

הָתָם קָיָמָא! דְּמִסְקִינָן לָהּ וּמַחְתִּינָן לָהּ כְּדִי לִיגְעָהּ. דְּתַנָּא, רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר אָמַר: בֵּית דִּין מְסִיעִין אֶת הָעֵדִים מִמְקוֹם לְמְקוֹם, כְּדִי שְׂתַטְרֹף דַּעְתָּן עֲלֵיהֶן וַיְחַזְרוּ בָהֶן.

“שִׁשִּׁים מְשָׁקִין אֶת הַסּוֹטוֹת” וְכוּ'. בְּשִׁלְמָא סוֹטוֹת, דְּכִתְבִיב: “וְהָעֵמִיד הַכֹּהֵן אֶת הָאִשָּׁה לִפְנֵי ה'”. מְצוּרְעִין נְמוּ, דְּכִתְבִיב: “וְהָעֵמִיד הַכֹּהֵן הַמְטֵהָ” וְגו', אֶלָּא יוֹלְדַת מַאי טַעְמָא?

אֵילִימָא מְשוּם דְּאִתִּין וְקִיִּימִין אַקוּרְבִינִיהוּ. דְּתַנָּא: אֵין קְרַבְנָן שֶׁל אָדָם קָרַב אֶלָּא אִם בֶּן עוֹמֵד עַל גְּבוּיָא אִי הָכִי, זְבִין וְזוֹבוֹת נְמוּ! אֵין הָכִי נְמוּ, וְהִנָּא חֲדָא מִיַּיְהוּדָא נִקְטָ.

תַּנּוּ רַבְנָן: אֵין מְשָׁקִין שְׁתֵּי סוֹטוֹת בְּאַחַת, כְּדִי שְׁלֵא יִהְיֶה לְבָהּ גַּם בְּחִבְרִיתָהּ. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר: לֹא מִן הַשֵּׁם הוּא זֶה, אֶלָּא אָמַר קָרָא: “אִתָּה”, לְבָדָהּ.

וְתַנָּא קַמָּא, הַכְּתִיב: “אִתָּה!” תַּנָּא קַמָּא רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן הִיא, דְּדָרִישׁ טַעַם דְּקָרָא. וּמָה טַעַם קַמָּא? מָה טַעַם אוֹתָהּ לְבָדָהּ? כְּדִי שְׁלֵא יִהְיֶה לְבָהּ גַּם בְּחִבְרִיתָהּ.

מַאי בִּינְיֵיהוּ? אֵיכָא בִּינְיֵיהוּ רוֹתֶתָּ.

She is already standing there in the Temple courtyard, as that is where the Sanhedrin sits. The Gemara answers: This teaches that they would bring her up^h and would bring her down repeatedly in order to fatigue her, with the hope that her worn-down mental state will lead to her confession. This was also done with witnesses testifying in cases of capital law, as it is taught in the *Tosefta* (*Sanhedrin* 9:1): Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: In cases of capital law, the court brings the witnesses^h from one place to another place in order to confuse them so that they will retract their testimony if they are lying.

§ The mishna teaches: Because there, at the Eastern Gate, they give the *sota* women the bitter water to drink, and there the lepers and women who have given birth are purified. The Gemara asks: Granted, the *sota* women are given the bitter water to drink there, as it is written: “And the priest shall stand the woman before the Lord” (Numbers 5:18),^N and the Eastern Gate is directly opposite the Sanctuary, which is the area referred to as “before the Lord.” Similarly, with regard to lepers as well, this is as it is written: “And the priest that cleans him shall set the man that is to be cleansed, and those things, before the Lord” (Leviticus 14:11). But what is the reason that a woman who has given birth must also be purified there?

The Gemara suggests: If we say it is because of the requirement for the women who have given birth to come and stand over their offerings, as it is taught in a *baraita*: The offering of a person is brought only^h if he stands over it while it is being sacrificed, and that is why they stand at this gate, which is as close to the sacrifice as they are permitted to be while they are ritually impure. If that is so, then the same *halakha* should apply to men who experience a gonorrhea-like discharge [*zavim*] and women who experience a discharge of uterine blood after their menstrual period [*zavot*]^h as well. They are also ritually impure while their offerings are sacrificed. Why would the mishna then specify women who have given birth? The Gemara answers: Yes, it is indeed so, and the *tanna* cited one of them, and the same *halakha* applies to all others in that category.

§ The Sages taught in a *baraita* in the *Tosefta* (1:6): Two *sota* women are not given to drink simultaneously,^h in order that the heart of each one not be emboldened by the other, as there is a concern that when one sees that the other woman is not confessing, she will maintain her innocence even if she is guilty. Rabbi Yehuda says: This is not for that reason. Rather, it is because the verse states: “And the priest shall bring her [*ota*] near and stand her before the Lord” (Numbers 5:16). Rabbi Yehuda explains his inference: The word “*ota*” indicates her alone, and therefore there is a Torah edict not to have two women drink the bitter water simultaneously.

The Gemara asks: And as for the first *tanna*, isn't it written “*ota*”? The Gemara answers: The first *tanna* is actually Rabbi Shimon, who interprets the reasons of *halakhot* written in verses, and he is saying: What is the reason? What is the reason the Torah requires her alone, that each *sota* drink individually? In order that the heart of each woman not be emboldened by the other.

The Gemara asks: What is the difference between them? Why should it matter if this *halakha* is due to a logical reasoning or due to a Torah edict? The Gemara answers: The difference between them is in a case where one of the women is trembling^N from fear. Since she has obviously not been emboldened by the presence of the other, Rabbi Shimon would allow her to be given to drink at the same time as the other.

HALAKHA

They would bring her up – מִסְקִינָן לָהּ – If the *sota* maintains her innocence before the court, she is brought up to the Eastern Gate, and she is then brought from place to place in order to fatigue her so that she will admit to her sin (Rambam *Sefer Nashim*, *Hilkhot Sota* 3:3).

Brings the witnesses, etc. – מְסִיעִין אֶת הָעֵדִים וְכוּ' – When investigating the testimony of witnesses in cases of capital law, the judges should abruptly shift the topic of their questions in an attempt to confuse the witnesses and catch them in an inconsistency or falsehood. The *Kesef Mishne* notes that this is the Rambam's interpretation of: The witnesses are brought from place to place (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim*, *Hilkhot Edu* 1:4).

The offering of a person is brought only, etc. – אֵין קְרַבְנָן אֵין שֶׁל אָדָם קָרַב אֶלָּא וְכוּ' – A person's offering cannot be sacrificed if he is not standing over it. Therefore, non-priestly watches were instituted so that Israelite representatives would be present on behalf of the entire people during the offering of communal sacrifices (Rambam *Sefer Avoda*, *Hilkhot Kelei HaMikdash* 6:1).

Zavim and *zavot*, etc. – זְבִין וְזוֹבוֹת וְכוּ' – A leper, and all others lacking atonement, such as *zavim*, *zavot*, and women who have given birth, stand outside the Israelite courtyard, at the opening of the Gate of Nicanor (Rambam *Sefer Korbanot*, *Hilkhot Mehuserei Kappara* 4:2).

Two *sota* women are not given to drink simultaneously – אֵין מְשָׁקִין שְׁתֵּי סוֹטוֹת בְּאַחַת – It is a Torah edict that two *sota* women are not given to drink simultaneously, even if one is trembling, as the *halakha* is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon (Rambam *Sefer Nashim*, *Hilkhot Sota* 4:2).

NOTES

Before the Lord – לִפְנֵי ה' – Rashi explains that although there were a total of seven gates to the courtyard, the Gate of Nicanor was considered “before the Lord,” as it was the main gate through which people entered. Others explain that the Gate of Nicanor most resembled the placement of the solitary gate found in the Tabernacle, which was likewise located on the east side. It appears that the Rambam understands that the Eastern Gate and the Gate of Nicanor were considered “before the Lord” because they stood directly opposite the Holy of Holies.

The difference between them is in a case where one of the women is trembling [*rotetet*] – אֵיכָא בִּינְיֵיהוּ רוֹתֶתָּ – Rashi explains that in such a case, the woman who is trembling is clearly not emboldened by the presence of the other woman, and therefore she is able to drink along with another woman. However, *Tosefot HaRosh* asks: In such a case, what would allow for the woman who is not trembling to drink in the presence of a trembling woman, as one should be concerned that she will be emboldened to persist in her denial due to the presence of another woman? *Tosefot HaRosh* explains that the text of the Gemara should be emended to read *rotetet*, in the plural, indicating that only in a case where both women are trembling may they be given to drink simultaneously. The *Devar Shaul* answers in support of Rashi's explanation that in an instance where one woman is trembling, the other woman will certainly not be emboldened to remain defiant, and in fact it may influence her to admit to her guilt.

One does not perform mitzvot in bundles – אין עושין – מצות חבילות חבילות: Rashi explains that in doing so, one appears as if he considered mitzvot to be a burden that he hastens to unload. Alternatively, the *Mitzpe Eitan* here cites *Tosafot* on *Moed Katan* 8b: The reason one should not perform mitzvot in bundles is because performing more than one mitzva at a time will prevent one from having the proper focus.

And uncover [*para*] – פָּרַע: The Hebrew term *para* has two meanings. It can mean to uncover or it can mean to disarrange that which was orderly. Both of these meanings apply to the *sota*. Her hair is uncovered by removing the covering on her head, and her body is uncovered by the tearing of some of her clothes. Also, her hair is disarranged by untying her braids and making her hair disheveled.

HALAKHA

Two lepers are not purified simultaneously – אין מטְהֵרין שְׁנֵי מְצֹרְעִין בְּאַחַת: Two lepers are not purified simultaneously because one does not perform mitzvot in bundles (Rambam *Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Tumat Tzara'at* 11:6).

Two slaves are not pierced simultaneously – אין עוֹרְפִין שְׁנֵי עֲבָדִים בְּאַחַת: The ears of two slaves are not pierced simultaneously because one does not perform mitzvot in bundles (Rambam *Sefer Kinyan, Hilkhot Avadim* 3:9).

Two heifers do not have their necks broken simultaneously – אין עוֹרְפִין שְׁנֵי עֵגְלוֹת בְּאַחַת: Two heifers do not have their necks broken simultaneously because one does not perform mitzvot in bundles (Rambam *Sefer Nezikin, Hilkhot Rotze'ah UShmirat HaNefesh* 10:5).

A man is stoned while naked, etc. – האִישׁ נִסְקָל עָרוֹם: Before the stoning of a condemned man, his clothes are removed and his genitals are covered in front. Condemned women are stoned while enrobed in a cloak (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim, Hilkhot Sanhedrin* 15:1).

ורוּתְתָת מִי מְשָׁקִין? וְהָאֵין עוֹשִׂין מְצוֹת חֲבִילוֹת חֲבִילוֹת!

דְּתַנּוּ: אֵין מְשָׁקִין שְׁנֵי סוֹטוֹת בְּאַחַת, וְאֵין מְטַהֲרִין שְׁנֵי מְצֹרְעִין בְּאַחַת, וְאֵין עוֹרְפִין שְׁנֵי עֲבָדִים בְּאַחַת, וְאֵין עוֹרְפִין שְׁנֵי עֵגְלוֹת בְּאַחַת, לְפִי שְׂאֵין עוֹשִׂין מְצוֹת חֲבִילוֹת חֲבִילוֹת!

אָמַר אַבְי, וְאִיתִימָא רַב כְּהֵנָּא, לָא קְשִׁיָּא: בְּאֵין בְּכֵהֵן אֶחָד, בְּאֵין בְּשְׁנֵי כְּהֵנִים.

‘וְהִכְהֵן אוֹחֹז בְּבִגְדֶיהָ’. תַּנּוּ רַבָּנַן: ‘וּפְרַע אֶת רֹאשׁ הָאִשָּׁה’ – אֵין לִי אֶלְאֵ רֹאשָׁה, גּוּפָהּ מִנּוּן? תִּלְמוּד לּוֹמַר: ‘הָאִשָּׁה’. אִם כֵּן, מַה תִּלְמוּד לּוֹמַר ‘וּפְרַע אֶת רֹאשָׁה’? מִלְּמַד, שֶׁהִכְהֵן סוֹתָר אֶת שְׁעָרָה.

‘רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמַר: אִם הָיָה לְבָהּ’ וְכוּ’. לְמִימָרָא, דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה חִישֵׁי לְהַרְהוּרָא, וְרַבָּנַן לָא חִישִׁי?

וְהָא אֵיפְכָא שְׂמַעִינָן לְהוּ! דְּתַנּוּ: הָאִישׁ מְכַסֵּין אוֹתוֹ פֶּרֶק אֶחָד מִלְּפָנָיו, וְהָאִשָּׁה – שְׁנֵי פֶרְקִים, אֶחָד מִלְּפָנֶיהָ וְאֶחָד מִלְּאַחֶרֶיהָ, מִפְּנֵי שְׂבוּלָה עֲרוּהָ, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי יְהוּדָה. וְחֲכָמִים אוֹמְרִים: הָאִישׁ נִסְקָל עָרוֹם, וְאֵין הָאִשָּׁה נִסְקָלָת עָרוּמָה!

אָמַר רַבָּה: הֵכָא טַעְמָא מַאי? שְׂמָא תַּעֲזַב מִבֵּית דִּין וְכִאֵיתָ וְיִתְגַּרְוּ בַּהּ פְּרָחֵי כְּהוֹנֵה. הֵתָם הָא מְסַתְּלָקָא. וְכִי תִימָא, אֲתֵי לְאִיגְרוּי בְּאַחֶרֶינֵיהּ – הָאִמַּר רַבָּא: גְּמִירִי, דְּאֵין יַצֵּר הָרַע שׁוֹלֵט אֶלְאֵ בְּמַה שְׁעִינֵו רׁוֹאוֹת.

The Gemara asks: And if she is other? But there is a general principle that one does not perform mitzvot in bundles,^N as one who does so appears as if the mitzvot are a burden upon him, and he is trying to finish with them as soon as possible.

As we learned in a *baraita*: Two *sota* women are not given to drink simultaneously, and two lepers are not purified simultaneously,^H and two slaves are not pierced simultaneously,^H and two heifers do not have their necks broken simultaneously,^H because one does not perform mitzvot in bundles. Accordingly, even Rabbi Shimon would agree that under no circumstances can a priest give two *sota* women to drink simultaneously. How, then, can the Gemara say that a trembling woman can be given to drink together with another *sota*?

Abaye said, and some say it was Rav Kahana who said: This is not difficult. Here, the second *baraita*, which says that it is prohibited to give two *sota* women to drink simultaneously because one does not perform mitzvot in bundles, is speaking with regard to one priest. There, Rabbi Shimon in the first *baraita*, who permits a trembling *sota* to be given to drink together with another *sota*, is speaking with regard to two priests. Since no individual priest is giving two women to drink simultaneously, mitzvot are not being performed in bundles.

§ The mishna teaches: And the priest grabs hold of her clothing and pulls them until he reveals her heart, and he unbraids her hair. The Gemara cites the source for these acts. The Sages taught: The verse states: “And the priest shall stand the woman before the Lord and uncover^N the woman’s head” (Numbers 5:18). From this verse I have derived only that he uncovers her head; from where do I derive that he uncovers her body? The verse states: “The woman,” rather than just stating: And uncovers her head. This indicates that the woman’s body should be uncovered as well. If so, what is the meaning when the verse states specifically: “And uncover her head”? Once it has stated that he uncovers the woman, it is already apparent that she, including her hair, is uncovered. It teaches that the priest not only uncovers her hair but also unbraids her hair.

The mishna continues by citing that Rabbi Yehuda says: If her heart was attractive he would not reveal it, and if her hair was attractive he would not unbraids it. The Gemara asks: Is this to say that Rabbi Yehuda, who maintains that it is prohibited to uncover an attractive woman, is concerned about onlookers having sexual thoughts, and the Rabbis, who permit it, are not concerned about this?

But we have heard the opposite from them, as it is taught in the *Tosefta* (*Sanhedrin* 9:6): Although a man condemned to stoning is stoned unclothed, the court covers him with one small piece of material in front of him, to obscure his genitals, and they cover a woman with two small pieces of material, one in front of her and one behind her, because all of her loins are nakedness, as her genitals are visible both from the front and from the back. This is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda. And the Rabbis say: A man is stoned while naked,^H but a woman is not stoned while naked, but fully clothed. Apparently, Rabbi Yehuda is not concerned that the onlookers seeing the woman unclothed will lead to sexual thoughts, but the Rabbis are concerned about this.

Rabba said: What is the reason here, with regard to a *sota*, that Rabbi Yehuda is concerned? Perhaps the *sota* will leave the court having been proven innocent, and the young priests in the Temple who saw her partially naked will become provoked by the sight of her. There, in the case of a woman who is stoned, she departs from this world by being stoned and there is no concern for sexual thoughts. The Gemara comments: And if you would say that the fact that she is killed is irrelevant to their sexual thoughts, as the onlookers will be provoked with regard to other women, this is not a concern. As didn’t Rava say: It is learned as a tradition that the evil inclination controls only that which a person’s eyes see.

אָמַר רַבָּא: דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה אֲדָרְבִּי יְהוּדָה
קְשִׁיָּא, דְּרַבְּנֵי אֲדָרְבֵּנָן לָא קְשִׁיָּא? אֵלָּא
אָמַר רַבָּא: דְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה אֲדָרְבִּי יְהוּדָה
לָא קְשִׁיָּא, כְּדִשְׁתֵּינּוּ.

Rava said: Is the contradiction between one statement of Rabbi Yehuda and the other statement of Rabbi Yehuda difficult, while the contradiction between one statement of the Rabbis and the other statement of the Rabbis is not difficult? There is also an apparent contradiction between the two rulings of the Rabbis, as with regard to a *sota*, they are not concerned about sexual thoughts, but with regard to a woman who is stoned they are. Rather, Rava said: The contradiction between one statement of Rabbi Yehuda and the other statement of Rabbi Yehuda is not difficult, as we answered above.

Perek I

Daf 8 Amud b

דְּרַבְּנֵי אֲדָרְבֵּנָן נִמְי לָא קְשִׁיָּא. הֲכָא
טַעְמָא מָאִי? מְשׁוּם "וַיִּנְסְרוּ בָּל הַנְּשִׁימִ",
הֲתַם אִין לֶךְ יִיסור גְּדוּל מְזֵה.

The contradiction between one ruling of the Rabbis and the other ruling of the Rabbis is not difficult as well. Here, with regard to a *sota*, what is the reason that her hair and body are uncovered? Because of what is stated in the verse, that other women should be warned: "Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be chastened not to do after your lewdness" (Ezekiel 23:48). There, with regard to stoning, you have no greater chastening than seeing this stoning itself.

וְכִי תִימָא. לְעֵבִיד בְּהַ תְּרַתֵּי – אָמַר רַב
נַחֲמָן אָמַר רַבָּה בֶּר אָבוּהַ, אָמַר קְרָא:
"וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ", בָּרוּר לוּ מִיְתָה
יָפָה.

And if you would say that two forms of chastening, both stoning and humiliation, should be done with her, Rav Nahman said that Rabba bar Avuh said: The verse states: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), teaching that even with regard to a condemned prisoner, select a good, i.e., a compassionate, death for him. Therefore, when putting a woman to death by stoning, she should not be humiliated in the process.

לִימָא, דְּרַב נַחֲמָן תַּנָּאִי הִיא? לָא. דְּכּוֹלֵי
עֲלֵמָא אִיתָ לָהּ דְּרַב נַחֲמָן, וְהִכָּא בְּהָא
קָמִיפְלֵגִי, מָר סָבַר: בִּיּוֹזוּנְהָ עָדִיף לִיה טְפִי
מִצַּעֲרָא דְּגוֹפִיָּהּ, וּמָר סָבַר: צַעֲרָא דְּגוֹפִיָּהּ
עָדִיף לִיה טְפִי מִבִּיּוֹזוּנְהָ.

The Gemara suggests: Let us say that the statement of Rav Nahman is a dispute between *tanna'im*, and according to Rabbi Yehuda there is no mitzva to select a compassionate death. The Gemara refutes this: No, it may be that everyone agrees with the opinion of Rav Nahman, and here they disagree about this: One Sage, i.e., the Rabbis, holds: Minimizing one's degradation is preferable to him than minimizing his physical pain. Therefore, the Rabbis view the more compassionate death as one without degradation, even if wearing clothes will increase the pain of the one being executed, as the clothes will absorb the blow and prolong death. And one Sage, Rabbi Yehuda, holds that minimizing physical pain is preferable to a person than minimizing his degradation, and therefore the one being executed prefers to be stoned unclothed, without any chance of the clothing prolonging the death, although this adds to the degradation.

"הִיתָה מְכּוּסָה לְבָנִים" וְכוּ'. תַּנָּא: אֵם
הִיוּ שְׂחוּרִים נְאִים לָהּ, מְכַסִּין אוֹתָהּ
בְּגָדִים מְכּוּפְעִים.

¶ The mishna teaches: If she was dressed in white garments, he would cover her with black garments. A Sage taught: If black garments are becoming to her,^h then she is covered in unsightly garments.

"הִיו עֲלֶיהָ כְּלֵי זָהָב" וְכוּ'. פֶּשִׁטָּא,
הִשְׁתָּא נוּוָּלִי מִנוּוִּיל לָהּ, הֲנִי מִיּבָעִיא?
מָהוּ דְּתִימָא: בְּהֵנִי אִיתָ לָהּ בִּיּוֹזוֹן טְפִי,
כְּדִאֲמֵרִי אֵינְשִׁי: שְׁלִיחַ עָרְטִיל וְסִיִּים
מְסָאנִי. קָא מְשִׁמַּע לָן.

The mishna teaches: If she was wearing gold adornments or other jewelry, they are removed from her. The Gemara asks: Isn't this obvious? Now that the priest renders her unattractive by uncovering her and dressing her in unsightly garments, is it necessary to teach that they remove these adornments from her? The Gemara answers: Lest you say that with these adornments on her, she has more degradation, as people say in a known aphorism: Undressed, naked, and wearing shoes. This means that a naked person who wears shoes emphasizes the fact that he is naked. Perhaps one would think that by a *sota* wearing jewelry, her nakedness is emphasized and her degradation is amplified. Therefore, the mishna teaches us that this is not so.

HALAKHA

הִיוּ שְׂחוּרִים – הִיוּ שְׂחוּרִים – הִיוּ שְׂחוּרִים
הִיוּ שְׂחוּרִים: A *sota* who was accustomed to wearing white garments is dressed in black. If the black garments enhance her appearance, she is dressed in a manner that renders her unattractive (Rambam *Sefer Nashim*, *Hilkhot Sota* 3:4).

Egyptian rope – תַּבֵּל הַמִּצְרַיִם: The Jerusalem Talmud notes that an Egyptian rope and an Egyptian basket (see 14a) are significant in that they were selected to allude to the fact that the *sota* engaged in immoral sexual behavior, which, in the Bible, is described as a characteristic of the Egyptian people (see Leviticus, chapter 18).

Will preclude [ye'akkev] – שְׂעֵבֵב: *Tosafot* and *Tosefot HaRosh* question why there would be any reason to think that a *sota* rite lacking an Egyptian rope should be invalid. After all, the absence of uncovering of the *sota*, which is mentioned in the verse, does not preclude the ritual from being valid. *Tosefot HaRosh* explains that the word *ye'akkev*, in this context, is not to be understood according to its standard meaning, that not using it will preclude the rite from being valid. Rather, it should be understood according to the standard meaning of the related word *ikkuv*, meaning delay, and the question of the Gemara is whether the priest should delay the performance of the rite in order to bring an Egyptian rope.

And women are obligated to watch her – וְנָשִׁים חַיְבוֹת – לְרְאוֹתָהּ: The Gemara's conclusion that there is an obligation incumbent upon women to watch the rite seems to contradict the expression in the mishna: And women are permitted to watch. Accordingly one must understand that the statement of the mishna is either as a contrast to the slaves, who are not permitted to watch, or should be understood as: Once they are permitted to watch, they must do so (*Meleket Shlomo; Tiferet Yisrael*).

With a measure by God has not ceased – בְּמִדָּה לֹא – בָּטִיל: The *Iyyun Ya'akov* explains that this principle: With a measure, is applicable to a *sota* in present times as well. Although the bitter water is no longer given, adulterers and those who exhibit immodest behavior will eventually be punished in a manner similar to their actions.

LANGUAGE

Ribbon [tziltzul] – צִלְצוּל: The sources indicate that the *tziltzul* is an ornamental belt or ribbon that is worn like a belt. Some explain that the word resembles the word *shalshelet*, meaning chain, with the letter *tzadi* replacing the letter *shin*, and it refers to a thin chain or braided belt.

HALAKHA

A small ribbon, etc. – צִלְצוּל קָטָן וְכו' – *She is tied ab initio* using an Egyptian rope. However, if one is not available, any type of rope can be used. The rope is tied above her breasts so that her clothes do not fall off, in accordance with the conclusion of the Gemara (*Rambam Sefer Nashim, Hilkhot Sota* 3:11).

Women are obligated to watch her – נָשִׁים חַיְבוֹת לְרְאוֹתָהּ – All the women who are in the Temple are obligated to watch the humiliation of the *sota* in order to be cautioned (*Rambam Sefer Nashim, Hilkhot Sota* 3:5).

“וְאַחַר כֵּן מְבִיא חֶבֶל” וכו'. בְּעַת מִינִיחָה רַבִּי אֲבָא מֵרַב הוֹנָא: חֶבֶל הַמִּצְרַיִם מֵהוּ שְׂעֵיבֵב בְּסוּטָה? מִשּׁוּם שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁמָטוּ בְּגָדֶיהָ מֵעֲלֶיהָ הוּא, וּבְצִלְצוּל קָטָן נִמְי סָגֵי, אוּ דִילְמָא מִשּׁוּם דְּאָמַר מַר: הִיא חֲגָרָה לוֹ בְּצִלְצוּל לְפִיכָךְ בְּהֵן מְבִיא חֶבֶל הַמִּצְרַיִם וְקוּשְׁרוֹ לָהּ לְמַעַלָּה מִדְּדִיחָה, מַעֲבֵב?

אָמַר לִיהוּ, תְּנִיתוּהוּ: וְאַחַר כֵּן מְבִיא חֶבֶל הַמִּצְרַיִם וְקוּשְׁרוֹ לָהּ לְמַעַלָּה מִדְּדִיחָה, בְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁמָטוּ בְּגָדֶיהָ מֵעֲלֶיהָ.

“וְכָל הַרוֹצֵה לְרְאוֹת בָּהּ יִרְאֶה” וכו'. הָא גּוֹפֵא קְשִׁיָּא, אִמְרַתְּ: כָּל הַרוֹצֵה לְרְאוֹת בָּהּ רוֹאֶה, אֵלְמָא לֹא שָׂנְא בְּבָרִי וְלֹא שָׂנְא נָשִׁי. וְהֵדָר תְּנִי: כָּל הַנָּשִׁים מוֹתְרוֹת לְרְאוֹתָהּ – נָשִׁים אִין, אַנְשִׁים לֹא!

אָמַר אַבְיִי: תְּרַגְמָה אַנְשִׁים. אָמַר לִיהוּ רַבָּא: וְהָא כָּל הַרוֹצֵה לְרְאוֹת בָּהּ רוֹאֶה קָתְנִי!

אֵלֹא אָמַר רַבָּא: כָּל הַרוֹצֵה לְרְאוֹת בָּהּ רוֹאֶה – לֹא שָׂנְא גְבָרִי וְלֹא שָׂנְא נָשִׁי. וְנָשִׁים חַיְבוֹת לְרְאוֹתָהּ, שְׂנְאָמַר: “וְנִסְרוּ כָּל הַנָּשִׁים וְלֹא תַעֲשִׂינָה כְּמוֹתֶיךָ”.

מתני' בְּמִדָּה שֶׁאָדָם מוֹדֵד – בָּהּ מוֹדְדִין לוֹ: הִיא קִשְׁטָה אֶת עַצְמָהּ לְעֵבִירָהּ, הַמְּקוֹם נוֹוֶלָה. הִיא גִּלְתָּה אֶת עַצְמָהּ לְעֵבִירָהּ, הַמְּקוֹם גִּלָּה עֲלֶיהָ. בִּירְךְ הַתְּחִילָה בְּעֵבִירָהּ תְּחִילָה וְאַחַר כֵּן הִבְטֵן, לְפִיכָךְ תִּלְקַח הַיֵּרֶךְ תְּחִילָה וְאַחַר כֵּן הִבְטֵן, וְשָׂאָר כָּל הַגּוּף לֹא פָּלַט.

גמ' אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: אִף עַל גַּב דְּמִדָּה בְּטִילָה, בְּמִדָּה לֹא בָּטִיל.

The mishna continues: And afterward the priest would bring an Egyptian rope, and he would tie it above her breasts. Rabbi Abba raised a dilemma before Rav Huna: What is the *halakha* as to whether the lack of an Egyptian rope^N will preclude^N the performance of the rite with regard to a *sota*? Does any means of tying suffice? Perhaps the primary function of the rope is so that her clothes will not fall off her, and therefore even a small ribbon [tziltzul]^{LH} would also suffice. Or, perhaps the rope is used because of what the Master said: She girded herself with a comely ribbon when she committed her transgression, and therefore the priest brings specifically an Egyptian rope, which is coarse, and ties it above her breasts. If that is the case, then the Egyptian rope should be indispensable.

Rav Huna said to him: You learned the answer to this dilemma in a *baraita* that teaches: And afterward the priest would bring an Egyptian rope and he would tie it above her breasts, so that her clothes would not fall off her. The *baraita* states that the use of an Egyptian rope is primarily for holding up her clothing, and therefore use of specifically Egyptian rope is not essential.

§ The mishna teaches: And anyone who desires to watch her may watch, except for her slaves and maidservants, who are not permitted to watch because her heart is emboldened by them. And all of the women are permitted to watch her. The Gemara comments: This matter is itself difficult, as there is an internal contradiction in the mishna. First you say: And anyone who desires to watch her may watch. Apparently, there is no difference whether the onlookers are men and there is no difference whether they are women; all are permitted to observe the rite. And then the mishna teaches: And all of the women are permitted to watch her, which indicates women, yes, they may watch her, but men, no, they may not.

Abaye said: Interpret the first statement, which permits all people to observe the *sota*, as pertaining to women, but men may not be onlookers. Rava said to him: But it teaches in that first statement that anyone who desires to watch her may watch, and one cannot limit this to women.

Rather, Rava said: Anyone who desires to watch her may watch, there is no difference whether the onlookers are men and there is no difference whether they are women. And the next clause of the mishna teaches that women are obligated to watch her,^{NH} as is stated: “Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be chastened not to do after your lewdness” (*Ezekiel* 23:48).

MISHNA The mishna teaches lessons that can be derived from the actions and treatment of a *sota*. With the measure that a person measures, he is measured with it. For example, she, the *sota*, adorned herself to violate a transgression, the Omnipresent therefore decreed that she be rendered unattractive; she exposed herself for the purpose of violating a transgression, as she stood in places where she would be noticed by potential adulterers, so the Omnipresent therefore decreed that her body be exposed publicly; she began her transgression with her thigh and afterward with her stomach, therefore the thigh is smitten first and then the stomach, and the rest of all her body does not escape punishment.

GEMARA Rav Yosef says: Although the measure with regard to court-imposed capital punishment has ceased, as there is no court today empowered to adjudicate and apply corporal punishment, punishment that is suitable to be applied with a measure by God has not ceased,^N as a person is punished by Heaven in accordance with his sin.

Four types of court-imposed capital punishment – ארבע מיתות בית דין: These four forms of court-imposed capital punishment are prescribed by the Torah for different transgressions. They are administered by a court of twenty-three members. They are, in diminishing order of severity: Stoning, burning, decapitation, and strangulation.

A snake bites him – נחש מבישו: There are a number of different types of poisonous snakes that inject their venom into an individual upon biting them. The majority of snakes in Eretz Yisrael are vipers, and their bites can cause an internal burning sensation. Therefore, there is reason to compare one burned to death with one who dies by snakebite.

Ukla – עוקלא: This is the Aramaic term for a small measurement. There are conflicting opinions as to its exact size. Some identify it as a measurement of one-twentieth of a kav.

LANGUAGE

Diphtheria [seronekhi] – סרוניקי: According to some, this word is from a Semitic language. Others explain that it is derived from the Greek *συνάγχη*, *sunnankhē*, referring to a form of strangulation that results from complications of diphtheria due to the trachea being blocked by pus.

Half-se'a [tarkav] – תרקב: *Tarkav* is a measuring vessel for the measurement of a half-se'a. Early commentaries explain that the word *tarkav* is a composite of the word for two and the word *kav*, which together indicates three *kav*, which equals a half-se'a. It is also possible that the source of the word is the Greek *τρίκαβος*, *trikabos*, meaning three *kav*.

Shawls [sudarim] – סודרין: From the Greek *σουδάριον*, *soudarion*, or the Latin *sudarium*, meaning a towel or napkin. In the Talmud, this usually refers to a woven piece of cloth that was used for various purposes, e.g., a wrap for one's neck or a covering for one's hair. It was often worn as a head covering for married scholars, as a sign of distinction.

As Rav Yosef says, and Rabbi Hiyya similarly teaches: From the day that the Temple was destroyed, although the Sanhedrin ceased, the four types of court-imposed capital punishment⁸ have not ceased. The Gemara asks: But they have ceased; court-imposed capital punishment is no longer given. Rather, the intention is: The law of the four types of court-imposed capital punishment has not ceased.

The Gemara explains: How so? One who is liable to be executed by stoning either falls from a roof or an animal mauls him and breaks his bones. This death is similar to the experience of stoning, in which the one liable to be executed is pushed from a platform and his bones break from the impact of the fall. One who is liable to be executed by burning either falls into a fire and is burned or a snake bites him,⁸ as a snakebite causes a burning sensation. One who is liable to be executed by slaying of the sword either is turned over to the authorities and they execute him with a sword, or robbers come upon him and murder him. One who is liable to be executed by strangling either drowns in a river and is choked by the water or dies of diphtheria [seronekhi],¹ which causes his throat to become clogged, and he dies.

It is taught in a baraita in the *Tosefta* (3:1–5) that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi would say: From where is it derived that with the measure that a person measures, he is measured with it? As it is stated: “In full measure [besese'a], when you send her away, you contend with her” (Isaiah 27:8). In other words, in the measure, *bese'a*, that one used in one's sin, God will contend with, i.e., punish, him.

The *baraita* continues: I have derived only the relatively large measurement of a *se'a*, which alludes to a significant sin. From where do I know to include even lesser sins that are comparable to smaller measurements, e.g., a half-se'a [tarkav]¹ and a half-tarkav; a *kav* and a half-kav; a quarter-kav and half of a quarter-kav; an eighth-kav [toman] and an ukla,⁸ which is one-thirty-second of a *kav*. From where is it derived that all these lesser sins are also dealt with in accordance with the measure of the sin? The verse states: “For every boot [sa'on] stamped with fierceness, and every cloak rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire” (Isaiah 9:4), indicating that every *sa'on*, which Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi interprets as a small *se'a*, is “stamped with fierceness” and doesn't go unpunished.

And from where is it derived that each and every *peruta* combine to add up to a great sum, alluding to the notion that even if one is not immediately punished for a small transgression, in the final accounting all misdeeds will combine together and be addressed by the imposition of a large punishment? The verse states: “Behold, this have I found, says Koheleth, adding one thing to another,⁴ to find out the account” (Ecclesiastes 7:27).

The *baraita* continues: And we found this with regard to a *sota*, that with the measure with which she measured, she is measured with it: She stood by the opening of her house to exhibit herself to her paramour, therefore a priest has her stand at the Gate of Nicanor and exhibits her disgrace to all; she spread beautiful shawls [sudarim]¹ on her head for her paramour, therefore a priest removes her kerchief from her head and places it under her feet; she adorned her face for her paramour, therefore

NOTES

Adding one thing to another, etc. – אמת לאמת וכו': In the Jerusalem Talmud, there are two interpretations of this verse. One is identical to the one found here, that at times a number of smaller unpunished transgressions are punished through

one severe punishment. By contrast, at times one major transgression is not punished all at once, but rather through small punishments over a longer period of time, and these small punishments combine to atone for the one severe transgression.

דאמר רב יוסף, וכן תני רבי חייא: מיום שחרב בית המקדש, אף על פי שבטלה סנהדרין, ארבע מיתות לא בטלו. והא בטלו! אלא דין ארבע מיתות לא בטלו.

מי שנתחייב סקילה – או נופל מן הגג או חיה דורסתו. מי שנתחייב שריפה – או נופל בדליקה או נחש מבישו. מי שנתחייב הריגה – או נמסר למלכות או ליסטין באין עליו. מי שנתחייב חניקה – או טובע בנהר או מת בסרונכי.

תניא, היה רבי אומר: מנין שבמדה שאדם מודד בה מודדין לו? שנאמר: “במאסא בה שלחה תריבנה”.

אין לי אלא סאה. מנין לרבות תרקב וחצי תרקב, קב וחצי קב, רובע וחצי רובע, תומן ועוקלא מנין? תלמוד לומר: “כי כל סאון סאון ברעש”.

ומנין שקל פרוטה ופרוטה מצטרפת לחשבון גדול? תלמוד לומר: “אחת לאחת למצא חשבון”.

וכן מצינו בסוטה, שבמדה שמדדה – בה מדדו לה: היא עמדה על פתח ביתה ליראות לו, לפיכך בהן מעמידה על שער נקנור ומראה קלונה לכל. היא פרסה לו סודרין נאים על ראשה, לפיכך בהן נוטל פסה מעל ראשה ומניחו תחת רגליה. היא קשטה לו פניה, לפיכך