

# Not to Mix Meat and Milk

Parsha Mishpatim

## Exodus 34:26

"לא תבשל גדי בחלב אמו"

*"Do not cook meat in its mother's milk"*

## Maimonides: Negative Commandment #186

The 186th prohibition is that we are forbidden from cooking a mixture of meat and milk. The source of this prohibition is G-d's statement, "Do not cook meat in its mother's milk." One who cooks them together, even without eating them, is punished by lashes, as explained in many Talmudic passages.

## Maimonides: Negative Commandment #187

The 187th prohibition is that we are forbidden from eating a mixture of meat and milk. The source of this prohibition is G-d's statement, "Do not cook meat in its mother's milk," which is repeated in order to prohibit its consumption...

Our Sages said in tractate Chulin, "The Torah expressed the prohibition against eating [meat and milk] with the word 'cook' in order to teach that just as one is lashed for cooking, one is lashed for eating." And they said the following about meat and milk in the second chapter of Pesachim: "The Torah did not explicitly write the prohibition of eating in order to teach that one is lashed even if it was eaten without enjoyment." Remember this.

This is the appropriate place to point out an important idea which has not yet mentioned — that G-d's statement, "Do not cook meat in its mother's milk," is repeated in the Torah three times. Those who passed down the Oral Tradition say that each prohibition has a different implication. They explained, "One is to prohibit eating, one to prohibit having benefit, and one to prohibit cooking."

Someone could possibly challenge me as follows: Why did you count eating and cooking as two separate *mitzvos* and not count having benefit as a third *mitzvah*? The questioner must know that having benefit cannot be counted as a separate *mitzvah* since it and eating are the same idea, since eating is just one type of benefit. G-d's statement that a certain thing may not be eaten is just giving one example of benefit, meaning that one may not have any benefit, not by eating it or in any other way...

Only one last question could be asked: Since — as our Sages (may they rest in peace) said — the prohibition of having benefit is self-understood from that of eating, why was it necessary to write a third prohibition to prohibit having benefit, as we explained above?

The answer is based on the fact that for meat and milk the Torah does not actually use the expression "Do not eat," which would have prohibited both eating and other forms of benefit. A separate statement was therefore necessary in order to prohibit having benefit. And we already mentioned the reason why the Torah didn't mention "eating" meat and milk — because anytime "eating" is prohibited, one is guilty only if he benefits from the eating. But if he opened his mouth and swallowed something prohibited [without tasting it], or ate it when it was so hot that it burned his throat and caused him pain when he swallowed it, etc. — then he is exempt [from punishment]. but meat and milk is an exception, and he is culpable for eating it even if he derived no benefit, as mentioned by our Sages. The same applies to *kilai hakerem*, as we will explain later. Understand all these principles and remember them.

The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in the 8th chapter of tractate Chulin.