

NOTES

But the Divine Spirit informs them – אֵלֵא רוח הקודש – מבשרתן: The proof that this is not part of the priests' statement is that they speak in the form of a request, saying: "Forgive, Lord, Your people Israel" (Deuteronomy 21:8), whereas the last part of the verse states: "And it shall be forgiven," as a statement of fact. The verse is stating an assurance that if the Elders and judges perform the ritual properly, they will eventually find the killer and bring him to justice, which will fully atone for the crime. The *Targum Yonatan* and several *midrashim* explain similarly (Maharsha).

Which is disqualified by years – שְׁשָׁנִים פּוֹסְלוֹת בָּהּ – Rashi writes that a heifer to be used in the ritual of breaking the neck must be in its first year of life. However, the *halakha* appears to be otherwise, as that is the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer (*Para* 1:1), but the Rabbis maintain that it is a heifer until it is age two. The Rambam rules in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis (Rashash).

A bundle [*uda*] of sacks – עוֹדָה שֶׁל שָׁקִין: This translation follows Rashi. According to the Rambam, it refers to a type of sackcloth. The author of the *Arukh* asserts, citing the *ge'onim*, that *uda* is a kind of rope that is tied over sacks to prevent them from falling off an animal, as in the verse: "The Lord upholds [*me'oded*] the humble" (Psalms 147:6). He explains that Rabbi Yehuda is saying that not only does the bundle itself disqualify the animal, but the rope does as well. Rabbeinu Hananel similarly states that it refers to a kind of decorative belt, like the word *adi*, meaning an ornament, placed on the cow, in the manner of a donkey's girth.

BACKGROUND

Yoke [*ol*] – עוֹל: A yoke is a bar, fashioned from wood or iron, that is placed on the shoulders of oxen or cows and then connected to a cart, a plowshare, or a threshing sled. An *ol* is for one animal, whereas a yoke for two animals is called a *tzemed*. A yoke needs to be wide enough that it will not break during the performance of labor. This is why its width is important for commercial transactions, as the Gemara notes.



Two oxen with a single yoke

LANGUAGE

Bundle [*uda*] – עוֹדָה: The word seems to come from a root that means tying or the bundling of things. There is a similar word in Syriac and in Arabic, *uddah*, عُدَّة.

וְהִכְהִינָם אוֹמְרִים: "כַּפֹּר לְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָּהּ וְאֵל תִּתֵּן דָּם נָקִי בְּקֶרֶב עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל". לֹא הָיוּ צָרִיכִין לומר וְנִכְפַּר לָהֶם הַדָּם, אֵלֵא רוח הקודש מבשרתן: אִימָתִי שֶׁתַּעֲשׂוּ בָכָה – הַדָּם מִתְכַּפֵּר לָהֶם.

גַּמ' וְיֵהָא מוֹם פּוֹסֵל בְּעִגְלָה מִקָּל וְחוּמְרֵי! וְיֵהָא פְּרָה שְׁאִין הַשָּׁנִים פּוֹסְלוֹת בָּהּ – מוֹם פּוֹסֵל בָּהּ, עִגְלָה שְׁשָׁנִים פּוֹסְלוֹת בָּהּ – אִינוּ דִּין שְׁיֵהָא מוֹם פּוֹסֵל בָּהּ! שְׁאִין הֵתָם, דְּאָמַר קְרָא: "אֲשֶׁר אֵין בָּהּ מוֹם", "בָּהּ" – מוֹם פּוֹסֵל וְאֵין מוֹם פּוֹסֵל בְּעִגְלָה.

אֵלֵא מֵעֵתָה, לֹא יְהוּ שְׂאָר עֲבוֹדוֹת פּוֹסְלוֹת בָּהּ!

אֵלֵמָה אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: הַיְנִיחַ עֲלֶיהָ עוֹדָה שֶׁל שָׁקִין – פְּסוּלָה; וְבְעִגְלָה – עַד שֶׁתִּמְשֹׁךְ! שְׁאִין פְּרָה, דִּלְפִינָא "עֵל", "עֵל" מֵעִגְלָה.

And the priests recite: "Forgive, Lord, Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of Your people Israel" (Deuteronomy 21:8). They did not have to recite<sup>h</sup> the conclusion of the verse: "And the blood shall be forgiven for them," as this is not part of the priests' statement, but rather the Divine Spirit informs them:<sup>n</sup> When you shall do so, the blood is forgiven for you.

**GEMARA** With regard to the mishna's statement that the heifer is not disqualified by a blemish, the Gemara suggests: **And a blemish should disqualify in the case of the heifer, by means of an *a fortiori* inference: And if in the case of the red heifer, which is not disqualified by years,<sup>h</sup> as it may be of any age, and yet a blemish disqualifies it,<sup>h</sup> then a heifer for this ritual, which is disqualified by years,<sup>nh</sup> as it is valid only until two years of age, is it not logical that a blemish should disqualify it?** The Gemara answers: **It is different there, in the case of the red heifer, as the verse states: "Wherein [*bah*] has no blemish" (Numbers 19:2). This serves as an exclusion and teaches that it is only with regard to it [*bah*] that a blemish is disqualifying, but a blemish is not disqualifying with regard to the heifer of the ritual of the breaking of the neck.**

The Gemara asks: **However, if that is so, if the word "*bah*" precludes a derivation by an *a fortiori* inference, then any other labor performed with the red heifer, apart from pulling a yoke, should not disqualify it.** While the verse disqualifies a red heifer only if it pulled a yoke, as it states: "And upon which never came a yoke" (Numbers 19:2), a similar *a fortiori* inference could be learned from the heifer whose neck is to be broken to disqualify a red heifer that has performed any labor. However, since the verse states with regard to the heifer whose neck is to be broken: "That has not been worked with [*bah*]" (Deuteronomy 21:3), this indicates that labor is disqualifying only for "*bah*," a heifer whose neck is to be broken, but not for a red heifer.

Why, then, does Rav Yehuda say that Rav says: **If he placed a bundle [*uda*]<sup>1</sup> of sacks<sup>n</sup> on a red heifer,<sup>h</sup> the heifer is immediately disqualified from being used as the red heifer; and as for the heifer whose neck is broken, it is not disqualified by such labor until it pulls and moves the burden, as the verse states: "That has not pulled a yoke" (Deuteronomy 21:3).** Why does bearing the weight of the bundle disqualify the red heifer? The Gemara explains: **The *halakha* with regard to the red heifer is different, as we learn by a verbal analogy between the word "yoke" used with regard to the red heifer and the word "yoke"<sup>b</sup> used with regard to the heifer whose neck is broken that any labor disqualifies the former.**

HALAKHA

They did not have to recite, etc. – לֹא הָיוּ צָרִיכִין לומר וכו' – After the heifer's neck is broken, the priests recite: "Forgive, Lord, Your people Israel whom You have redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of Your people Israel" (Deuteronomy 21:8). They omit the conclusion of that verse: "And the blood shall be forgiven for them," as this is a promise by God that this ritual will serve to atone for them (Rambam *Sefer Nezikim, Hilkhot Rotze'ah UShmirat HaNefesh* 9:3).

The red heifer, which is not disqualified by years – פְּרָה שְׁאִין – הַשָּׁנִים פּוֹסְלוֹת בָּהּ: The red heifer should be three or four years old, *ab initio*. It is valid even if it is older than this, but the priests do not wait that long to perform the ritual, in case it becomes disqualified by the growth of black hairs, as stated in tractate *Para* (Rambam *Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Para Aduma* 1:1).

A blemish disqualifies it – מוֹם פּוֹסֵל בָּהּ: All blemishes that

disqualify sacred offerings disqualify the red heifer as well (Rambam *Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Para Aduma* 1:7).

A heifer for this ritual, which is disqualified by years – עִגְלָה: The heifer whose neck is broken may be up to two years old. If it is two years and one day old it is disqualified, as stated here and in tractate *Para* (Rambam *Sefer Nezikim, Hilkhot Rotze'ah UShmirat HaNefesh* 10:2).

If he placed a bundle on it, etc. – הַיְנִיחַ עֲלֶיהָ עוֹדָה וכו' – All types of labor disqualify the red heifer. The *halakha* with regard to a yoke is even more stringent. If a yoke is merely placed on an animal it disqualifies it, even if the yoke was not pulled. However, other forms of labor must actually be performed in order to be disqualifying. If one placed a garment or sackcloth on the animal, it is disqualified (Rambam *Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Para Aduma* 1:7).

Sacred offerings, which are not disqualified by labor – קְדָשִׁים דְּלֹא פְסֻלָּה בְּהוּ עֲבוּדָה – Offerings are not disqualified by the performance of labor (Rambam *Sefer Tahara, Hilkhoh Para Aduma* 1:7).

Sacred offerings, which are disqualified by a blemish – קְדָשִׁים שְׂמוּם פְּסֻלָּת בְּהוּ – It is a positive mitzva for all offerings to be unblemished and of good quality. A blemished animal is disqualified from being used as an offering (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhoh Issurei Mizbe'ah* 1:1).

The Gemara raises an objection: If there is a verbal analogy between the red heifer and the heifer that will have its neck broken, then the *halakha* that a blemish should disqualify the heifer whose neck is broken **should also be derived** from the usage of “yoke” with regard to the heifer whose neck is broken and **from the usage of “yoke” with regard to the red heifer**. The Gemara answers: **The Merciful One has excluded** this possibility by placing in the verse the word “*bah*,” which indicates that disqualification due to blemish applies only to the red heifer and not to the heifer whose neck is broken.

The Gemara counters this claim: **In** the verse concerning a heifer whose neck is broken, the Torah **also writes “bah”**; it should be the case that forms of labor other than pulling a yoke are disqualifying only with regard to it and not with regard to the red heifer. The Gemara answers: **That word “bah” is required** by Rav Yehuda in order to **exclude** sacred offerings, i.e., **which are not disqualified by labor**,<sup>1</sup> and one may bring an animal that has been used for labor as an offering. **It might enter your mind to say that this should be derived by an a fortiori inference from a heifer whose neck is broken**, as follows: **And if with regard to a heifer whose neck is broken, which is not disqualified by a blemish, labor nevertheless disqualifies it**, then with regard to sacred offerings, **which are disqualified by a blemish,<sup>1</sup> is it not right that labor should disqualify them?** In order to counter this argument, the word “*bah*” teaches us that a sacred offering is not disqualified by labor.

With regard to this suggested *a fortiori* inference, the Gemara observes that **it can be refuted** in the following manner: **What** about the fact that a heifer whose neck is broken **is disqualified by years**, as once it reaches two years of age it is no longer classified as a heifer? As it is clear that the heifer whose neck is to be broken carries some restrictions that do not apply to sacred offerings, perhaps being disqualified by labor is another such restriction. The Gemara refutes this argument: **Is that to say that there are no sacred offerings that are disqualified by years?** There are several offerings that may be brought only in their first or second year, and **where the verse is necessary** to teach that sacred offerings are not disqualified by labor, it is with regard to **those sacred offerings that are disqualified by years**.

The Gemara raises an objection: **But is the halakha that sacred offerings are not disqualified by labor derived from this verse? It is derived from elsewhere**. The verse states with regard to sacred offerings: “Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wart, or scabbed, or scurvy, you shall not offer these to the Lord” (Leviticus 22:22). This verse serves to create an exclusion, teaching that it is **these that you may not sacrifice, but you may sacrifice sacred animals that have been used for labor**. The Gemara answers: **It was necessary to state the halakha twice. It might enter your mind to say that this halakha**, that one may sacrifice animals that have been used for labor, **applies only** in a case where **they were used for permitted labor**, but if they were used for **prohibited labor**, e.g., on Shabbat, you might say **that it is prohibited** to bring **them** as offerings. In order to refute this argument, it is **necessary to state the halakha** again.

The Gemara poses another question: **But this halakha** that prohibited labor does not disqualify offerings **is also derived from here**, a verse with regard to the sacrifice of blemished animals: “**And from the hand of a stranger you shall not offer the bread of your God from any of these, because... there is a blemish in them**” (Leviticus 22:25). This verse emphasizes that it is only “**these**,” i.e., blemished animals, that **you may not sacrifice, but you may sacrifice sacred animals that have been used for labor**. Since this verse is discussing the possibility of accepting offerings from a gentile, who presumably also performed prohibited labor with the animal, this demonstrates that prohibited labor does not disqualify animals from being sacrificed as offerings.

עֲגֻלָּה נְמִי תִיְתִי “עַל”, “עַל” מִפְּרָה! הָא מִיַּעַט רַחֲמָנָא “בָּה”.

בְּעֲגֻלָּה נְמִי כְּתִיב “בָּה”! הֵהוּא מִיַּבְעֵי לֵיה: לְמַעֲוֵטֵי קְדָשִׁים דְּלֹא פְסֻלָּה בְּהוּ עֲבוּדָה. סִלְקָא דְעֵתְךָ אָמִינָא לִיתִי בְקַל וְחוֹמֵר מְעֻלָּה: וּמָה עֲגֻלָּה שְׂאִין מוּם פּוֹסֵל בָּה – עֲבוּדָה פּוֹסֵלָת בָּה, קְדָשִׁים שְׂמוּם פּוֹסֵלָת בְּהוּ – אִינוּ דִין שְׁעֲבוּדָה פּוֹסֵלָת בְּהוּ.

אִיכָא לְמִפְרָךְ: מָה לְעֻלָּה שְׂבֹן שְׁנַיִם פּוֹסֵלוֹת בָּה! אִטוּ קְדָשִׁים מִי לִיכָא דְפְסֻלָּי בְּהוּ שְׁנַיִם? כִּי אִיצְטְרִיךְ קְרָא – לְהִנָּךְ קְדָשִׁים דְּפְסֻלָּה בְּהוּ שְׁנַיִם.

וְקְדָשִׁים דְּלֹא פְסֻלָּה בְּהוּ עֲבוּדָה מִהֵכָא נִפְקָא? מִהֵתָם נִפְקָא: “עֲוֹרָת אוּ שְׂבוּר אוּ חֲרוּץ אוּ יִבְלָת אוּ גָרַב אוּ יִלְפָת לֹא תִקְרִיבוּ אֵלֶיהָ לֵה” – אֵלֶיהָ אִי אֲתָהּ מִקְרִיב, אֲבָל אֲתָהּ מִקְרִיב קְדָשִׁים שְׁנַעֲבָדָה בְּהוּ עֲבוּדָה! אִיצְטְרִיךְ, סִלְקָא דְעֵתְךָ אָמִינָא הִנֵּי מִיֵּלֵי הִיכָא דְעֵבֵד בְּהוּ עֲבוּדָת הִיטָר, אֲבָל עֲבוּדָת אִיסוּר – אִימָא לִיתְסָרוּ. צְרִיכָא.

וְהָא נְמִי מִהֵכָא נִפְקָא: “וּמִיד בֵּין נִכְר לֹא תִקְרִיבוּ אֶת לֶחֶם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל אֲלֹהִים – “אֵלֶיהָ” אִי אֲתָהּ מִקְרִיב, אֲבָל אֲתָהּ מִקְרִיב קְדָשִׁים שְׁנַעֲבָדָה בְּהוּ עֲבוּדָה!

אי צטרך, סלקא דעתך אמינא הני מילי  
היכא דעבד בהן כשהן חולין, אבל  
עבד בהן כשהן קדשים אימא ליתסרו.  
צריכא.

גופא, אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: הניח עליה  
עודה של שקין – פסולה, ובעגלה – עד  
שתמשוך. מיתבי: “על” – אין לי אלא  
עול; שאר עבודות מניין? אמרת קל  
וחומר: ומה עגלה שאין מום פוסל בה –  
שאר עבודות פוסלות בה, פרה שמום  
פוסל בה – אינו דין ששאר עבודות  
פוסלין בה.

ואם נפשך לומר – נאמר כאן “על” ונאמר  
להלן “על”: מה להלן שאר עבודות  
פוסלות בה, אף כאן שאר עבודות  
פוסלות.

מאי “אם נפשך לומר”? וכי תימא, איכא  
למפרך: מה לעגלה שכן שנים פוסלות  
בה! אי נמי, קדשים יוכיחו, שמום פוסל  
בהן ואין עבודה פוסלת בהן!

נאמר כאן “על” ונאמר להלן “על”,  
מה להלן שאר עבודות, אף כאן שאר  
עבודות. וממקום שבאתה: מה להלן עד  
שתמשוך, אף כאן עד שתמשוך!

תנאי היא, דאיכא דמייתי לה מעגלה,  
איכא דמייתי לה מגופה דפרה.

דתנא: “על” – אין לי אלא עול; שאר  
עבודות מניין? תלמוד לומר: “אשר לא  
עלה עליה על”, מכל מקום; אם בן,  
מה תלמוד לומר “על”? עול פוסל בין  
בשעת עבודה בין שלא בשעת עבודה,  
שאר עבודות אין פוסלות אלא בשעת  
עבודה.

The Gemara answers: It was necessary to teach this *halakha* a third time. It might enter your mind to say: This *halakha*, that labor does not disqualify offerings, applies only where one performed labor with them when they were non-sacred and afterward dedicated them as offerings, but if one performed labor with them when they were already sacred animals, you might say that it is prohibited to bring them as offerings. In order to refute this argument, it is necessary to teach this *halakha* in three separate places.

§ The Gemara returns to discuss the matter itself: Rav Yehuda says that Rav says: If one placed a bundle of sacks on a red heifer, it is disqualified. And as for a heifer whose neck is broken, it is not disqualified until it pulls a burden. The Gemara raises an objection from a *baraita*: It states with regard to the red heifer: “That upon which never came a yoke” (Numbers 19:2). I have derived only a yoke; from where do I derive that other types of labor also disqualify the animal? You can say the following *a fortiori* inference: And if with regard to a heifer whose neck is broken, which is not disqualified by a blemish, other types of labor disqualify it, then with regard to a red heifer, which is disqualified by a blemish, is it not right that other types of labor should disqualify it?

And if it is your wish to say that this *a fortiori* inference is unsound, you can learn this *halakha* by a verbal analogy: It is stated here, with regard to the red heifer, “yoke” (Numbers 19:2), and it is stated there, with regard to the heifer whose neck is broken, “yoke” (Deuteronomy 21:3). Just as there, other types of labor disqualify it, so too here, in the case of the red heifer, other types of labor disqualify it.

The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of: If it is your wish to say? What potential problem with the *a fortiori* inference necessitates the verbal analogy? The Gemara explains: And perhaps you would say that the *a fortiori* inference can be refuted in the following manner: What is unique about a heifer whose neck is broken is that it is disqualified by years, which is not the case for a red heifer. Alternatively, one could suggest that sacred offerings will prove that this inference should not be made, as a blemish is disqualifying with regard to them, but labor is not disqualifying with regard to them.

As the *a fortiori* inference can be refuted in either of these ways, there is a need for the verbal analogy: It is stated here “yoke,” and it is stated there “yoke.” Just as there, in the case of a heifer whose neck is broken, other types of labor disqualify it, so too, other types of labor disqualify a red heifer. The Gemara raises an objection to this verbal analogy: And from the place that you came you can offer an alternative exposition: Just as below, in the case of a heifer whose neck is broken, it is not disqualified by carrying a burden until it pulls the yoke, so too here, a red heifer should not be disqualified until it pulls the yoke, contrary to the statement of Rav.

The Gemara answers the objection to the statement of Rav from the *baraita*: It is a dispute among *tanna'im*, as there are those who cite the source of this *halakha*, that labor disqualifies a red heifer, by verbal analogy from a heifer whose neck is broken, and therefore the red heifer is disqualified only if it pulls the burden. There are also those who cite the source of this *halakha* from a red heifer itself, and consequently they disqualify the red heifer even if it did not pull the yoke.

This is as it is taught in a *baraita* with regard to a red heifer: From the term “yoke” I have derived only that a yoke disqualifies a red heifer; from where do I derive the other types of labor? The verse states: “That upon which never came a yoke” (Numbers 19:2). The verse could be read with a pause after the word “came,” which would teach that it is disqualified in any case, no matter what labor was performed with it. If so, what is the meaning when the verse states “yoke,” if all forms of labor disqualify it? It teaches us that a yoke placed on the animal disqualifies it whether the yoke was on the animal at the time of performing labor or whether it was on the animal not at the time of performing labor, i.e., it was merely placed on the animal. However, other types of labor actions disqualify animals only at the time of actually performing labor.<sup>4</sup> Rav ruled in accordance with this opinion.

#### NOTES

בשעת – At the time of performing labor – עבודה: In other words, the animal is disqualified only if the owner intended for the animal to do the action for the sake of labor, but not if it was done for any other reason. The Rambam writes, as an example, that if one brought the animal into the threshing area for a reason other than threshing, the threshing it performs incidentally while there does not disqualify the animal from being the red heifer. With regard to the carrying of a burden, however, it is disqualified even if one placed the yoke on the animal without intending it for work.

The Gemara raises an objection: And perhaps one can say a different exposition of the verse: “That upon which never came” is a **generalization** that disqualifies the animal after any type of labor, while “yoke” is a **detail**. There is a **generalization and a detail**, and the principle of halakhic exposition in that case is that **there is nothing in the generalization other than what is in the detail**. Therefore, with regard to a yoke, **yes**, it will disqualify an animal from being used as a red heifer; but with regard to **anything else**, **no**, it will not disqualify the animal. The Gemara answers: “That upon which never came” is an **amplification**, and the addition of this term results in this verse not belonging to the category of generalizations and details.

The Gemara comments: **And a case like this is also taught in a baraita with regard to a heifer whose neck is broken**: From the word “yoke” I have derived **only** that a yoke disqualifies; **from where** do I derive the **other** types of labor? **The same verse states**: “That has not been worked with” (Deuteronomy 21:3), to teach that it is disqualified **in any case**, no matter what labor was performed with it. **If so**, what is the meaning when the verse states “yoke”? It serves to teach us that a yoke placed on the animal **disqualifies it whether** the yoke was on the animal **at the time of performing labor or whether** it was on the animal **not at the time of performing labor**, i.e., it was merely placed on the animal, whereas **other** types of labor actions **disqualify animals only at the time of actually performing labor**.

The Gemara raises an objection: **And perhaps one can say** a different exposition of the verse: “That has not been worked with” is a **generalization** that disqualifies the animal after any type of labor, while “yoke” is a **detail**. There is a **generalization and a detail**, and the principle of halakhic exposition in that case is that **there is nothing in the generalization other than what is in the detail**, which means: With regard to a yoke, **yes**, it will disqualify an animal, but with regard to **anything else**, **no**, it will not disqualify it. The Gemara answers: The phrase “that has not been worked with” is an **amplification**, and the addition of this term results in this verse not belonging to the category of generalizations and details.

Rabbi Abbahu said: I asked of Rabbi Yohanan: This pulling of a yoke that disqualifies a heifer whose neck is broken, **with how much**, i.e., how far, must the animal pull the yoke for it to be disqualified? **He said to me**: Like the measure of the size of a full yoke. A dilemma was raised before the Sages: Does this mean according to its length or according to its width? **One of the Sages, and Rabbi Ya'akov was his name, said to them**: It was explained to me personally by Rabbi Yohanan himself: **The pulling of a yoke is according to its width, which is a handbreadth.**<sup>HB</sup>

The Gemara poses a question: **And** since he stated a fixed measurement, **let him merely state**: A handbreadth. Why was it necessary to add that this is the width of a yoke? The Gemara answers: **This teaches us that the measure of a yoke along its width is a handbreadth. What difference is there** in knowing this fact? This teaches that **in the case of commercial transactions**, a buyer may retract his purchase if the yoke he was given is less than a handbreadth wide.

#### HALAKHA

**Pulling of a yoke** – משיכת עול: All types of labor disqualify an animal from being the heifer whose neck is broken, similar to the *halakha* concerning the red heifer. The specification of an animal “that has not pulled a yoke” teaches that a yoke is

disqualifying even if no labor was performed but the yoke was merely pulled a handbreadth (Rambam *Sefer Nezikim, Hilkhhot Rotze'ah UShmirat HaNefesh* 10:3).

#### BACKGROUND

**Handbreadth** – טפח: A handbreadth is one of the measures of length frequently used in the Talmud. According to some

modern halakhic opinions, the length of a handbreadth is 9.6 cm, and according to others it is 8 cm.

ואימא: “אשר לא עלה עליה” – בלל; “על” – פרט; בלל ופרט אין בכלל אלא מה שבפרט, עול – אין מידי אחרינא – לא! “אשר” – רבויא הוא.

ותניא נמי גבי עגלה כי האי גוונא: “על” – אין לי אלא עול; שאר עבודות מניין? תלמוד לומר: “אשר לא עבד בה”, מכל מקום. אם כן, מה תלמוד לומר “על”? עול פוסל בין בשעת עבודה בין שלא בשעת עבודה, שאר עבודות אין פוסלות אלא בשעת עבודה.

ואימא: “אשר לא עבד בה” – בלל; “על” – פרט; בלל ופרט אין בכלל אלא מה שבפרט, עול – אין מידי אחרינא – לא! “אשר” – רבויא הוא.

אמר רבי אבהו, בעי מיניה מרבי יוחנן: משיכת עול בכמה? אמר לי: כמלא עול. איבעיא להו: לארבו או לרחבו? אמר להו ההוא מרבנן ורבי יעקב שמייה, לדידי מפרשא לי מיניה דרבי יוחנן: משיכת עול לרחבו טפח.

ולימא טפח! הא קא משמע לן, שיעורא דעול טפח הוי. למאי נפקא מינה? למקח וממכר.



But it is permitted to comb...there, etc. – מותר לְסוּק – שָׁם וְכוּ: It is permanently prohibited to sow or work the land on which the heifer's neck was broken. This ruling is accordance with Rabbi Yonatan, as the unattributed mishna follows his opinion. Anyone who works the land itself, e.g., by plowing, sowing, or planting, is liable to receive lashes. However, it is permitted to comb flax or to cut stones there, as all work that does not involve the land itself is permitted (Rambam *Sefer Nezikim, Hilkhhot Rotze'ah UShmirat HaNefesh* 10:9).

§ The mishna taught: **But it is permitted to comb flax there<sup>h</sup> or to cut stones there. The Sages taught:** From the phrase “**which may be neither worked nor sown,**” I have derived **only sowing; from where do I derive that other types of labor are also prohibited?** **The verse states: “Which may be neither worked,”** indicating that it may not be worked in any manner.

The *baraita* continues: **If so, why does the verse also need to state “nor sown”?** It is in order to say to you: **Just as sowing is unique in that it is labor performed on the land itself, so too, all labor that is performed on the land itself is prohibited. This excludes combing flax and cutting stones, which are not done on the land itself.**

The Gemara raises an objection: **And perhaps one can say a different exposition: “Which may be neither worked” is a generalization, and “nor sown” a detail. When the Torah writes a generalization and a detail, there is nothing in the generalization other than what is in the detail, i.e., the detail serves to impose a limit on the generalization. Consequently, the verse is teaching that with regard to sowing, yes, it is prohibited, but with regard to anything else, no, it is not prohibited. The Gemara again answers: The term “which” is an amplification, and the addition of this term results in this verse not belonging to the category of generalizations and details.**

§ The mishna taught that **the Elders of the city would then wash their hands.<sup>n</sup> The Sages taught:** With regard to the verse: **“And all the Elders of that city, who are nearest to the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley”** (Deuteronomy 21:6), one might have thought that there is **no need for the verse to state: “Whose neck was broken,”** because there is no heifer mentioned other than the one whose neck was broken. **And what is the meaning when the verse states: “Whose neck was broken”?** It serves to teach us that they wash their hands **over the place where the heifer’s neck was broken.**

The verse further states: **“And they shall say: Our hands did not spill this blood, nor did our eyes see”** (Deuteronomy 21:7). The mishna explains: **But did it enter our minds that the Elders of the court are spillers of blood, that they must make such a declaration? Rather, they mean to declare: The victim did not come to us and then we let him take his leave without food,<sup>n</sup> and we did not see him and then leave him alone to depart without accompaniment.** They therefore attest that they took care of all his needs and are not responsible for his death even indirectly.

## NOTES

Wash their hands – רוחצין ידיהן: This is to signify that their hands are clean of any taint of the victim’s blood (*Iyyun Ya’akov*).

And we let him take his leave without food – מוֹנוֹת וּפְטָרְנוֹהוּ בְלֵא: A different explanation of the mishna is stated in the Jerusalem Talmud, that the Sages of Eretz Yisrael hold that the Elders are referring to the killer rather than to the victim. In other

words, they did not knowingly allow the killer to escape; rather, they were unaware of his identity. This explanation is supported by a variant text of the mishna that reads: And we did not let him take his leave, and did not leave him. It does not include the phrases: Without food, or: Without accompaniment. It is written in the Jerusalem Talmud that these phrases are a later addition and not part of the text of the mishna.

“ומותר לְסוּק שָׁם פִּשְׁתָּן וְלִנְקָר שָׁם אֲבָנִים.” תְּנוּ רַבָּנַן: “אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲבֹד בּוֹ וְלֹא יִזְרַע” – אֵין לִי אֶלָּא זְרִיעָה. שְׂאָר עֲבוּדוֹת מִיָּן? תְּלַמּוּד לֹאִמַר: “אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲבֹד בּוֹ,” מִכָּל מְקוֹם.

אם כן, מה תלמוד לומר “ולא יזרע”? לומר לך: מה זריעה מיוחדת שהיא בגופה של קרקע, אף כל שהיא בגופה של קרקע, יצא סריקת פשתן וניקור אבנים שאינן בגופה של קרקע.

ואימא: “אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲבֹד בּוֹ” – כָּלִל; “וְלֹא יִזְרַע” – פָּרֵט; כָּלִל וּפָרֵט אֵין בְּכָלִל אֶלָּא מֵה שְׂבַפְרֵט. זְרִיעָה – אֵין, מִיָּדִי אַחֲרֵינָא – לֹא! “אֲשֶׁר” – רְבוּיָא הוּא.

“זְקִנֵי הָעִיר רוֹחֲצִין יְדֵיהֶן” כּוּ. תְּנוּ רַבָּנַן: “וְכָל זְקִנֵי הָעִיר הֵיחָא הַקְּרָבִים אֶל הַחֶלֶל יְרוֹחֲצוּ אֶת יְדֵיהֶם עַל הָעֵגְלָה הָעֲרוּפָה בְּנַחֲלִי” – שְׂאֵין תְּלַמּוּד לֹאִמַר “הָעֲרוּפָה”. וּמֵה תְּלַמּוּד לֹאִמַר “הָעֲרוּפָה”? עַל מְקוֹם עֲרִיפְתָּהּ שֶׁל עֵגְלָה.

“וְאָמְרוּ יָדֵינוּ לֹא שָׁפְכוּ אֶת הַדָּם הַזֶּה וְעֵינֵינוּ לֹא רָאוּ” – וְכִי עַל לִבֵּנוּ עָלְתָה שְׂבִיט דִּין שׁוֹפְכֵין דְּמִים? אֶלָּא, לֹא בָּא לִידֵינוּ וּפְטָרְנוֹהוּ בְלֵא מוֹנוֹת, וְלֹא רְאִינוֹהוּ וְהִנְחֵנוּהוּ בְלֵא לִוְיָהּ.

There is coercion with regard to accompaniment – כּוּפִין – לְלוּיָהּ: Just as the courts would compel the giving of charity they would enforce the duty of accompaniment, by appointing messengers to accompany those traveling from place to place. If the appointed messengers neglected their duty, they are considered like spillers of blood (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim, Hilkhot Evel* 14:3).

## NOTES

One who accompanies by foot, etc. – מִי שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה לְלוּיָהּ – וְכִי: The Maharsha explains that although one who provides verbal directions does assist the other, this does not guarantee that he will not get lost. By contrast, one who accompanies him by foot will lead him far enough to prevent him from going astray.

תַּנְיָא, הָיָה רַבִּי מְאִיר אֹמֵר: כּוּפִין לְלוּיָהּ, שֶׁשֶׁכֶר הַלְוִיָּהּ אֵין לָהּ שִׁיעוּר, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וַיֵּרְאוּ הַשְּׂמֵרִים אִישׁ יוֹצֵא מִן הָעִיר וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ הֲרֵאנוּ נָא אֶת מְבוֹא הָעִיר וְעִשְׂנוּ עִמָּךְ חֶסֶד", וּבְתוֹב: "וַיֹּרְאֵם אֶת מְבוֹא הָעִיר". וּמָה חֶסֶד עָשׂוּ עִמּוֹ? שֶׁכָּל אוֹתָהּ הָעִיר הֲרֵגוּ לְפִי חֶרֶב, וְאוֹתוֹ הָאִישׁ וּמִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ שָׁלְחוּ.

"וַיֵּלֶךְ הָאִישׁ אַרְצֵי הַחִתִּים וַיֵּבֶן עִיר וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמָהּ לּוֹז הוּא שְׁמָהּ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה". תַּנְיָא: הֵיא לּוֹז שֶׁצּוֹבְעִין בָּהּ תְּכֵלֶת, הֵיא לּוֹז שֶׁבָּא סְנַחֲרִיב וְלֹא בְּלִבְלָה, נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר וְלֹא הַחֲרִיבָה, וְאִף מִלְּאֵךְ הַמָּוֶת אֵין לוֹ רְשׁוּת לַעֲבוֹר בָּהּ, אֲלֵא וְקִנְיָם שְׂבָה בּוֹמֵן שֶׁדַּעְתָּן קָצָה עֲלֵיהֶן – יוֹצְאִין חוּץ לַחוּמָה וְהֵן מֵתִים.

וְהֵלֵא דְבָרִים קֵל וְחוֹמֵר: וּמָה כְּנֻעֵי זֶה, שֶׁלֹּא דִיבַר בְּפִיו וְלֹא הֵלֵךְ בְּרַגְלָיו – גֵּרָם הֲצִלָּה לוֹ וְלֹרְעוּ עַד סוֹף כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת, מִי שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה לְלוּיָהּ בְּרַגְלָיו – עַל אַחַת כְּמָה וּבְכָמָה.

בְּמָה הֲרָאָה לָהֶם? תּוֹקִיָּה אָמַר: בְּפִיו עָקַם לָהֶם, רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: בְּאַצְבָּעוֹ הֲרָאָה לָהֶם. תַּנְיָא כּוּוֹתִיָּה דְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: בְּשִׁבְלֵי שְׁכַנְעֵנִי זֶה הֲרָאָה בְּאַצְבָּעוֹ, גֵּרָם הֲצִלָּה לוֹ וְלֹרְעוּ עַד סוֹף כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת.

אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לׁוּי: הַמְהֵלֵךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְאֵין לוֹ לְלוּיָהּ – יַעֲסוֹק בַּתּוֹרָה, שְׁנֵאמַר: "כִּי לׁוּיִת חֵן הֵם לֹאֲשֶׁךְ וְעֲנֻקִים לְגִרְתֶּיךָ". וְאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לׁוּי: בְּשִׁבְלֵי אַרְבַּעַת פְּסִיעוֹת שְׁלוֹהַּ פְּרַעָה לְאַבְרָהָם, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וַיֵּצֵאוּ עָלָיו פְּרַעָה אֲנָשִׁים" וְגו', נִשְׁתַּעֲבַד בְּבִנְיָן אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וַעֲבָדוּם וְעָנּוּ אוֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה". אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: כָּל הַמְלוּהָ אֶת חֲבִירוֹ אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת בְּעִיר – אֵינוּ מִזּוֹק. רַבִּינָא אֲלוּיָהּ לְרַבָּא בַר יִצְחָק אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת בְּעִיר, מִטָּא לְיָדֶיהָ הַיּוֹקָא וְאֵיתְצִיל.

It is taught in a *baraita*: Rabbi Meir says: There is coercion with regard to accompaniment,<sup>h</sup> i.e., one who does not want to accompany another is nevertheless required to do so, as the reward for accompaniment is without measure. The proof of the importance of accompaniment is from a verse, as it is stated with regard to when the Jewish people laid siege to the city of Bethel: "And the watchers saw a man come out of the city, and they said to him: Show us, please, the entrance into the city, and we will deal kindly with you" (Judges 1:24), and it is written: "And he showed them the entrance to the city" (Judges 1:25). And what kindness did they perform with him? It is that they killed the entire city by the sword, but that man and his family they sent free.

The Gemara elaborates on the reward received in that story. The next verse states: "And the man went to the land of the Hittites, and he built a city, and he called its name Luz; that is its name to this day" (Judges 1:26). It is taught in a *baraita*: This is the city Luz where sky blue wool is dyed. It is the same city Luz where, although Sennacherib came and exiled many nations from place to place, he did not disarrange and exile its inhabitants; Nebuchadnezzar, who conquered many lands, did not destroy it; and even the angel of death has no permission to pass through it. Rather, its Elders, when they have decided that they have reached the end of life, go outside the city wall and die.

Are these matters not inferred *a fortiori*: And if this Canaanite, who did not speak with his mouth and explicitly tell them where the city entrance was, and did not walk with them by foot, but merely indicated the correct path to them, nevertheless caused himself to be rescued and also had the merit to provide rescue for his descendants until the end of all generations, then with regard to one who accompanies another by foot,<sup>n</sup> all the more so will his reward be great.

After stating that the man did not openly guide those watching the city, the Gemara asks: How did that Canaanite show them the entrance to the city? Hizkiyya says: He twisted his mouth for them, i.e., he showed them the path to the city by moving his lips. Rabbi Yohanan says: He showed them with his finger alone. It is taught in a *baraita* in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yohanan: Because this Canaanite showed them with his finger, he caused himself to be rescued and merited rescue for his descendants as well, until the end of all generations.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says: One who walks along the way without having someone to accompany him should occupy himself with words of Torah, as it is stated with regard to words of Torah: "For they shall be a chaplet of grace to your head, and chains around your neck" (Proverbs 1:9). And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi further says: Due to four steps<sup>n</sup> that Pharaoh accompanied Abraham, as it is stated: "And Pharaoh gave men charge concerning him, and they brought him on the way, and his wife, and all that he had" (Genesis 12:20), Pharaoh enslaved Abraham's descendants for four hundred years, as it is stated: "And shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years" (Genesis 15:13). Rav Yehuda says that Rav says: Anyone who accompanies his friend four cubits in a city will come to no harm by accompanying him. The Gemara relates: Ravina accompanied Rava bar Yitzhak four cubits in a city. He came close to harm, but he was saved.

## NOTES

Due to four steps – בְּשִׁבְלֵי אַרְבַּעַת פְּסִיעוֹת: The idea is not that these four steps caused the slavery, as Abraham was not liable to punishment for being accompanied. The decree of slavery was said to Abraham at the Covenant between the Pieces because

he questioned God with regard to inheriting Eretz Yisrael. It was not said then which nation would enslave Abraham's descendants. Through his actions, Pharaoh earned the right to be the one to rule over them (Maharsha).

**הרב לתלמיד וכו' – א תלמיד לרבו:** A teacher accompanies a student, etc. – A teacher is obligated to accompany his student until the outskirts of the city. A friend is accompanied to the Shabbat boundary of the city. A student accompanies his teacher for the distance of a parasang, or three parasangs in the case of his most significant teacher. The *Likkutei Halakhot* comments that the custom nowadays is to accompany guests a minimum of four cubits, as the assumption is that the visitor relinquishes his right to the strict requirement of accompaniment (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim*, *Hiikhot Evel* 14:3).

## NOTES

**איך לו שיעור וכו' – וכמה – אין לו שיעור:** This is puzzling, as if there is no measure, how can the Gemara inquire into how much it is? One suggestion is that the phrase: No measure, means no upper limit, i.e., he may accompany him as far as he wishes; there is, however, a minimum requirement of a parasang (*Eshel Avraham*). Others explain that when the Gemara states that the student's accompaniment has no measure, this means that there is no measure within the Shabbat boundaries of the city and one accompanies his teacher out of the city. The Gemara then questions how far out of the city he accompanies him and answers that he accompanies him to the distance of a parasang beyond the city's borders (*Shevet Ya'akov*; see *Meromei Sadeh*).

**ארץ שגור וכו' – ארץ שגור וכו':** Rav Shimi bar Ashi's explanation was therefore that when Rabbi Yosei said that those dates are from the time of Adam the first man, this was not to be taken literally. Rather, it meant that the place was designated for palm trees since the days of Adam the first man.

## BACKGROUND

**Parasang – פרסה:** One parasang is equal to four *mil*. This equals 3.86 km according to Rav Hyyim Na'e and 4.63 km according to the Hazon Ish.

## LANGUAGE

**בי ציניתא דבבל – ציניתא:** The word *tzinita*, in its various forms, can also be found in the Mishna. It is the name of a particular subspecies of palm tree. Here, it refers to a large forest of date-palms that grew near the ancient city of Babylonia.

**The Sages taught: A teacher accompanies a student<sup>1</sup> until the outskirts of the city; a friend accompanies a friend until the Shabbat boundary of that city, which is two thousand cubits; and for a student who accompanies his teacher, there is no measure to the distance he accompanies him.** The Gemara asks: **And how far?**<sup>2</sup> The student is certainly not required to walk with him the entire way. **Rav Sheshet says: Up to a parasang [parsa],<sup>3</sup> which is four mil.** The Gemara comments: **And we said this amount only with regard to one who is not his most significant teacher, but he accompanies his most significant teacher, who taught him most of his knowledge, three parasangs.**

The Gemara relates a story about accompaniment: **Rav Kahana accompanied Rav Shimi bar Ashi from the town of Pum Nahara to the palm grove in Babylonia.<sup>4</sup> When they arrived there, Rav Kahana said to Rav Shimi bar Ashi: Is it true that you say that these palm trees of Babylonia have been in this place since the years of Adam the first man?**

**Rav Shimi bar Ashi said to him:** By mentioning Adam the first man you reminded me of something that Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina, says: **What is the meaning of that which is written: "Through a land that no man passed through, and where no person [adam] dwelt"?** (Jeremiah 2:6). This verse is difficult: **Since it is a land through which no man has passed, where would he dwell? And if he did not dwell, where did he pass? Why does the verse add that no person has dwelled there? Rather, this is the meaning: Any land concerning which Adam the first man decreed<sup>5</sup> that it would be a settled area, was settled; but a land concerning which Adam the first man did not decree that it should be settled, was not settled.**

The Gemara also relates that **Rav Mordechai accompanied Rav Ashi from the town of Hagronya until Bei Keifei, and some say that he accompanied him until Bei Dura.**

The Gemara continues to discuss the importance of accompaniment. **Rabbi Yoḥanan says in the name of Rabbi Meir: Whoever does not accompany another or will not allow himself to be accompanied is like a spiller of blood and is held responsible for any deaths that occur as a result of his inaction.** The proof for this is that **had the inhabitants of Jericho accompanied Elisha, he would not have incited the bears to attack the children, as it is stated: "And he went up from there to Bethel, and as he was going up by the way, there came forth young lads out of the city and mocked him, and said to him: Go up, baldhead; go up, baldhead"** (II Kings 2:23). Had the residents of Jericho accompanied him, they would have sent away those youths and prevented what occurred next.

The Gemara proceeds to discuss this episode in detail, beginning with the meaning of the youths' taunt. **They said to him: Go up, away from here, for you have made the place bald, i.e., bare, for us.** They had previously earned their living by providing the city of Jericho with water. Elisha sweetened the city's own water, rendering their services unnecessary. The Gemara asks: **What is the meaning of: "Young lads [ne'arim ketanim]"?** One would have expected the verse to state either "young" or "lads," but not both. **Rabbi Elazar says:** The word "lads [ne'arim]" means that **they were shaken empty [meno'arim] of the mitzvot;** the word "young [ketanim]" means that **they were of little faith [ketannei amana],** as they had no trust that they would be able to earn their livelihood by any other means. **The Sages taught: They were lads, that is, already of age, but they disgraced themselves like young children.**

תנו רבנן: הרב לתלמיד – עד עיבורה של עיר; חבר לחבר – עד תחום שבת; תלמיד לרב – אין לו שיעור. וכמה? אמר רב ששת: עד פרסה. ולא אמרו אלא רבו שאינו מובהק, אבל רבו מובהק – שלשה פרסאות.

רב כהנא אלויה לרב שימי בר אשי מפום נהרא עד בי ציניתא דבבל. כי מטו התם, אמר ליה: ודאי דאמרייתו: הני ציניתא דבבל משני אדם הראשון איתנהו?

אמר ליה: אדפרתן מלתא. דאמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא, מאי דכתיב: "בארץ לא עבר בה איש ולא ישב אדם שם"? וכי מאחר שלא עבר היכן ישב? (ומאחר שלא ישב היכן עבר?) אלא, ארץ שגור עליה אדם הראשון לישוב – נתישבה, ארץ שלא גור עליה אדם הראשון – לא נתישבה.

רב מרדכי אלויה לרב אשי מהגרוניא ועד בי כפי, ואמרי לה עד בי דורא.

אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי מאיר: כל שאינו מלוה ומתלוה – כאילו שופך דמים, שאילמלי ליווהו אנשי יריחו לאלישע לא גידה דובים לתניקות, שנאמר: "ויעל משם בית אל והוא עלה בדרך ונערים קטנים יצאו מן העיר ויתקלסו בו ויאמרו לו עלה קרח עלה קרח".

אמרו לו: עלה שהקרחת עלינו את המקום. מאי "ונערים קטנים"? אמר רבי אלעזר: שמונערים מן המצות; "קטנים" – שהיו מקטני אמנה. תנא: נערים היו, ובבבזו עצמן בקטנים.

## BACKGROUND

Ne'oran – נְעוֹרָן: Also known today as Na'aran, this was a small city located near Jericho. In talmudic times, it was inhabited entirely by Jews, in contrast to Jericho, which had a mixed population. This city is now in ruins, though there are the remains of a beautiful synagogue there.

**Plaited locks** – בְּלוּרִית: Many explanations have been suggested for the source of this term, mostly from Latin or Greek, yet none is entirely convincing. This hairstyle involved letting the hair on the sides and back of the head grow while tying and braiding them in different ways. The hair was later shaved in an idolatrous ritual.

## NOTES

**Literally saw** – רָאָה מִמַּשׁ: The Maharsha explains that the problem with a literal reading of this verse is that cursing a Jew is prohibited by Torah law. For this reason, Rav stated that Elisha did not explicitly curse them but placed his eyes upon them, which was enough to cause them harm.

מִתְקִיף לָהּ רֵב יוֹסֵף: וְדָלְמָא עַל שֵׁם מְקוֹמָן!  
מִי לֹא בְּתֵיב: "וְאַרְם יֵצְאוּ גְדוּדִים וַיִּשְׁבּוּ  
מֵאַרְץ יִשְׂרָאֵל נְעִרָה קְטָנָה", וְקִשְׂיָא לֵן:  
נְעִרָה וְקְטָנָה! וְאָמַר רַבִּי פְּדָת: קְטָנָה דְּמִן  
נְעוֹרָן! הֲתָם לֹא מְפָרֵשׁ מְקוֹמָהּ, הֲכֵא  
מְפָרֵשׁ מְקוֹמָן.

– וַיִּזְנוּ אַחֲרָיו וַיְרִאֵם וַיְקַלְלֵם בְּשֵׁם ה' –  
מִזֶּה רָאָה? אָמַר רַב: רָאָה מִמַּשׁ, כְּדִתְנִינָא,  
רַבֵּן שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אָמַר: כָּל מְקוֹם  
שֶׁנִּתְּנוּ חֲכָמִים עֵינֵיהֶם – אוֹ מִיתָה אוֹ עוֹנֵי;  
וְשְׁמוּאֵל אָמַר: רָאָה שְׁכּוּלָן נִתְּעַבְּרָה בְּהֵן  
אֲמֵן בְּיוֹם הַכִּיפּוּרִים;

וְרַבִּי יִצְחָק נִפְחָא אָמַר: בְּלוּרִית רָאָה לָהּ  
כְּגוֹיִים, וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: רָאָה שְׁלֵיא הַיְתָה  
בְּהֵן לַחֲלוּחִית שֶׁל מִצְוָה. וְדָלְמָא בּוֹרְעֵיהּ  
נִיחָה הָיְהָה! אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: לֹא בָּם וְלֹא  
בּוֹרְעֵם עַד סוּף כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת.

"וַתֵּצְאָנָה שְׁתֵּי דְּבִיּוֹת מִן הַיַּעַר וַתִּבְקַעְנָה  
מֵהֶם אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנַיִם יְלָדִים."

Rav Yosef objects to this interpretation: **And perhaps they were called *ne'arim* after their place of origin? Isn't it written: "And the Arameans had gone out in bands, and had brought away captive from Eretz Yisrael a minor young woman [*na'ara ketana*]"** (II Kings 5:2), **and this verse raised a difficulty to us: A minor and a young woman; how could she be both of these? And Rabbi Pedat says it means a minor girl from the town of Ne'oran.**<sup>b</sup> This verse concerning the lads can be explained in a similar manner: They were young children from Ne'oran. The Gemara answers: These two cases are not comparable. **There the verse does not specify her place of origin, so "*na'ara*" could mean from the town of Ne'oran; but here the verse specifies their place of origin, namely Jericho.**

The verse further states with regard to the same incident: **"And he turned behind him and saw them, and he cursed them in the name of the Lord"** (II Kings 2:24). The Gemara asks: **What did he see?** There are four explanations offered. Rav says: He **literally saw**,<sup>n</sup> i.e., he stared and bored his eyes into them, as it is taught in a *baraita*: **Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: Wherever it states that the Sages placed their eyes upon a certain person, they brought upon that person either death or poverty. And Shmuel says: He saw their essential nature, that all their mothers became pregnant with them on Yom Kippur, when conjugal relations are forbidden.**

**And Rabbi Yitzhak Nappaḥa says: He saw that they had plaited locks<sup>b</sup> grown on the back of their heads like the gentiles. And Rabbi Yoḥanan says: He saw that they did not contain even a smidgen of a mitzva.** The Gemara raises an objection to this last interpretation of Rabbi Yoḥanan: **But how could he curse them just because they did not have any mitzvot? Perhaps their descendants would have many mitzvot. Rabbi Elazar says: He saw that mitzvot would be found neither in them nor in their descendants, through all generations.**

The verse states: **"And two she-bears came out of the forest and tore forty-two children from them"** (II Kings 2:24).