impurity to a fifth item.

With regard to teruma, an item of first-degree impurity renders impure one additional level of contact, i.e., it imparts second-level impurity to teruma food with which it comes into contact, and that item in turn disqualifies one additional level afterward, as that teruma food imparts third-degree impurity upon teruma.

And with regard to non-sacred food, an item of first-degree impurity merely disqualifies one additional level of non-sacred food. Evidently, non-sacred items cannot go beyond a second-degree impurity.

Rabbi Eliezer also agrees with this principle, as we learned in a mishna (Hala 2:8): Rabbi Eliezer says: *Hala* can be taken from ritually pure dough on behalf of ritually impure dough. How so? If there are two batches of dough, one of which is pure and one of which is impure, one takes the required amount of dough for separating hala for both of the batches from the pure dough when its hala has not yet been separated for itself, and then places less than an egg-bulk of dough, which is not susceptible becoming ritually impure due to its size, in the middle, between the impure dough and the pure dough set aside for being used as the separated hala. This joins all of the dough together, so that one can fulfill the requirement to take dough for separating hala from dough that is situated near the dough it comes to exempt.

Two batches of dough — קלָנָה: If one has two batches of dough, of which one is ritually pure and the other of which is ritually impure, he must take the entire required amount of dough for separating hala from the pure dough, and then place less than an egg-bulk of impure dough between the pure batch and the impure batch, in order to separate hala from dough that is situated near the dough it comes to exempt (Rambam Sefer Zera'im, Hilkhot Bikurim 2:12).
And the Rabbis prohibit separating halla in this manner.

And it is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Eliezer even allows the ritually pure dough placed in the middle to be as large as an egg-bulk, even though dough of that size is susceptible to the halakhah of ritual impurity.

The Gemara now explains the reasoning of those who tried to prove from here that Rabbi Eliezer is of the opinion that second-degree ritual impurity cannot impart third-degree ritual impurity upon non-sacred items: They assumed that both this mishna and this baraita are referring to cases where the dough is of first-degree impurity. And furthermore, they assumed that all the tanna'im agree that non-sacred food that is untithed with regard to the obligation to separate halla, as its halla has not yet been separated, is not treated like halla as far as its ability to contract third-degree ritual impurity. Rather, it is regarded as generic non-sacred food, which is susceptible only to second-degre impurity.

Based on these assumptions the Gemara explains how these authorities understood the tannaitic dispute: What, is it not clear that Rabbi Eliezer and the Rabbis disagree with regard to the following matter: One Sage, Rabbi Eliezer, holds that an item of second-degree impurity cannot impart third-degree impurity to non-sacred items. Therefore, there is no problem placing an egg-bulk of pure dough in the middle, as although it will touch the impure dough and thereby contract second-degree impurity, nevertheless it is unable to transmit impurity to the pure dough.

And one Sage, i.e., the Rabbis, holds that an item of second-degree impurity can impart third-degree ritual impurity to non-sacred items. They therefore prohibit placing an egg-bulk of dough in the middle, as it will assume second-degree impurity status, which, in their opinion, can impart third-degree impurity status upon the pure dough.

Rav Mari, son of Rav Kahana, said that the dispute can be understood differently: Everyone agrees that an item of second-degree ritual impurity cannot impart third-degree ritual impurity to non-sacred items. But here, the dispute concerns another matter, as they disagree with regard to the status of non-sacred food that is untithed vis-à-vis halla, as its halla has not yet been separated. One Sage, i.e., the Rabbis, holds that it is treated like halla with regard to its ability to contract third-degree ritual impurity, and one Sage, Rabbi Eliezer, holds that it is not treated like halla and cannot contract third-degree impurity. Therefore, he permits separating halla in this manner.

And if you wish, say instead that they disagree with regard to a different issue: Everyone agrees that non-sacred food that is untithed with regard to halla is not treated like halla and cannot contract third-degree impurity, and that an item of second-degree ritual impurity cannot impart third-degree ritual impurity to non-sacred items. But here, they disagree with regard to whether or not it is permitted to cause ritual impurity to non-sacred food that is in Eretz Yisrael.96

NOTES

An egg-bulk – און בולקס. Although it is agreed upon that an egg-bulk is the minimum measurement necessary for food to contract ritual impurity, there is a dispute between Rashi and Tosafot with regard to the details of this requirement. Rashi understands that at least an egg-bulk of food is necessary in order for it to be capable of imparting impurity upon other food items with which it comes into contact. However, according to Tosafot (Pesahim 3b), less than an egg-bulk of food cannot contract ritual impurity either. This disagreement leads to conflicting interpretations of the Gemara here.

They assumed – מ доброוס. Usually when a statement is introduced by the expression. They assumed, it is an indication that this opinion was expressed in the study hall but was eventually rejected. The Meri points out that in this case, only part of the opinion presented is rejected in the continuation of the Gemara, as there is no rejection of the assumption that the reference is to dough of first-degree impurity status.

Disagree with regard to the following matter – עםון בולקס. Does this refer to the mishna or to the baraita? Rashi maintains that the Gemara is explaining the dispute in the mishna. Although Rabbi Eliezer’s opinion, as quoted in the mishna, is that one should use a piece of dough small enough that it is not susceptible to the halakhah of ritual impurity, nevertheless, the Gemara assumes that he is not concerned about it transferring impurity to the halla. Otherwise, he would prohibit this practice, and will not use an egg-bulk of dough, thereby imparting impurity upon the pure dough. Accordingly, the baraita is mentioned tangentially, as it is not necessary for the discussion.

According to this explanation, later commentators ask why the Gemara does not suggest that the core dispute between Rabbi Eliezer and the Rabbis is whether or not the concern that use of a smaller piece of dough will lead to the use of an egg-bulk should be taken into account. Tosor Halifenso answers that this concern is obviously valid, as it is difficult for people to discern between these measurements.

In the Commentary of Rabbi Shimon Ben Dosa on tractate Terumot, the Gemara here is explained as discussing the dispute between the mishna and the baraita with regard to the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer.

It is permitted to cause ritual impurity to non-sacred food that is in Eretz Yisrael – מיתהא אנא עלא אונא בולקס. The reason why this issue applies only in Eretz Yisrael is that non-sacred food outside of Eretz Yisrael is automatically impure due to the inherent impurity of what is called the land of the nations, i.e., any territory outside of Eretz Yisrael.

The opinion that it is prohibited to cause impurity in Eretz Yisrael is perhaps related to the fact that although eating impure non-sacred food is halakhically permitted, many individuals who were devoted to the meticulous observance of mitzvot would make sure to keep their food ritually pure. Furthermore, it can be reasoned that if people are not careful to avoid causing food to become impure, they may accidently impart impurity to items that are prohibited to become impure, e.g., teruma and sacrificial food.

HALAKHA

It is permitted to cause ritual impurity to non-sacred food that is in Eretz Yisrael – מיתהא אנא עלא אונא בולקס. Just as it is permitted to eat non-sacred food while in a state of ritual impurity, so too, it is permitted to cause impurity to non-sacred food that is in Eretz Yisrael (Rambam Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Tumat Okhlin 16:9).
One Sage holds that the halakha of Shabbat boundaries is mandated by Torah law, etc. – דְּאוֹרַיְתָא: It is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud that both tannaim agree that the Shabbat limit is by Torah law and the dispute is with regard to its extent. Rabbi Akiva holds that it is two thousand cubits, and Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, holds that by Torah law it is larger than that, and the two-thousand-cubit measure is by rabbinic law.

The halakha of Shabbat boundaries is mandated by rabbinic law – מָר, מָר, מָר, מָר. One who goes beyond the Shabbat limit is liable to receive lashes. The extent of this limit is not explicitly defined in the Torah, but there is a tradition that by Torah law it is twelve mil, which is approximately twelve kilometers, whereas the Sages limited it to two thousand cubits, approximately one kilometer. The Rambam and the Rashba, cited in Moggid Mohne, are of the opinion that by Torah law there is no Shabbat limit at all. They claim that it is only the opinion of Rabbi Akiva that the Shabbat limit is mandated by Torah law, whereas the other Sages maintain that it is by rabbinic law (Rembam Sefer Zemanim, Hilkhot Shabbat 277).

One Sage, Rabbi Eliezer, holds that it is permitted to cause impurity to non-sacred food that is in Eretz Yisrael. Therefore, since the dough placed in the middle cannot impart third-degree ritual impurity status upon the dough designated for hallel, there is no reason to prohibit doing so. And one Sage, i.e., the Rabbis, holds that it is prohibited to cause impurity to non-sacred food that is in Eretz Yisrael. Therefore, although the dough of the ritualually pure batch will not become impure, nevertheless the Rabbis prohibit separating hallel in this manner, as causing the dough in the middle to become impure is prohibited.

It is stated in the mishna: On that same day Rabbi Akiva interpreted one of the contradictory verses with regard to the amount of land surrounding the Levite cities as teaching that one may not travel beyond a two-thousand-cubit radius around his city limits on Shabbat. Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, on the other hand, interprets the contradictory verses as referring to different types of land left for the Levites around their cities.

The Gemara asks: With regard to what halakhic matter do they disagree? The Gemara answers: One Sage, Rabbi Akiva, holds that the halakha of Shabbat boundaries is mandated by Torah law, as he bases it on a verse; and one Sage, Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, holds that the halakha of Shabbat boundaries is mandated by rabbinic law, and he therefore derives other matters from the verse.

The Sages taught: On that same day Rabbi Akiva taught that at the time that the Jewish people ascended from the split sea they set their eyes on reciting a song of gratitude to God. And how did they recite the song? In the same manner as an adult man reciting hallel on behalf of a congregation, as his reading enables all who hear to fulfill their obligation, and the congregation listening merely recite after him the chapter headings of hallel. So too, by the sea, Moses said: “I will sing unto the Lord” (Exodus 15:1), and the people said after Moses: “I will sing unto the Lord.” Moses continued and said: “For He is highly exalted” (Exodus 15:2), and they said once again the chapter heading: “I will sing unto the Lord.”

Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, says: The Jewish people sang just like a minor boy reciting hallel and the congregation who hear him repeat after him all that he says, word for word, as hearing the recital of a minor is insufficient for fulfilling one’s obligation. So too, by the sea, Moses said: “I will sing unto the Lord” (Exodus 15:1), and the people said after Moses: “I will sing to the Lord.” Moses said: “For He is highly exalted,” and they said after him the same words: “For He is highly exalted.”

Rabbi Nehemya says: They sang the song of the sea like a scribe, a cantor, who recites aloud the introductory prayers and blessings before Shema in the synagogue; as he begins by saying the first words of the blessing, and they repeat after him the initial words and continue reciting the rest of Shema together with him in unison. So too, in the song of the sea, Moses began and then everyone recited the entire song together with him.

The Gemara asks: With regard to what do they disagree? The Gemara answers that they disagree with regard to the interpretation of the verse: “Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song unto the Lord, and said, saying” (Exodus 15:1). Rabbi Akiva holds that the word “saying,” which indicates that the people sang after Moses, is referring only to the first words of the song, which the people continually repeated: “I will sing unto the Lord” (Exodus 15:1).

And Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, holds that the word “saying” is referring to every single word, as they would repeat after Moses every word. And Rabbi Nehemya holds that the phrase “and they said” (Exodus 15:1) indicates that everyone recited the song of the sea together, and the word “saying” means that Moses began singing the song first; and then the rest of the people sang the beginning after him and they all continued in unison.
The Sages taught in a baraita that Rabbi Yosei HaGelili taught: At the time that the Jewish people ascended from the sea they resolved to sing a song of gratitude to God. And how did they recite this song? If a baby was lying on his mother’s lap or an infant was nursing from his mother’s breasts, once they saw the Divine Presence, the baby straightened his neck and the infant dropped the breast from his mouth, and they recited: “This is my God and I will glorify Him” (Exodus 15:2). As it is stated: “Out of the mouths of babies and sucklings You have founded strength” (Psalms 8:3).

Rabbi Meir would say: From where is it derived that even fetuses in their mother’s womb recited the song at the sea? As it is stated:

“in full assemblies, bless God, the Lord, you that are from the source of Israel” (Psalms 68:27), indicating that even children that are in the “source,” i.e., their mother’s womb, blessed God when they gathered at the sea.

The Gemara asks: But the fetuses could not see, so how could they have honestly said: “This is my God and I will glorify Him”? Rabbi Tanhum says: Their mother’s stomach was transformed for them like luminous crystal [aspaklarya], and they saw through it.

On that same day Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus taught that Job served the Holy One, Blessed be He, only out of love, as it is stated: “Though He will slay me, still I will trust in Him [lo]” (Job 13:15). The mishna continues that the word lo in the verse is ambiguous as to whether it is indicative of Job expressing his yearning for God or his lack thereof. The Gemara asks: Let us see whether this word lo is written lamed alef, and therefore its meaning is: I will not trust, or whether it is written lamed vav, according to which its meaning is: I trust in Him. Why is there room for doubt with regard to the meaning of the verse?

The Gemara counters: But is it true that anywhere that the word lo is written lamed alef, its meaning is: Not? If that is so, then in the verse: “In all their affliction He was [lo] afflicted” (Isaiah 63:9), where the word lo is written lamed alef, so too, does it mean: Not, i.e., God was not afflicted in the afflictions of the Jewish people?

And if you would say that indeed that is the meaning of the verse, but isn’t it written in the continuation of that same verse: “And the angel of His Presence saved them,” which clearly indicates that God was concerned with their afflictions? Evidently, the word lo in that verse means: “In all their affliction He was afflicted.” Rather, is it not clear that lamed alef sometimes indicates this and sometimes indicates that? Therefore, the mishna had to derive the proper meaning of the word from another verse.

It is taught in a baraita (Tosfia 6:1) that Rabbi Meir says: It is stated with regard to Job that he was “God-fearing” (Job 1:1), and it is stated with regard to Abraham that he was “God-fearing” (Genesis 22:12). Just as the description “God-fearing,” which is stated with regard to Abraham, is referring to Abraham’s fearing God out of love, so too, the description “God-fearing” that is stated with regard to Job indicates that Job feared God out of love.

Babies…fetuses - The Maharsha writes that it is possible that according to Rabbi Yosei HaGelili the infants sang but the fetuses did not, as it is stated in the Midrash that in Egypt, Jewish babies were born in the fields and God raised them miraculously. Therefore, these infants recognized God at the sea and could say: “This is my God and I will glorify Him” (Exodus 15:2). In Yerush Halakhot, however, it is claimed that both opinions agree that the fetuses sang, as the Gemara (Niddah 31b) writes that while in its mother’s womb a fetus is taught the entire Torah by an angel, and therefore it is in a position to recognize God.

The commentator points out that the Gemara is bothered by the question of how the fetuses could see, when it is seemingly secondary to the problem of how they could sing. If their singing is not a problem, as it was miraculous, why is Gemara troubled by their inability to see? The Torat Hakinnot answers that the Gemara asks its question only to introduce the description of the miracle that allowed them to see.

With regard to Abraham, he was God-fearing – אֶלֶּֽהִי יְרֵא, אֱלֹהִים יָרֵא - תְּמוּנָה. The fear of God mentioned with regard to Abraham is not a reference to his fear of divine retribution, but rather to his awe of God’s exaltedness, an attribute that derives from one’s recognition and intense love of God (see Sefer Tanya; Kever Natunya; Hazon Yehuckel).

Crystall (aspaklarya): From the Latin specularis, of a mirror, or specular, to examine, which possibly derives from Greek. It refers to a transparent item, pane, or optical instrument. Sometimes it means a mirror.