RITUAL SLAUGHTER



A Modern Guide to Karaite Jewish Practice



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(20th Century CE; Cairo, Egypt)

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Dedicated to

Acting Rav Joseph Moussa (Yosef ben Shalom Moshe Pessah)

for a life of teaching at the Karaite Jews of America

&

Travis Wheeler (Avraham ben Adam)

for preserving the tradition of Karaite Jewish slaughter in the United States

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Introduction by the Karaite Jews of America

This short work on *sheḥiṭa* ("ritual slaughter") according to the custom of the Karaite Jews was rediscovered in the library of the Karaite Jews of America, and it bore the translated title *Concerning Ritual Slaughter: According to the Community of Karaite Jews*. The Karaite Jewish community of Israel had sent numerous copies of the work to the Karaite community in the United States in the hopes that the American community would continue to eat meat slaughtered in accordance with Karaite Jewish custom.

In Egypt, the community learned the laws of ritual slaughter in formal classes, during which a teacher wrote the laws on a chalkboard in both Hebrew and Arabic. Students copied both the Hebrew and Arabic texts in personal notebooks. Although we have not done a word-by-word comparison, the text published in this edition appears to be the standard version used by the community in Egypt.

Many members of the Karaite Jewish community retained their notebooks when they fled Egypt. We have appended to this publication the entire handwritten notebook¹ of one such student, Joseph Moussa, who is, at the time of publication, the Acting Rav of the Karaite Jews of America. The reader will see that the notebook ends with the heading *The Ten Things that Invalidate an Act of Slaughter*, with no information following. As Mr. Moussa recalls, his course was cut short when its teacher, Elie Lichaa, fled Egypt for Europe in 1964. Elie Lichaa passed away in France in 2014.

The Karaite Jews of America notes that throughout the centuries, various Karaites had different views of the laws of *sheḥiṭa*.

¹ Some images are slightly trunctated in the electronic version we have in our possession. The images are reprinted in this edition as they appear in our electronic files.

The information in this publication tends to reflect the current practices of Jews of historical Karaite descent. For that reason, we titled this work *Ritual Slaughter: A Modern Guide to Karaite Jewish Practice*. We intend to bring to light other historical works on ritual slaughter and corresponding dietary laws of Karaite Jews. The Karaite Jews of America thanks Isaac Sardar Ha-levy for his translation of this work. We are also thankful to the academics and laypersons who reviewed the translation and original Hebrew text.

About the Hebrew Text: We have preserved the consonantal text of the printing in our hands, aside from two places. On page 22, there is a quotation of Leviticus 17:13; in one instance, the earlier printing contains the word אשר in the incorrect place, but we have corrected the passage from the Biblical text. On page 34, the earlier printing reads מתיחם, meaning "warms up (in sexual heat)," a word out of place in this context; it is clear that this should be מתיחם, "related," which is what we have printed in our text.

We have also generally followed the earlier printing's vocalization and punctuation, but on occasion, we have corrected these, when they were incorrect or liable to lead to confusion. Moreover, in a number of places, the verse numbers that the earlier printing gives for Biblical references were incorrect. We have cite-checked all such references and edited them accordingly.

הקדמה

כוונת חוברת זו היא לבאר ענין השחיטה לפי מצוותיה, חוקיה ומשפטיה הכתובים בספר התורה הכתובה בסיני על־ידי אב וראש הנביאים - משה רבינו, עליו השלום, כפי שיגזור השכל האנושי אחרי הפשט הנכון היוצא מן התורה שבכתב מבלי נטות ימין ושמאל אחרי דברים חיצוניים.

סידור השחיטה חובר על־ידי החכם שמואל ז"ל הכהן, היהודי הקראי, שחי לאחרונה במצרים.

יצא לאור במולדתנו בהוצאת מר שלמה בן אברהם מרזוק - שכון רסקו 132, לוד, ברחוב אינשטין.

ישלם ה' פועלו ותהי משכורתו שלמה מיושב הכרובים ויהיה לזכרון לפני ה' תמיד ועל טוב יזכור שמו לעד אמן

1958 - הוצא לאור בשנת תשי"ח

Introduction to the Printed 1958 Edition

This book was written with the intention to explain the concept of *sheḥiṭa*, slaughtering, according to all its commandments, rules, and laws, which are written in the Torah, given at Mount Sinai through the father and head of all prophets, Moses, as human sense can derive from the correct straight meaning of the words of the written Torah, without straying right or left after outside influences.

This treatise on slaughtering was composed by the sage Shemuel Ha-kohen, of blessed memory, the Karaite Jew, who lived recently in Egypt.

This book has been published in [the Land of Israel], our homeland, by Mr. Solomon ben Abraham Marzouk, Rasco Neighborhood 132, Lod, on Einstein Street.

May God fully repay him for his work, and may he be remembered in front of God; may his compensation be complete from [God], who dwells over the cherubim; and may he be in God's memory forever, and may He remember his name for good, forever, Amen.

Published in 1958

מְפֶּר עְנְיַן הַשְּׁחִיטָה

RITUAL SLAUGHTER

עִנְיַן הַשְּׁחִיטָה

בְּבֵאוּר עִנְיַן הַשְּׁחִיטָה הָעִנְיָן אֲשֶׁר יְדָבַּר בּוֹ תְּחִילָּה בְּעִנְיַן ָהַשְּׁחִיטָה הוּא עַל הָתֵּר אֲכִילַת הַחַי חַי אַחֵר כָּמְוֹהוּ וְהוּא כִּי ָיְדוּעַ כִּי כָל הַקּוֹדֵם בַּבְּרִיאָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִית הוּא בְּעַד חֲבֵרוֹ ָהַמָּתִאַחֵר לוֹ בַּבָּרִיאָה כִּעָנִיַן בִּרִיאַת הַצִּמָחִים שֶׁקָּדְמָה בִּרִיאָתָם לְבְרִיאַת בַּעֵלֵי־חַיִּים לְהִיוֹת בִּעֵד מְזוֹן בַּעֵלֵי־חַיִּים שֶׁנְּתְאַחֵרָה בְרִיאָתָם לִבְרִיאַת בַּעֲלֵי־הַחַיִּים. וּלְעוֹלָם הַצְּרִיךְ נִקְדַּם אֶל ַהַנִּצְרָךְ וּבִלְתִּי קְדִימַת הַצָּרִיךְ לֹא יִהְיֶה קִיּוּם אֶל הַנִּצְרָךְ. וְכֵן אָמַר הַכְּתוּב בָּיֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כֹּל (ברא סימן ט׳), ר"ל כְּמוֹ שָהתַרִתִּי לְבַעֵלֵי־חַיִּים שֶׁיֵהָנוּ מֵהַצִּמָחִים שֶׁקָּדְמוּ לְבִרִיאָתָם ַכּן הִתַּרְתִּי לָכֶם לֵהָנוֹת מִבַּעֲלֵי־חַיִּים שֶׁקָּדְמוּ לִבְרִיאַתְכֶם. וּמִכָּל הַחַי הָאִלֵּם לֹא הָתַּר לַאֲכִילָה רַק מַה שֶּׁהִתְּירָה הַתּוֹרָה וְהִבְדֵּילָה בְסִימָנִים וְשֵׁמוֹת לִהְיוֹת מַה שֶׁנֶּאֱסַר טִבְעָם אַרְסִי וּמַזִּיק לִבְרִיאוּת הַגּוּף וּמְעַטִּים עֵינֵי הַשֵּׂכֶל מִלְּהָבִין מַה שֶּׁבְּכֹחוֹ לְהָבִין כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶאֱמַר וִלֹא תִטַּמִאוּ בָהֶם וִנִטְמֵתֶם בָּם (ויקרא סימן י״א ָס״ג) כִּי הַתּוֹרָה הָקִפֶּידָה בִּבְרִיאוּת הַגּוּף וִהַנֶּפֶשׁ וִלֹא הִתִּירָה רַק מַה שָּהוּא נֵאוֹת לְטֶבַע הָאָדָם וּבְקִנְיַן שְׁלֵמוּתוֹ. כִּי טֶבַע הַמְּזוֹן

Concerning Ritual Slaughter

In explaining the issue of slaughtering, the first thing that must be discussed is the permission for a living thing to eat another living thing. It is known that any being whose creation preceded that of another being during the days of creation is for the benefit of the beings that followed it. For example, the creation of vegetation preceded that of animals, so that it would be food for the animals, for their creation was after that of the animals.¹ And always, the thing that was needed preceded the thing that needed it; for if this were not so, the thing that needed it would not be able to exist. As Scripture says: *Like vegetation, I [God]* have given you [people] everything (Genesis 9). That is, just as I have allowed animals to benefit from vegetation, which preceded them in creation, so too have I allowed you [people] to benefit from animals, which preceded you in creation. And of all dumb animals, the only ones that are permitted for consumption are the ones that the Torah permitted by designating them with specific characteristics or names. The ones that are forbidden have qualities that are poisonous and harmful to bodily health, although the eyes of understanding are too small to understand [that these animals are unhealthy], as [God] understands, as it is said: And ye shall not become impure through them, such that ye become impure through them (Leviticus 11:43). For the Torah particularly cared about the health of one's body and soul and only allowed one to eat what is fitting for one's nature and the acquisition of [spiritual] completion. For the nature of the food being consumed is transferred to the consumer, because it and

¹ This sentence appears self-contradictory. Presumably, the author means to say that creation of vegetation *preceded* that of the animals, not that it followed it. Alternatively, the author may be saying that the plants are food for animals, and those animals are food for animals that were created later; however, this is difficult to fit with the author's syntax.

יָשׁוּב בְּטֶבַע הַנִּזּוֹן לִהְיוֹתָם תַּחַת סוּג אֶחָד. וְכָל בַּעֲלֵי־הַחַיִּים בִּכְלָל הֵם אַרְבָּעָה סוּגִים: חַיּוֹת, בְּהֵמוֹת, עוֹפוֹת וְדָגִים. וְכָל סוּג יִכְלֹל מִינִים הַרְבֵּה. וְכָל אֶחָד מֵהַמִּינִים הָאֵלֶּה מִמֶּנּוּ מֻתָּר לַאֲכִילָה וּמִמֶּנּוּ אָסוּר.

א. הַמִּינִים הַמָּתָּרִים מֵהַחֵיּוֹת הֵם אֲשֶׁר הִבְּדִילֶתֵם הַתּוֹרָה מִכָּל שְׁאָר מִינֵי הַחַיּוֹת בִּשְׁמָם לְדַעְתָּם וּלְהָבִין וְהֵם שִׁבְעָה מִינִים וְהֵם אֲשֶׁר נִזְכְּרוּ בְּפָסוּק אֶחָד (דברים י״ד ה׳): אַיָּל, צְבִי, יַחְמוּר, אַקּוֹ, דִּישׁן, תִּאוֹ, זֶמֶר, וְכָל זוּלְתָם מֵהַחַיּוֹת הֵם אֲסוּרִים.

ב. וְהַמִּינִים אֲשֶׁר הָתֵּרוּ מֵהַבְּהֵמוֹת הֵם אֲשֶׁר נְתְנָה הַתּוֹרָה סִימָנִים לְטָהֵרָתָם וְהֵם מַעֲלַת גֵּרָה וּפַרְסָה שְׁסוּעָה כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמִר כִּלְ מַבְּרֶסָת בַּּרְסָה וְשׁסַעַת שֶׁסַע בְּרָסֹת, מַעֲלַת גַּרָה הוּא הַבְּהֵמָה שֶׁתַּחְזִיר בִּבְּהַמָה לְּמִירָ אָחֲרֵי שֶׁתִּבְלָעֵהוּ וְלוֹעֶסֶת אוֹתוֹ. וּפַרְסָה שְׁסוּעָה שָׁמִין שָׁכִּלְה לְפִיהָ אַחֲרֵי שֶׁתִּבְלָעֵהוּ וְלוֹעֶסֶת אוֹתוֹ. וּפַרְסָה שְׁסוּעָה שָׁפִּרְסוֹתֵיהָ נִבְדָּלוֹת וּבְלְתִי נִדְבָּקוֹת זוֹ בָזוֹ. וְכָל בְּהַמָה שָׁאֵין שָּפִּרְסוֹתֵיהָ נִבְדָּלוֹת וּבְלְתִי נִדְבָּקוֹת זוֹ בָזוֹ. וְכָל בְּהַמָה שָׁאֵין בָּהִי שְׁנִייִם אֵלוּ אוֹ יֶחְסַר הָאֶחָד אוֹ שְׁנִיהֶם בְּאֶחָד הִיא אֲסוּרָה לְהֵאָכֵל. וְהַנּוֹדְעִים אָצְלֵנוּ הַיּוֹם בַּעֲלֵי שְׁנֵי הַפִּימְנִים הַבְּעִלִי שְׁנִי הַבְּהַמוֹת הֵם בַּעֵלִי שְׁנֵי הַפִּימְנִים הַבָּמִים וְשֵּה עִזִּים, וּמְרִיא, שָׁהוּא מִמְּין הַבְּהָתוֹת הֵם אֲסוּרִים. הַבָּל שְׁאָר מִמִּינִי הַבְּהַמוֹת הֵם אֲסוּרִים.

ג. וּבָעוֹפוֹת אֵין בָּהֶם שׁוּם סִימָן. רַק הִבְּדְּילָה הַתּוֹרָה הַמִּינִים הַטָּמֵאִים בִּשָּׁמָם וְהֵם כ"א מִינִים הַנִּזְכָּרִים (ויקרא י"א the consumer are of the same [natural] category. And all animals can be categorized into one of the following four groups: wild mammals, domestic mammals, birds, and fish. And each group includes many species – some of which are permissible to eat, while others are forbidden.

- 1. The species of wild animals that are permissible to eat are the ones that the Torah distinguishes by name from all other wild mammals, for [us] to know and understand them; they are the seven that are mentioned in the following verse: *The hart, gazelle, roebuck, wild goat, pygarg, antelope, and mountain sheep*² (Deuteronomy 14:5). And any other [species] of wild mammals is forbidden to eat.
- 2. And the species of domestic animals that are permitted are those for which the Torah gives special signs regarding their pure state. Those signs are the chewing of cud and split hooves, as the verse says: Any [domestic mammal] that has a split hoof and that chews its cud, you may eat (Leviticus 11:3). Chewing of cud means that after an animal has swallowed food, that food returns back up to the animal's mouth and the animal chews it again; and split hooves means that the hooves are separated, not stuck together. Any domestic mammal that does not possess both these signs, but is missing one or the other or both, is not permissible to eat. And the domestic animals that we know today to have both these signs are: the ox, the sheep, the goat, and the fatling (meri), which is part of the cattle family. All other species of domestic animals are prohibited to eat.
- 3. And there is no sign [of permissibility] of birds. The Torah merely specified, by name, those that are prohibited to eat; they are the twenty-one birds mentioned (Leviticus 11:13 ff.).³

² Note that the translations of many of these species names are tentative; indeed, the author writes further down in this page that today we can identify only cattle, sheep, goats, and *meri*.

³ The original printed Hebrew read "Leviticus 11–13," but we have corrected the citation to 11:13 ff., for the list continues through 11:19.

י״ג ולהלן) וְכֶל זוּלָתָם הֵם טְהוֹרִים וּמֻתָּרִים לַאֲכִילָה, אֲבָל מִפְּנֵי שָׁנֶּעְדְּרָה מִמֶּנּוּ יְדִיעַת שְׁמוֹת רֹב הָעוֹפוֹת לֹא הֻתֵּרוּ מֵהֶם רַק שִׁבְעָה מִינִים בִּלְבָד וְהֵם: תַּרְנְגוֹלִים, בַּרְבּוּרִים, אַוָּזִים, יוֹנִים, תּוֹרִים, שְׂלָו, קוֹרֵא: הַיְדוּעִים אֶצְלֵנוּ בְּסֵבֶל יְרְשָׁה דּוֹר אַחַר דּוֹר.

ד. וְהַדָּגִים הַמְּתָּרִים לַאֲכִילָה הֵם בַּעֲלֵי שְׁנֵי סִימְנִים כְּמוֹ הַבְּהַמוֹת וְהֵם סְנַפִּיר וְקַשְּׂקֶשֶׁת כְּמוֹ שֶׁנָּאֱמֵר כֹּל אֲשֶׁד לוֹ סְנַפִּיר וְקַשְּׂקֶשֶׁת בְּמֵּיִם, בַּיָּמִים וּבַנְּחָלִים אוֹתָם תּאֹבֵלוֹ (ויקרא י״א ט׳). הַסְּנַפִּיר וּוֹא כְּמוֹ הַכָּנָף בָּעוֹפוֹת שָׁבּוֹ שׁוֹחֶה בַיָּם. וְהַקַשְּׁקֶשֶׂת הִיא עִגוּלִים הוּא כְּמוֹ הַכָּנָף בָּעוֹפוֹת שָׁבּוֹ שׁוֹחֶה בַיָּם. וְהַקַשְּׁקֶשֶׂת הִיא עִגוּלִים הוּא כְּמוֹ הַבָּנְף בָּעוֹפוֹת שָׁבּוֹ שׁוֹחֶה בַּיָּם. וְהַלָּשְׁיֻקְשֶׁת הִיא עִגוּלִים הָּאָחָד אוֹ דְּקִים דְּבוּקִים זָה בְּעוֹר לַאֲכִילָה. וּכְשָׁיֶחְסַר מִמֶּנוּ הָאָחָד אוֹ שְׁנֵיהֶם כְּאֶחָד הוּא אָסוּר לַאֲכִילָה. וְהִאם יֵשׁ דְּגִים בְּלְתִּי קַשְּׂקֶשֶּׂת וְבִּלְתִּי קַשְּׂקֶשֶׂת הְּעֹד לְקַדְמוֹנִינוּ, עֲלֵיהֶם וְהַבָּעְלוֹם בְּעְלֵי קַשְּׁקְשֶּׂת בְּעוֹרָם מִמְשׁ, שָׁהוּעֵד לְקַדְמוֹנֵינוּ, עֲלֵיהֶם הַשְּׁלוֹם, בְּרְאִיַּת עֵינִיהֶם מִּמְשׁ, שָׁהֵם בַּעֲלֵי קַשְּׁקְשֶׂת בְּעוֹדְם בְּעוֹלִם בְּעְלֵי קִשְּׁקְשֶּׁת בְּעוֹךְ הַיִּם וְשוֹפֵּך אוֹתוֹ בְּצֵאתוֹ מִן הַיָּם וְשִׁבּּר אִיִם וְשוֹפֵּך אוֹתוֹ בְּצֵאתוֹ מִן הַיָּם וְשִׁבְּי לִאְנִינוּ עִיְהָ וְשִׁיְבָּלְ מִוֹנִינוּ ע״ה, הוּא אָסוּר לַאֲכִילָה וְלֹא יְתַר לַאֲכִילָה הָעִנִין בְּרִאיָת עֵינִינוּ בַּרְאִיָּת עִינִינוּ בְּרִאיָת עִינִין בְּרְאִיָּת עִינִינוּ בְּרִאיָת עִינִינוּ בְּרִאִיָּת עִינִינוּ בְּרִאיָר בְּרִאיָת עִבּילִנוּ עִי״ה, הוּא אָסוּר לַאֲכִילָה וְלֹא יְתַר לַּיִלְּהָוֹ בְעִלְּיִם בְּרִתּיִנוּ עִיִּרְ בְּרִאיִית עִינִינוּ בְּרִיתִּים בְּיִבְּיִם בְּרִתִּים בְּרִים בְּרִים בְּרִים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבְּים בְּבְּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִם בְּבִילְה בְּיִים בְּעִּים בְּיִם בְּיִבּים בְּיִם בְּיִבְּים בְּחִים בְּעִים בְּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּשִׁים בְּים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּים בְּיִבּים בְּבִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִבּים בְּיִים בְּבִּים בְּיִם בְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִבְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבְיּם בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיבְּיִבְּים בְּיִּבְים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִבְּים בְ

וּבְכָל אֶחָד מֵהַמִּינִים הָאֵלֶה יֵשׁ גּוּפִים פְּרָטִיִּים אֲסוּרִים לַאֲכִילָה עם הֱיוֹתָם טְהוֹרִים וְהֵם (ט"ו) גּוּפִים שֶׁהִזְכִּירוּם חֲכָמֵינוּ (ע"ה) וְהֵם: מֻכֶּה, חוֹלֶה, גּוֹסֵס, רוֹבֵעַ, נִרְבָּע, שׁוֹר נַגָּח, בֶּהֱמַת עִיר הַנִּדְּחַת, בְּהֵמָה מוּעֶלֶת בַּחֵרֶם, עֶגְלָה עֲרוּפָה, שָׂעִיר הַמִּשְׁתַּלֵחַ, And any bird besides them is pure and permissible to consume. However, because we lack the knowledge of the names of most of the twenty-one forbidden birds, it is permissible to eat only the following seven birds – which, based on the burden of the inheritance (*sevel ha-yerusha*) from generation to generation, we know to not be part of the twenty-one forbidden birds: chickens, swans, geese, pigeons, turtledoves, quail, and ammoperdix [a genus of partridges].

4. The fish that are permissible to eat are those that possess two signs, like the domestic mammals; [in the case of fish, the signs are signs [senappir] and scales [qasqeseth] – as the verse says: Any [fish] in the water which has fins and scales . . . ye may eat (Leviticus 11:9). Senappir are like a bird's wings, which [the fish] uses to swim in the sea; *qasqeseth* is the thin circles, stuck together, in the fish's skin. Any fish that has both of these signs is permissible to eat. If one or the other of these signs is missing, then it is forbidden to eat [such a fish]. And though there are certain fish that have fins but no scales, which we nonetheless [treat as] permissible to eat, this is because our predecessors, peace be upon them, witnessed with their own eyes that these fish really have scales when they are still in the water, and the scales merely fall off when the fish is removed from the water. And any fish that [allegedly] has scales when in the water, which it sheds upon its removal from the water, but this was not acknowledged by our predecessors, is prohibited to be eaten and cannot be permitted unless we witness with our own eyes [that this alleged claim is correct].

And from all of the aforementioned permitted species, there are specific situations in which any of these species would be forbidden to be eaten, despite their being pure [in species]. These are the fifteen situations that our teachers have specified: injured; sick; close to death; penetrator; penetrated; the ox that gored; an animal from an idolatrous city; an animal that has been

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צִפּוֹר שֶׁל מְצֹרָע, תִּקְרְבֶת לַעֲבוֹדָה זָרָה, מַחְסוֹר זְמַן, אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בִּנוֹ, טָרֵפָה.

- א. מֶכֶּה: הוּא שֶׁהְכָּה בְעֵץ אוֹ בְאֶבֶן אוֹ בְחֵץ אוֹ בַחֲנִית וְנִפְצַע וְהוּא מְסָכָּן לָמוּת.
- ב. חוֹלֶה: הוּא שֶׁיָצָא מִגֶּדֶר הַבְּּרִיאוּת וְנִכָּר חָלְיוֹ מִכְּבֶד תְּנוּעוֹתִיוּ וּמֵחֵסִרוֹן מַאַכַלוֹ וּמִשְּׁתֵּהוּ.
- ג. גּוֹסֵס: הוּא שֶׁנְּטָה לָמוּת וְלֹא נִשְׁאָר עֻלָיו רְשֶׁם מֵהַחִיוּת רַק שָׁהוּא מִתִנַשֵּׁם בִּלִבָד.
 - ר. רוֹבֵעַ: הוּא הַשּׁוֹכֵב עִם נְקַבָּה מִבְּנֵי אָדְם.
 - ה. נְרְבָּע: הוֹא הַנִּשְׁכָּב מִזְכָר מִבְּנֵי אָדְם.
- ו. שוֹר נַגָּח: הוּא שֶׁהַמִּית אִישׁ אוֹ אִשָּׁה בִּנְגִיחַת קַרְנָיו אוֹ בְּנְשִׁיכָה אוֹ בְּגִיזָה אְכֶּן שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בְּנְשִׁיכָה אוֹ בְאֵיזֶה אְכֶּן שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בְּנְשִׁיכָה אוֹ בְאֵיזֶה אְכֶּן שֶׁיִּהְיֶה וְאָכוּר לַאַכִילָה. וְאֵלוּ הַגּוּפִים לִפִי דִינָם חַיָּבִים לִהְסָּקֵל.
- ז. בָּהֶמַת עִיר הַנִּדְּחַת: הִיא הַבְּהֵמָה מִן הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר נִדְּחוּ יוֹשְׁבֵיהָ לַעֲבֹד עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה מִמַּה שֶּׁהַכָּתוּב חִיֵּב הֲרִיגַת יוֹשָׁבֵי הָעִיר הַהִּיא וְכָל בְּהֶמְתָּהּ.
- ח. בְּהֵמָה מוּעֶלֶת בַּחֵרֶם: הִיא הַבְּהֵמָה שֶׁבְּעָלֶיהָ מוֹעֵל בַּחֵרֶם וַאֵסוּרָה בַהַנָּאָה מִשׁוּם שֶׁדִינָה לִהְשָּׂרֵף.

Ritual Slaughter 🔉 Concerning Ritual Slaughter

banned as *herem*, but illicitly taken anyway; the decapitated calf; the scapegoat; the leper's bird; an offering to idolatry; an animal before its time; an animal along with its child; and an animal that has been torn [rather than slaughtered]:

- Injured: anything that has been hit by a piece of wood or a rock or an arrow or a spear and is injured from this, and is in danger of dying.
- Sick: anything that is recognizably unhealthy as can be realized from its heavy motions and its reduced eating and drinking.
- 3. Close to death: anything very near death and, other than breathing, that has lost its appearance of being alive.
- 4. **Penetrator:** anything that has slept with a human female.
- 5. Penetrated: anything with which a human male has slept.
- 6. **The ox that gored:** anything that has killed a man or woman by goring, biting, kicking, trampling, or by whatever other method, it is forbidden to eat. All these [the penetrator, the penetrated, and the murderous ox] must be stoned, in accordance with their law.
- 7. An animal from an idolatrous city: an animal from a city whose inhabitants were led astray to idol worship. [The prohibition to eat such things is derived] from the fact that the Torah commands that any person or animal from such a city must be killed.⁴
- 8. An animal that has been banned as *herem*, but illicitly taken anyway: an animal whose owner [acquired it by] illicitly taking from the *herem*. 5 It is forbidden to derive benefit from such an animal, because the law is that it must be burned.

⁴ Deuteronomy 13.

⁵ *Ḥerem* is a status wherein items, or even a whole city, are declared dedicated to God alone. See Leviticus 27:28; Deuteronomy 13:17–18; Joshua 6:17–18.

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- ט. עֶגְלָה עֲרוּפָה: הִיא הַנְּקֵבָה הָרָפָה שֶׁבְּמִין הַבָּקָר אֲשֶׁר חִיְּבָהּ הַכָּתוּב לִהִשָּׁחֵט מִן הָעֶרֶף בָּעִיר הַקִּרוֹבָה אֶל הֶחַלָּל.
- י. שָׁעִיר הַמִּשְׁתַּלֶח: הוּא שֶׁעֶלָה עָלָיו הַגּוֹרֶל בְּיוֹם הַכְּפּוּרִים.
- יא. צִפּוֹר שֶׁל מְצֹרָע: הוּא אֲשֶׁר יַזֶּה הַכֹּהֵן בּוֹ עַל הַנִּטְהָר מִצְּרַעְתּוֹ וְנֶאֱסָר לַהֲנָאָה מִשׁוּם שֶׁחִיֵּב הַכָּתוּב לְשַׁלַּח אוֹתָם חַיִּים הַמִּדְבָּרָה.
- יב. תִּקְרְבֶּת לַעֲבוֹדָה זָרָה: הוּא בְעַל־הַחַיִּים שָׁנִּרְשַׁם עָלָיוּ
 רְשֶׁם־מָה וְנִפְרַשׁ לְהַעָבֵד אוֹ לְקָרְבָּן לַעֲבוֹדָה זָרָה וְנָאֶסַר
 מִשׁוּם תּוֹעֵבָה שֶׁנָּאֱמַר לֹא תֹאכַל כָּל תּוֹעֵבָה (דברים י״ד ג׳)
 וְכָתוּב וְלֹא תָבִיא תוֹעֵבָה אֶל בִּיתֶךְ (דברים ז׳ כ״ו).
- יג. מַחְסוֹר זְמַן: הוּא אֲשֶׁר לֹא נִשְׁלְמוּ לוֹ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִיּוֹם הְּוּלְדוֹ כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמֵר שׁוֹר אוֹ־כֶשֶׂב אוֹ־עֵזּכִּי יָּלֵד וְהְיָה שִּׁבְעַת יָמִים הְּוּלְדוֹ כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמֵר שׁוֹר אוֹ־כֶשֶׂב אוֹ־עֵזּכִּ יִיָּלֵד וְהְיָה שִּׁבְעַת יָמִים תַּתַת אָמוֹ (ויִקרא כ״ב כ״ז). וְנֶאֱסַר מִשׁוּם שֶׁחְנַן לוֹ הַכְּתוּב חַיֵּי זְמַן שִׁבְעַת יָמִים עַל צֵד הַחֶמְלָה וּמִזֶּה תֵּאָסֵר גַּם שְׁחִיטַת אָמוֹ כִּי בְשְׁחִיטַת אִמוֹ מֵיך יִהְיֶה תַּחַת אָמוֹ וְכֵן דִּין זֶה יְקַשׁ אִמוֹ כִּי בִשְׁחִיטַת אִמוֹ מֵיך יִהְיֶה תַּחַת אָמוֹ וְכֵן דִּין זֶה יְקַשׁ

- 9. The decapitated calf: the weak⁶ female of the cattle species, which Scripture requires to be slaughtered from the back of its neck in the city that is closest to a corpse.
- 10. **The scapegoat:** the goat that has been chosen by lottery on Yom Kippur [to be sent into the wilderness].⁷
- 11. The leper's bird: the bird that a priest uses to sprinkle onto someone who is becoming purified from leprosy. The prohibition to eat it is derived from the fact that the Torah commands to send out this bird alive into the wilderness.
- 12. **An offering to idolatry:** an animal that has been designated to be worshiped or as a sacrifice for idolatry. It is prohibited to derive benefit [from such things], for it is an abomination; as it is said: *Do not eat any abomination* (Deuteronomy 14:3); and it is written: *Bring no abomination into thy house* (Deuteronomy 7:26).
- 13. **An animal before its time:** anything that is younger than seven full days old; as the verse says: *When an ox or a lamb or a goat is born, it must remain with its mother for seven days* (Leviticus 22:27). It is prohibited, for the Torah graciously grants the animal seven days of life, as [a deed of] mercy. Therefore, slaughtering the mother [before the offspring is seven days old] is prohibited, as well; for if the mother is slaughtered, how can [the offspring] be *with its mother*? This law applies,

⁶ The author seems to be using the word "weak" (*rafa*) to mean young; thus, a calf rather than a grown cow. Scripture states rules about this calf, that *it has not been worked, has not born any yoke* (Deut. 21:3); perhaps this is why our author calls it "weak." For the context of this law, see Deuteronomy 21:1–9. 7 Leviticus 16.

⁸ Leviticus 14. The word "leprosy" is a traditional English translation of Hebrew *zara'ath*; it refers to a mysterious skin disease mentioned throughout Scripture, not Hansen's Disease, which is known as "leprosy" today.

גַם בַּחַיּוֹת גַם בָּעוֹפּוֹת. וְהוּא שֶׁלֹא לְשַׁלַּח אֶת הָאֵם מֵעַל הַבָּנִים אֱלָא אַחַר עֵבֹר שִׁבְעַת יָמִים.

יד. אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ: הוּא מִמִּין לֹאֹ־תִקָּח הָאֵם עַל־הַבְּנִים (דברים כ״ב
וֹ׳) וְהוּא שָׁלֹא לְהַשְּׁחִית הָעִקָּר עִם הַפֶּרַח בְּיוֹם אֶחָד וְזֶה
יַקִּישׁ אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בִּתּוֹ, אוֹתָהּ וְאֶת בִּתָּהּ, אוֹתָהּ וְאֶת בְּנָהּ,
וֹיָה גַּם בַּבְּהֵמוֹת וְגַם בַּחִיּוֹת וְגַם בָּעוֹפוֹת וְאִסוּר זֶה מִפְּנֵי
הַחֶמְלָה. וְתַחַת מַאֲמֵר אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ נִכְלָל אִסוּר שְׁחִיטַת
הָחָמְלָה. וְתַחַת מַאֲמֵר אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ נִכְלָל אִסוּר שְׁחִיטַת
הָהָרָה כִּי הָעֻבָּר בְּעוֹדוֹ בִּמְעֵי אִמּוֹ נִקְרָא בֵּן, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב
וַיִּתְרוֹצְצוּ הַבְּנִים בְּקְרָבָּה (בראשית כ״ה כ״ב). בְּהֵמְה שָׁנִשְׁחֲטָה
וְנִמְצֵאת הָרָה וְעֻבָּרָה יָצָא חֵי, אִם לֹא יָמוּת הָעֻבָּר בְּאוֹתוֹ
וְנִמְצֵאת הָרָה וְעֻבָּרָה יָצָא חֵי, אִם לֹא יָמוּת הָעֻבָּר בְּאוֹתוֹ
בְּאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם קֹּדֶם הָעֶרֶב אָסוּר מִשׁוּם הֶפְּסֵד שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּיוֹם
אֵחָד.

טו. טְרֵפָה: הִיא הַבָּהֶמָה אוֹ הַחַיָּה אוֹ הָעוֹף הַנְּטְרָפִים מִידֵי

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- by analogy, also to wild mammals and to birds; and thus, it is forbidden to send away the mother [bird] from her children until seven days have passed.⁹
- 14. An animal along with its child: This is of the same concept as Thou shalt not take the mother along with the children (Deuteronomy 22:6), namely, not to destroy the root along with the flower on the same day. This prohibition can be extended by analogy to a father and daughter, a mother and daughter, and a mother and son. 10 It applies to domestic mammals, wild mammals, and birds. The reason for this prohibition is compassion. Slaughtering a pregnant animal is also included in this prohibition [against slaughtering] an animal along with its child, for a fetus is called *ben* [child] already in its mother's womb; as it is written: And the children struggled together inside her (Genesis 25:22).11 If an animal was slaughtered and was then found to be pregnant, and its offspring came out alive – if the offspring did not die that day, but stayed alive until the night, it is permissible to eat the mother's flesh. However, if [the offspring] dies that day, before evening, it is forbidden, for both [mother and offspring] have been lost on a single day.
- 15. Torn (terefa): Any domestic mammal, wild mammal, or bird

⁹ In Deuteronomy 22:6–7, the Torah speaks of sending away a mother bird from her offspring; our author is arguing, based on the verse about domestic mammals in Leviticus 22, that the mother bird may not be sent away until seven days after the birth of her offspring.

¹⁰ The words an animal along with its child (Leviticus 22:28) literally translate to: him and his son. Our author is saying that the animal's sex is irrelevant.

11 Unlike the Rabbanites, Karaites prohibit slaughtering a pregnant animal. See Royal Attire: On Karaite and Rabbanite Beliefs, by Mordecai Ben Nisan, translated by Gabriel Wasserman, The Karaite Press: Daly City, 2016.

אָדָם, אוֹ חַיָּה טוֹבֶפֶת, אוֹ עוֹף טוֹבֵף, וְהוּא אֲשֶׁר נָאֱמַר עָלְיוֹ
וּבְשָּׁר בַּשָּׂדָה טְבִפָּה לֹא תֹאבֵלוֹ (שמות כ״ב ל) וְאָמַר בַּשָּׂדָה לְפִי
שֹׁהַטְּבִפָּה הִיא בַשִּׂדָה עַל הָרֹב וְדִין זֶה גַּם בְּמוֹשַׁב בְּנֵי אָדָם
וּבְכָל מָקוֹם שִׁיִּהְיֶה. וְכֵן תֵּאָסֵר אֲכִילַת הַנְּבֵלָה. וְהִיא הַמֵּתָה מִיְתָה טִבְעִית בְּלֹא שְׁחִיטָה אוֹ שָׁנִּתְנַבְּלָה בִשְׁחִיטָה מִמַּה שָׁאָמֵר הַכְּעִית בְּלֹא שְׁחִיטָה אוֹ שָׁנִּתְנַבְּלָה בִשְׁחִיטָה מִמַּה שָׁאָמֵר הַכְּעִית בְּלֹא תֹאַכְלוֹּ בְּל נְבֵלְה (דברים י״ד כ״א). וְהַטְּבֵפָה חֲמוּרָה מֵהַנְּבֵלָה מִמְּה שָּׁהַכְּתוּב הוֹרָה לְהַשְּׁלִיךְ הַטְּרֵפָה אָסוּר לַבֶּלֶב שָׁנְאֶבְיִרְ הִשְּׁלִירָ מִשְׁלִיכוּן אוֹתוֹ (שמות כ״ב ל) וּבַנְּבֵלָה אָמַר לַבֶּלֶב שְׁנְעָיִדְ הִשְּּלִיכוּן אוֹתוֹ (שמות כ״ב ל) וּבַנְּבֵלָה אָמַר לְבָּלֶב שְׁנְבֶירְ הִשְּׁלִינִי מִשׁוּם שָׁהוּא מַזִּיק לַבְּרִיאוּת כְּמוֹ שָׁנָּאֲמֵר לִא תִבֵּן מִכְשׁל (ויקרא י״ט י״ד).

וּכְמוֹ שָׁנָאֶסָר בְּשַׂר הַגּוּפִים הַטְּמֵאִים מִכֶּל מִין שָׁיִּהְיָה, פֵן נֶאֶסָר כָּל הַיּוֹצֵא מֵהֶם כְּגוֹן חֲלֵב בְּהֵמָה וְחַיָּה טְמֵאָה פֵן נֶאֱסָר כָּל הַיּוֹצֵא מֵהֶם כְּגוֹן חֲלֵב בְּהֵמָה וְחַיָּה טְמֵאָה וּבִיצַת עוֹף וְדָג טָמֵא וְדוֹמֵיהֶם כְּמוֹ שֻׁנָּאֱמֵר מִ**בְּשָּׂרָם לֹא** תֹאבלוּ (ויִקרא י״א ח׳). וְטַעַם מִבְּשָׂרָם כּוֹלֵל עַל כָּל הַיּוֹצֵא מֵהָם. וּמַאֲמֵר חֲכָמֵינוּ ע״ה עַל זֶה כָּל הַיּוֹצֵא מִן הַטָּהוֹר טָהוֹר וְכָל זִה בְּל הַיּוֹצֵא מִן הַטָּהוֹר טָהוֹר וְכָל

that was torn apart by human hands, or by a carnivorous¹² wild animal, or by a carnivorous bird, is referred to in the verse: Ye shall not eat torn flesh in a field (Exodus 22:23). It says *in the field* because most torn flesh is in a field, but this law applies also in places of human settlement, and, indeed, everywhere. Similarly, it is forbidden to eat a carcass (*nevela*); that is, an animal that died a natural death, without being slaughtered, or that was made into a carcass [due to slips] during the slaughtering process; as Scripture says: Ye shall eat no carcass (Deuteronomy 14:21). Torn flesh is more severe than a carcass, for the Torah instructs us to throw torn flesh to a dog; as it is written: Ye shall throw it to the dog (Exodus 22:27); whereas, regarding a carcass, it says: To the sojourner *in thy gates shalt thou give it, and he may eat it* (Deuteronomy 14:21). And feeding a torn animal to a gentile is also prohibited, because it is harmful to one's health; as it is written: Do not place a stumbling block before a blind person (Leviticus 19:14). 13

Just as eating the bodies of impure animals of all species is forbidden, so, too, it is forbidden to consume anything produced by such animals, such as milk of an impure domestic or wild mammal, or eggs of an impure bird or fish, or anything like these; as it is written: *From their flesh shall ye not eat* (Leviticus 11:8). And the meaning of "from their flesh" includes anything that issues from them. ¹⁴ Our teachers' rule regarding this is: "Anything produced from a pure thing is pure, and

¹² Literally "one that tears." An animal that tears up other animals, even if it does not eat them, would still make its victim "a torn animal." However, the translation "carnivore" makes a much easier English sentence; indeed, the word "those that tear" (*torfim*) is used to refer to carnivores in Modern Hehrew

¹³ That is, do not deceive someone into doing something that could harm them.

¹⁴ The author is expounding on the particle "from" as meaning not just the flesh but what issues from it.

הַיוֹצֵא מִן הַטָּמֵא טָמֵא. וְלֹא כְדֵעַת חַכְמֵי הָרַבָּנִים שֶׁאָמְרוּ עַל הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַבָּא מִבֶּטֶן הַחֲזִיר שֶׁהוּא טָמֵא, וְעַל הַחֲזִיר הַבָּא מִבֶּטֶן הַכִּבְשָׂה שֶׁהוּא טָהוֹר וְכָל כַּיּוֹצֵא בָאֵלֶה.

וְזוּלַת אֵלֶה הַגּוּפִים שָׁהִזְכַּרְנוּ כָּלֶם הֵם כְּשֵׁרִים. וּמִכֶּל אֶחָד מֵהַסּוּגִים הַנּזְכָּרִים מֻתִּרִים בַּהֲנָאָה בְּכָל מֲקוֹם וּבְכָל זְמַן. מַהַסּוּגִים הַנּזְכָּרִים מֻתִּרִים בַּהֲנָאָה בְּכָל מֲקוֹם וּבְכָל זְמַן. וַהְנָאָתָם הִיא עַל־יְבִי שְׁחִיטָה זוּלַת הַסּוּג הָאֶחְד שָׁהוּא סוּג הַדְּגִים שָׁהִתִּירוֹ הַכָּתוּב בְּמִיתָתוֹ הַמְסְבֶּבֶת מֵאֲסִיפָתוֹ מִן הַיָּם הַיִּאָא לְהֶם וְהִיאָ לְהֶם וֹמְדָאָ לְהֶם וֹמְדָּא לְהֶם וֹמְצָא לְהֶם (במדבר י״א כ״ב). וּבְזוּלַת זָה הוּא אָסוּר בַּהֲנָאָה, כְּגוֹן הַמֵּת בַּיָם וְהַנֶּהֶרְג וְכִיוֹצֵא וְהוּא כְמוֹ נְבֵלָה. וּשְׁאָר הַסּוֹגִים כְּלָם טְעוּנִים שְׁחִיטָה.

אֵיכוּת הַשְּׁחִיטָה יְדוּעָה לֱנוּ בְּסֵבֶל הַיְרָשָׁה דּוֹר אַחַר דּוֹר מִזְּמַן נְּחַ, ע״ה, שֶׁהִיא בִּכְרִיתַת אַרְבַּעַת הַסִּימָנִים אֲשֶׁר בִּפְנֵי הַצַּנָּאר שֶׁהֵם קָנָה, וֱשֶׁט וּשְׁנֵי וְרִידִין. הַקָּנָה - הוּא מְקוֹם הוֹצָאַת הַנְּשָׁמָה וְהַקּוֹל. וְהַנְּשָׁט - הוּא מְקוֹם הוֹרָדַת הַמַּאֲכָל וְהַמִּשְׁתָּה. וּשְׁנֵי וְרִידִין - הֵם מְקוֹרֵי הַדָּם.

ָנְהֶיוֹת שֶׁהַשְּׁחִיטָה בְּאְפֶן זֶה נוֹדָע מֵהַנָּאֱמָר לְנְחַ, ע"ה, אַדְ־ בְּשָׂר בְּנַפְשׁוֹ דָמוֹ לֹא תֹאכֵלוּ (בראשית ט' ד') וְהוֹצְאַת הַדָּם מִבְּעַל־ הַחַיִּים לֹא תִהְיֶה אֶלָּא בְצוּרָה הַנִּזְכֵּרָת. כִּי מִזְמַן הַבִּרִיאָה עַד anything produced from an impure thing is impure." This is in contrast to the view of the Rabbanite sages, who say that a lamb born from the womb of a pig is kosher, and a pig born from the womb of a sheep is not kosher, and all sorts of similar claims. ¹⁵

But other than these cases, the bodies of all these [kosher species] are permitted. Deriving benefit from any of these species is made permissible, in all times and places, through the act of slaughtering (*sheḥiṭa*). However, one type, namely fish, is an exception; Scripture permits them if their death comes about as a result of their being fetched from the sea, which counts as slaughtering for them. As it is written: *Could there be enough sheep and cattle slaughtered to feed them? If all the fish of the sea are gathered for them, will it suffice to feed them?* (Numbers 11:22). And without this [death as a result of fishing], it is forbidden to derive any benefit from [fish], such as if they died in the sea or were killed [in some other manner] – they are like a carcass. And all other kinds [of animals] require slaughter.

The correct way to slaughter is known to us from the burden of the inheritance (*sevel ha-yerusha*) dating back to Noah, peace be upon him. It is: the cutting of the [four] signs (*simanim*) – the trachea, esophagus, and two veins (arteries) – which are in the front of the neck. The trachea is the place from which breath and voice are produced; the esophagus is the place through which food and drink are swallowed; the two veins are the sources of blood.

The fact that slaughtering must be performed in this way is known from what [God] said to Noah, peace be upon him: *But ye may not eat flesh in its life, its blood* (Genesis 9:4) – for the blood can only be extracted from the animal in the abovementioned

¹⁵ There is no paragraph break in the 1958 Hebrew edition, but we have added one to this publication, because the author turns here from the topic of impure species to the topic of the method of slaughter.

זְמֵן נְחַ, ע"ה, לֹא הָיוּ נוֹהֲגִים בִּשְׁחִיטָה אֱלָּא הִיוּ פּוֹרְקִים אֵבֶּר מִן הַחַי, ר"ל, שֶׁבְּעוֹד הַגּוּף חַי הִיוּ מְסִירִים מֵעָלָיו הָאֵבֶּר הַנִּבְּחָר לָהֶם וְאוֹכְלִים אוֹתוֹ. וּבָזֶה הִיְתָה נִכְאֶבֶת הַבְּהַמָּה כְּאֵב גָּדוֹל זְמֵן רַב, וְזֶה הוּא אַכְזְרִיּוּת וּמִדְּה רָעָה. וְעוֹד שֶׁהָיָה נִבְלָע הַדְּם זְמַן רַב, וְזֶה הוּא אַכְזְרִיּוּת וּמִדְּה רָעָה. וְעוֹד שָׁהָיָה נִבְלָע הַדָּם וְנִקְפָּא בְּתוֹךְ הַבָּשֶׂר וּבָזֶה הָיָה נָאֶכְל גַּם הַדָּם, שָׁהִיָּה עָתִיד הַכְּתוֹב לְאָסְרוֹ אִסּוּר גָּמוּר. וְלָזֶה נֶאֱמֵר וְלֹא תֹאַכַל הַנָּפָשׁ עִם הַבְּשִּׁר (דברים י"ב כ"גוּ), ר"ל בְּעוֹד דְּמוֹ בוֹ כִּי הַדְּם הוּא הַנְבָּשָּׁת. וּמִזֶּה נָאֲסְר שִׁלֹא לֶאֱכֹל אֵבֶר מִן הַחַי רַק עַל־יְדֵי שְׁחִיטָה לְבַד, כְּדֵי לְהָקֵל עַל כְּאֵב הַנִּשְׁחָט וְלִשְׁפֹּךְ דְּמוֹ כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹא יֵאָכֵל.

אֵיכוּת פְּעַל הַשְּׁחִיטָה הִיא, שֶׁתִּהְיֶה בִּמְשִׁיכַת הַּסַּכִּין עַל הַצַּוָּאר, ר"ל בְּהוֹלֶכָה וּבְהוֹבָאָה אַחַת, וְאִם יַגְבִּיר הַשּׁוֹחֵט שֶׁלֹא נִגְמְרָה הַשְּׁחִיטָה, אֲזֵי יֵשׁ לוֹ לְהוֹסִיף הוֹלֶכָה וְהוֹבָאָה אַחֶרֶת בְּלִי שֶׁיָּרִים הַסַּכִּין מֵעַל הַצַּנָּאר, בְּאְׂכָן שֻׁתִּהְיֵינָה הַהוֹלֶכוֹת בְּלִי שֶׁיָּרִים הַסַּכִּין מֵעַל הַצַּנָּאר, בְּאְׂכָן שֻׁתִּהְיֵינָה הַהוֹלֶכוֹת וְהַהוֹבָאוֹת תְּכוּפּוֹת זוֹ אַחַר זוֹ. וֶהֱיוֹת שֶׁהַשְּׁחִיטָה בְּהוֹלֶכָה וּבְהוֹבָאה נוֹדָע מִמַּשְׁמַע לְשׁוֹן שְׁחִטָה, שֶׁהִיא מְשִׁיכָה מִלְשׁוֹן וּיְחִטָּה, שָׁהִיא מְשִׁיכָה מִלְשׁוֹן חִיכּה בּוֹ מְשִׁיכַת הַחֵץ עַל הַקֶּשֶׁת, חַּיְשִׁיכִה לֹא תִהְיֶה אֶלֶּא בְּהוֹלֶכָה וּבְהוֹבָאָה. גַּם בְּהוֹלֶכָה אַחַת לְבִי הּבְּלִי הוֹבָאָה תִּכְשֵׁר בִּשְׁתִיטָה וְזֶה כְּשָׁיַגְבִיר הַשּׁוֹחֵט שָׁלֹא לְבַד בְּלִי הוֹבָאָה תִּכְשֵׁר בִּלִי שְׁחִיטָה וְזֶה כְּשָׁיִנְה אָרִיכָה לִהִיוֹת עָּלִד מְהַיִּיכָה לִהְיוֹת יִּה בְּלִי הוֹבְאָה תִּכְיִבִים בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה, וְהַשְׁחִיטָה צְרִיכָה לִהְיִם הָּלִיכָה לִּהִים בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה, וְהַשְׁחִיטָה צְרִיכָה לִהְיֹנִת לָּהִיכָה לִבְים בְּלִים בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה, וְהַשְׁחִיטָה בְּלִי הִיבְּיִם אָחִייבָה לִבְי בִּלִים בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה, וְבִשְׁרִיכָה לִבְים בְּלִיכָה לִּבְים בְּלִים בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה, וְהַשְּחִייָם הִבּלִיכָּה לִבְיִים בְּיִים אָחִיים בְּלִים בּלִים בְּלִים בְּלִי שְׁחִיטָה, וְבִשְׁיִם בְּלִים בּלִים בְּלִים בְּעִים בְּלִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּלִּים בְּעִּים בְּיִים בְּיִבּים בְּיִים בְּיִבְים בְּיִבּים בְּבִּים בְּבִּים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִּבְּשִׁים בְּיִים בְּיִבְּים בְּיִּים בְּבִּים בְּבִּים בְּבִּים בְּבְּיִים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִבּים בְּיִּבְּיִים בְּיוֹם בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִּים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיִים בְּיְּי

way. For from the time of Creation until that of Noah, people would not slaughter animals; rather, they would tear limbs from a living animal – that is, while the body was still alive, they would remove the limb that they wanted, and they would eat it. The animal would suffer tremendously from this, for an extended period, and this was an act of great cruelty and wrong behavior. Moreover, the blood would be absorbed and harden inside the flesh, such that the blood would be eaten - and Scripture would one day [at the time of the revelation at Sinai] prohibit [the consumption of blood] entirely, regarding which it is said: Thou shalt *not eat the life along with the flesh* – that is, while the blood is still in it – *for the blood is the life* (Deuteronomy 12:23). Therefore, it is forbidden to eat a limb straight from a living animal; but rather [it is permitted to eat meat] only after slaughter, in order to lessen the pain of the slaughtered animal, and it is required to spill out its blood, so that it [the blood] will not be eaten.

The correct way to slaughter is to drag the knife across the [animal's] neck, in a forward and then backward motion; but if it is too difficult for the slaughterer, ¹⁶ such that the slaughter has not been completed, then he should do another forward and backward motion, without removing the knife from the neck, such that all the motions, forward and back, are uninterrupted. The fact that slaughtering must be done in a forward and backward motion is known from the meaning of the word <code>sheḥiṭa</code>, which means "pulling," as in <code>hez shaḥuṭ</code> (Jeremiah 9:7), which means the pulling of the arrow on the bow – and pulling is necessarily done by going forward and backward. However, slaughter can also be acceptable if there is only a single forward motion, without any backward motion, if the slaughterer can put in enough effort

¹⁶ Hebrew *ve'im yagbir*; this would seem to mean "if the slaughterer gives too much effort," but this obviously makes no sense in context, so the sentence seems to mean "if the effort is too much for the slaughterer."

בִּזְרִיזוּת וְקַלּוּת בְּאְׂפֶן שֶׁלֹּא לְהַכְאִיב הַנִּשְׁחָט בִּכְאֵב נוֹסָף עַל כָּאֵב הַשִּׁחִיטָה.

הַסַּכִּין אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ תֵּעֶשֶׂה הַשְּׁחִיטָה צָּרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת מְיֻחָד לְפְּעֵל זָה וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּמֵשׁ בִּדְבָרִים אֲחֵרִים, כִּי כֵן מָצֵאנוּ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הַמַּאֲכֶלֶּת בְּיִדוֹ (בּראשית כ״ב י׳) בְּהֵא הַיְּדִיעָה, שֶׁהוּא מְסֻגָּל לִפְּעֻלָּה זֹאת בְּיִחוּד, וְנִקְרָא מַאֲכֶלֶת שָׁהִיא מַרְשֶׁרֶת אֶת בַּעַל־הַחַיִּים לַאֲכִילָה וְהַמַּאֲכֶלֶת צְּרִיכָה לִהְיוֹת חַדָּה וַחֲרִיפָה וּכְפוּלָה בְאָרְכָּה כְּדִי עְבִי וְהַמִּאְכֵלֶת צְרִיכָה לִהְיוֹת חַדָּה וַחֲרִיפָה וּכְפוּלָה בְאָרְכָּה כְּדִי עְבִי צְּנִאר הַגּוּף הַנִּשְׁחָט, כְּדֵי לִהְיוֹת הַשְּׁחִיטָה בְּהוֹלְכָה וְהוֹבְאָה, וְכֵן שֶׁתִּהְיָה יִשְׁרַת הַפְּצָה וְלֹא מְחַדְּדֶת כְּשִׁנִי הַמַּזְלֵג, כָּן יִקְרָה וְתִבְּעָת הַשְּׁחִיטָה צָּרִיךְ לְבָּדְקָה הֵיטֵב עַל חַדּוּתָה וַחֲרִיפוּתְה, וְחְכָּר הַמִּלְת בִּיִּתְה הַשְּׁחִיטָה צָּרִיךְ לְבָּדְקָה הֵיטֵב עַל חַדּוּתָה וַחְיִנְה הַבְּּחִיטָה. פְּנִים וְהוּא הַפֶּךְ מִשְׁמְעוּת מִלַּת הַשְּׁחִיטָה צָּרִיךְ לְבָּדְקָה הֵיטֵב עַל חַדּוּתָה וְחֵיִרִים וְּתָבְּרָה חַדּוּתָה, וְחְמֶר הַבְּעָה הְוֹקְיִם בְּבְרָכָה בְּלִי הֶפְּסֵק דְּבּוּר בֵּינְתָּה, יִתְחַיֵּב בִּבְרָכָה בְּלִי הֶפְּסֵק דְּבּוּר בֵּינְתְּיִם, בְּנִתְר הַשְּׁחִיטָה, יִתְחַיֵּב בִּבְרָכָה בְּלִי הֶפְסֵק דְּבּוּר בֵּינְתְּים, בְּנְיחִים, וֹחִי, הְבְּיִרְה בִּבְּרָכָה בְּלִי הֶפְסֵק דְבּוּר בֵּינְתְּחָים. בְּנִים חִבּיִם הַּבְּחִים הַבְּיִם הַבְּיִם הַבְּיִם הַבְּיִם הַבְּיִם הַבְּיִם הַ בְּבְּרָכָה בְּלִי הָפְסֵק דְבּוּר בֵּינְתְּיִם.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלֶם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשֵׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתִיוּ וְהָתִּיר לְנוּ לִשְׁחֹט בְּהֵמָה טְהוֹרָה, אוֹ עוֹף טָהוֹר, אוֹ חַיָּה טְהוֹרָה. וְהִתִּיר לְנוּ לִשְׁחֹט בְּהֵמָה טְהוֹרָה, אוֹ עוֹף טָהוֹר, אוֹ חַיָּה טְהוֹרָה. וְטַעַם הַבְּּרָכָה הוּא עַל שֶׁהִסְפִּיק לְהָשִׁית מְזוֹן לִבְנִי אָדָם, כִּי אִי אֶפְשָׁר לָאָדָם לֵהָנוֹת מִשׁוּם דָּבָר בְּלֹא בְרָכָה. וְדַם הַנִּשְׁחָט אִם בְּהֵמָה הוּא טָעוּן שְׁפִיכָה עַל הָאֵרֶץ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶאֱמֵר עַל הָאֶרֶץ אִם בְּהֵמָה הוּא טָעוּן שְׁפִיכָה עַל הָאֵרֶץ, כְּמוֹ שָׁנֶאֱמֵר עַל הָאֶרֶץ הִיּה אוֹ עוֹף הוּא - טָעוּן כִּסוּיִּ

to leave none of the [four] signs uncut. The slaughtering must be done efficiently and lightly, so as not to give additional pain beyond the pain of the actual slaughter.

The knife used for slaughtering must be designated specifically for this purpose, and one should not use other items [to do the act of slaughter]. This can be derived from the following verse: He took the knife in his hand (Genesis 22:10), with the definite article, meaning that it is reserved specifically for this purpose. The knife is called *ma'akheleth* [in that verse], for it makes the animal permissible for eating [akhila]. The knife needs to be honed, sharp, and twice as long as the animal's neck is thick, so that the act of slaughtering will be able to go forward and back. [The knife must also] have a straight edge and not have serrations like the prongs of a fork, lest it happen that it be inserted in the midst of the [four] signs, which is the opposite of the meaning of *shehita* [pulling]. At the time of slaughter, one must perform a good check on the knife's sharpness, lest it have been blemished and lost its sharpness. The material of which the knife is made must be of good, strong iron, such that the slaughtering process can be done easily and quickly.

Right before the slaughtering, one must make the following blessing, without speaking between it and the slaughtering:

"Blessed are you Y·H·W·H our God, eternal king, who has sanctified us through His commandments, and permitted us to slaughter a pure domestic mammal," or "a pure bird," or "a pure wild mammal." The purpose of the blessing is [to bless God] for providing food to mankind, for it is forbidden for a person to derive any sort of pleasure without reciting a blessing. As for the blood of the slaughtered animal: if [one is slaughtering] a domestic mammal, one needs to pour it [the blood] onto the ground; as is it said: *Thou shalt pour it out onto the ground, like water* (Deuteronomy 12:16). However, if one is slaughtering a wild mammal or bird, one must cover [the blood] with dirt; as it is

בֶּעָפָר, שֶׁנֶּאֶמַר וְאִישׁ אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְּׂרָאֵל וּמִן הַגֵּר הַגָּר בְּתוֹכָם אֲשֶׁר יִצוּד צִיד חַיָּה אוֹ עוֹף אֲשֶׁר יִאָכֵל וְשָׁפַּךְ שֶׁת דָּמוֹ וְכִפֶּהוּ בֶּעָפָּר (ויקרא י״ז י״ג) וּבְעֵת הַכִּסוּי יִתְחַיַּב בְּרָכָה.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְשְׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתִיוּ וְצִוֳּנוּ עַל כִּסוּי דַם הָעוֹף הַטָּהוֹר הַנִּשְׁחָט אוֹ הַחַיָּה הַטְּהוֹרָה הַנִּשְׁחֵטֶת.

וְאִם הַנִּשְׁחָט קְטַן הַכַּמוּת מְאֹד וּמְשְׁכָה הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת כָּל דַּם הַנִּשְׁחָט וְלֹא נִשְׁפַּךְ אַרְצָה – חוֹב לִרְחֹץ אֶת הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת וּלְכַסּוֹת הַנִּשְׁחָט וְלֹא נִשְׁפַּךְ אַרְצָה – חוֹב לִרְחֹץ אֶת הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת וּלְכַסּוֹת מֵי הָרְחִיצָה כְּדֵי לְקַיֵּם מִצְוַת הַתּוֹרָה. וְכִסּוּי הַדָּם צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת בָּעָפָר אוֹ בָאֵפֶר וְכֵן בְּכָל דָּבָר שָׁנִּקְרָא בְשֵׁם עָפָר. הַנִּשְׁחָט צָרִיךְ לִקְשֹׁר יָדִיו וְרַגְּלָיו וְלָאֱחוֹז בְּרֹאשׁוֹ כְּדֵי שָׁלֹא יִתְנוֹעֵעַ וְיֻכָּה בָאֵרֶץ וְיִצְטַעֵר נוֹסְף עַל צַעַר הַשְּׁחִיטָה, וְכֵן שֶׁלֹא לְהַפְשִׁיט עוֹרוֹ אוֹ לִמְרֹט הָעוֹף וְלֹא לַעֲשׁוֹת שׁוּם דְּבָר עַד שֶׁיָּמוּת כָּרָאוּי מִשׁוּם שָׁלֹא לְהוֹסִיף בִּכָאבוֹ.

פְּעַל הַשְּׁחִיטָה לֹא כָל אִישׁ רָאוּי לְקָרְבָה אֵלָיו אֱלָּא אִישׁ

said: And whatsoever man from among the Israelites, or from the sojourners that dwell in their midst, hunts a wild mammal or bird that may be eaten, they must pour out its blood and cover it with dirt (Leviticus 17:13). And at the time of covering [the blood], the following blessing is required:

"Blessed are you Y·H·W·H our God and eternal king, who has sanctified us with his commandments, and commanded us to cover the blood of a pure bird that has been slaughtered" or "of a pure wild animal that has been slaughtered." 17

And if the animal being slaughtered is very small in size, the knife draws all its blood, so nothing is spilled onto the ground; in such a case, one is obligated to wash the knife, and cover the washing water, in order to fulfill the Torah's commandment.¹⁸

The covering of the blood must be with dirt, or ashes, or anything that is called "dirt" ('afar). 19

[Before slaughtering], one must bind the animal by its front legs and hind legs and grab its head, so that it will not tremble and be hit [by its fall] to the ground, which will cause pain additional to that of the slaughtering. Similarly, one must not flay the animal's skin, or, if it is a bird, pull out its feathers, or do anything else, until the animal is fully dead, to ensure that it will have no additional pain.

Not every man²⁰ is fit for the job of slaughtering. Rather, [the

¹⁷ There is no paragraph break in the Hebrew, but we have added one, because the author is done with his discussion of the blessing, and he goes on to a somewhat new topic.

¹⁸ Again, there is no paragraph break here, but we have added one, because the next sentence discusses the covering of blood in general, not in the specific case of a very small animal.

¹⁹ Again, we have added a paragraph break, because the topic changes.

²⁰ The word used here is *ish*, which can mean either "man" or "person" in general. It is not clear what the author's position is regarding female slaughterers. Here, we note that many of the Karaite women in twentieth-century Egypt slaughtered birds for family consumption.

ענין השחיטה 🔉 ענין הַשָּׁחִיטַה

תָּם בַּדֵּעוֹת וְיָשָׁר בַּמִּדּוֹת, מַשְׂכִּיל בְּתוֹרַת יהוה, בָּקִי בְדִינֵי הַשְּׁחִיטָה, נִזְהָר בְּאִסוּרֵי הַתּוֹרָה, בַּעַל שֵׂכֶל, יוֹדֵעַ לְהוֹצִיא פְּעַל הַשְּׁחִיטָה מִהְיוֹת חָמָס, בַּעַל זְרְוֹעַ, זָרִיז וְאָמָן בִּמְלֶאכֶת הַשְּׁחִיטָה, כְּדֵי שָׁיָקֵל בִּכְאֵב הַנִּשְׁחָט עַד הָאֶפְשָׁר, וְהָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הוּא שָׁלֵם בְּכָל אֱלֶה רָאוּי לִסְמֹךְ עָלָיו וּמֻתָּר לֶאֱכֹל מִשְּׁחִיטָתוֹ, וְאִם הוּא חָסֵר בְּאֶחָד מֵאֵלֶה, אֵין רָאוּי לְקָרְבָה אֶל הַמְּלָאכָה, כִּי וְאִם הוּא חָסֵר בְּאֶחָד מֵאֵלֶה, אֵין רָאוּי לְקָרְבָה אֶל הַמְּלָאכָה, כִּי מְלָאכָה קְדוֹשָׁה וּנְדוֹלָה הִיא, וְכָל הַקְּרֵב בְּמֵזִיד בִּלְתִּי הַתְּנָאִים הָשׁוֹר מַבֶּקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּשְׁחִיטָתוֹ נְבַלָה עֲווֹנוֹ הָשִׁר. בַּבְּקִּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּך הוּא וּשְׁחִיטָתוֹ נְבַלָּה עֲווֹנוֹ יִשָּׂא. כַּאָמוּר שׁוֹחֵט הַשּׁׁוֹר מַבְּה־אִישׁ (ישִיהוּ ס"וּ וּ׳).

Ritual Slaughter 🔻 Concerning Ritual Slaughter

only one fit is] a man who is pure in his beliefs, is upright in his character, understands Y·H·W·H's Torah, is expert in the laws of slaughtering, is careful in keeping the Torah's prohibitions, is full of intelligence, knows how to perform the act of slaughtering without its being [too] violent, is full of strength, and is fast working and expert in the act of slaughtering, so that he can make the animal's pain as light as possible. The man that is complete in all these is worthy to rely on, and it is permissible to eat of his slaughtering. But if he lacks any of these qualities, he is not fit to come close to this work, for it is great and holy work. And anyone who wantonly comes to this job, while lacking these conditions, is rebelling against God, and his slaughtering is deemed an [unkosher] carcass, and he will be accountable for his sin. As it is written: *One who slaughters an ox is* [accountable, just like] one who kills a man (Isaiah 66:3).

עֲשָׂרָה מְנַבְּלֵי הַשְּׁחִיטָה

- א. שְׁחִיטָה שָׁנִּשְׁאָר סִימָן אוֹ סִימָנִים בִּלְתִּי כְרִיתָה הִיא פְסוּלָה, וּמִקְרֶה כָזֶה קְרָאִוּהוּ חֲכָמֵינוּ, ע״ה, הַשְּׁאָרָה.
- ב. שְׁחִיטָה שֶׁנֶּעֶשְׂתָה בְעַצְּלוּת בְּהֵפֶּךְ הַזְּרִיזוּת אוֹ שֶׁהֵרִים הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת טֶרֶם יִנְּמֵר פְּעַל הַשְּׁחִיטָה וְעוֹד שָׁחַט - גַּם הִיא פְסוּלֶה. וְזֹאת קְרָאִוּהָ שְׁהִיָּה, וְזָה יִקְרֶה מֵחֻלְשַׁת יַד הַשּׁוֹחֵט אוֹ מֵחֶסְרוֹן חַדּוּת הַמַּאֵכֶלֶת.
- ג. הַנַּעֲשֵׂית בִּדְקִירַת הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת בָּעוֹר אוֹ בְסִימָן מִן הַסִּימָנִים גַּם הִיא פְסוּלָה, וְהִיא נִקְרֵאת חֲלָדָה, וְזֶה יִקְרֶה מֵחַדּוּת רֹאשׁ הַמַּאֲכֵלֶת כִּקִצֶה הַחֵנִית.
- ד. סִימָן אוֹ סִימָנִים שֶׁנֶּעֶקְרוּ מִמְּקוֹמָם מִצַּד הָרֹאשׁ אוֹ הַגּוּף, שְׁחִיטָה כָּזֹאת הִיא נְבֵלָה וְנִקְרֵאת עִקּוּר.
- ה. הַשְּׁחִיטָה בִדְרִיכַת הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת עַל הַצַּנָּאר בְּלִי מְשִׁיכָה, הַיְנוּ בְלִי הוֹלְכָה וְהוֹבָאָה, פְּסוּלָה הִיא וְנִקְרֵאת דְּרְסָה.
- ו. שְׁחִיטָה שֶׁנְּפְלָה בְּעֶצֶם הַטַּבְּעַת הַגְּדוֹלָה אוֹ סְמוּךְ לָהּ הִיא פְסוּלָה, יְעַן כִּי הַטַבְּעַת הַגְּדוֹלָה קִשָׁה כְּעֶצֶם וְיַרְגִּישׁ הַנִּשְׁחָט כְּאֵב גָּדוֹל, וּמִקְרֶה כָזֶה נִקְרָא הַגְרְמָה, שֶׁהַטַבְּעַת הַגְּדוֹלָה הִיא הָעֶלְיוֹנָה מִכָּל הַטַּבְּעוֹת שֶׁבַּקְנָה.
- ז. וְכֵן שְׁחִיטָה שֶׁנָּפְלָה בְּבֵית הַבְּלִיעָה גַּם הִיא פְסוּלָה, לְפִי שִׁיִּצְטַעֵר הַנִּשְׁחָט יוֹתֵר מֵצַעַר הַשְּׁחִיטָה וְנִקְרֵאת הַבְּלָעָה.
- ח. אָם מָשַׁךְ הַשּׁוֹחֵט אֶת הַסִּימָנִים לְצַד הָרֹאשׁ אוֹ נִמְשָׁכוּ

The Ten Things that Invalidate an Act of Slaughter

- 1. Any slaughtering in which one or more of the [four] signs was left uncut. Our sages, peace be upon them, called this scenario "leaving over" (*hash'ara*).
- 2. Slaughtering that was done lazily, rather than quickly, or if one picked up the knife before the process of slaughtering was complete and then went on to slaughter further this, too, is invalid. They have called this scenario "waiting" (*shehiyya*). It occurs when the slaughterer's hand is too weak or the knife is too dull.
- 3. If the knife punctured the skin or one of the signs this, too, is invalid. It is called "digging" (*ḥalada*). This can occur if the tip of the knife is very sharp, like the edge of a spear.
- 4. If one or more signs were uprooted from their place on the side of the head or the body. This renders the animal an unkosher carcass. It is called "uprooting" ('iqqur').
- 5. Slaughtering by running the knife along the neck, without a pulling motion that is, without going forward and back is invalid, and is called "pushing" (*derasa*).
- 6. Slaughtering that comes down upon or near the bone of the larynx is invalid, for the larynx is hard as a bone, so the animal will experience a great deal of pain. Such a scenario is called "slaughtering at the bone" (*hagrama*), for the larynx is the uppermost of all the rings in the windpipe.
- 7. Similarly, slaughtering that comes down upon the place of swallowing is also invalid, because this would cause the slaughtered animal to experience more pain than that of the slaughtering itself. This is called "slaughtering at the place of swallowing" (havla'a).
- 8. If the slaughterer pulls the signs toward the side of the head, or

ענין השחיטה 🔉 עֲשָּׂרָה מְנַבְּלֵי הַשְּׁחִיטָה

- לְצֵד מַטָּה וְנָפְלָה הַשְּׁחִיטָה חוּץ מִגְּבוּלָהּ לְמַעְלָה מֵהַטַּבְּעַת הַגְּדוֹלָה וּמִבֵּית הַבְּלִיעָה, נִתְנַבְּלָה הַשְּׁחִיטָה וְהִיא אֲשֶׁר קוֹרִין אוֹתָהּ הַמִּשָּׁכָה.
- ט. בּשְׁחִיטָה שֶׁהוּסַר הָרֹאשׁ מֵעַל הַגּוּף, אוֹ הִגְּיעָה הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת אֶל חוּט הַשִּׁדְרָה, הִיא נְבֵלֶה, לְפִי שֶׁתְּמַהֵּר לָמוּת בִּזְמַן קָצְר מֵהֶמְשֵׁךְ הַשְּׁחִיטָה וְנִקְרֵאת הַתָּזָה, וְזֶה יִקְרָה מֵרֹב חַדּוּת הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת אוֹ מִתּוֹסֶפֶת כְּחַ יַד הַשׁוֹחֵט.
- י. אָם נִכְרַת סִימָן אוֹ סִימָנִים מֵעַצְמָם שֶׁלֹא מִכְּחַ הַמַּאֲכֶלֶת הִיא פְסוּלֶה וְנִקְרֵאת נִתּוּק. וְזֶה יִקְרֶה מִמְּתִיחַת בַּעַל־הַחַיִּים אֶת צַנָּארוֹ.

אֵלֶה הַמִּקְרִים אֲשֶׁר הִזְכַּרְנוּ הַפּוֹסְלִים אֶת הַנִּשְׁחָט. הֵם הַנִּקְרָאִים בְּסִפְרֵי חֲכָמֵינוּ, ע״ה, ״עֲשָׂרָה מְנַבְּלֵי הַשְּׁחִיטָה״.

Ritual Slaughter 🗯 10 Invalidations of Act of Slaughter

- they have been pulled downward, and the slaughtering takes place out of its bounds above the larynx and the place of swallowing then the slaughtering is rendered invalid. This is what they call "pulling" (*hamshakha*).
- 9. If the head fell off the body of the animal as a result of slaughtering, or the knife reached the spine, the animal is rendered an unkosher carcass, because it will die more quickly than it would in the full process of slaughtering. This is called "beheading" (*hattaza*), and it may occur either when the knife is too sharp or when one exerts too much strength during the act of slaughter.
- 10. If one or more signs were cut by themselves, rather than by force of the slaughtering knife, this is invalid, and is called "dislocation" (*nittuq*). This may occur if the animal stretches out its neck.

These are the situations that we have mentioned as invalidating the slaughter. They are called "The Ten Invalidations of Slaughter" in the books of our sages, peace be upon them.

שְׁלֹשָׁה אָסוּרִים נוֹסְפִים

אַחַר שָׁנִשְׁחַט הַגּוּף כַּדִּין וְכַהֲלֶכָה עַל פִּי הַמְבֹאָר יֵאָסְרוּ מִמֶּנוּ שָׁלשָׁה דְבָרִים: דָּם, חֵלֶב, גִּיד הַנָּשֶׁה.

- א. הַדָּם בְּכָל מִינֵי בַעֲלֵי־הַחַיִּים וַאֲפִילוּ בַדָּגִים הוּא אָסוּר מִמַּה שֶׁנָּאֱמַר דַּם בָּל בְּשָּׁר לֹא תֹאכֵלוּ בִּי נֶפֶשׁ בָּל בְּשָׂר דָּמוֹ הִיּא (ויִקרא י״ז י״ד) וְשָׁנָה וְשִׁלֵשׁ הַכָּתוּב בְּאִסוּרוֹ כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹא יְהֵא קַל בְּעִינֵי הָאָדָם לְאָכְלוֹ וְלָכֵן גְּדָרוֹ בְּכָרֵת כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר בָּל־אֹּרְיִּ זְבָּרְת (ויִקרא י״ז י״ד). וּמִמַּה שֶׁנָּדַר הַכָּתוּב אֲכִילַת הַדָּם בְּעְׂנָשׁ כָּבִת (ויִקרא י״ז י״ד). וּמִמַה שֶׁנָּדַר הַכָּתוּב אֲכִילַת הַדָּם בְּעְׂנָשׁ כָּבִת הָחֶמְירוּ הַחֲכָמִים, ע״ה, וְחִיְּבוּ בְנִקּוּר הַבָּשְׂר, רְ״ל הוֹצָאַת עוֹרְקִי הַדְּם מִכָּל הַגּוּף בַּחַיָּה וּבַבְּהֵמָה חוּץ מִן הָרֹאשׁ לִהְיוֹת עוֹרְקִיוֹ רְחָבִים וְיוֹצֵא דָמוֹ בִרְחִיצָה וּמְלִיחָה, וְכֵל הַמִּינִים, גַּם לְהָסִיר הַקֶּצֶף מְעַל שׁוּל בְּאְפָן שֶׁלֹא יִשְׁאֵר רְשָׁם מַעַל שׁוּלֵי הַקְּדֵרָה בְּעָת הַבִּשְׁוּל בְּאְפָן שֶׁלֹא יִשְׁאֵר רְשָׁם הַנְּל שָׁהוּא בְּתוֹךְ הַבְּשִׁר, וְעַל הַטְּחוֹל וְהַכָּבֵד הִזְהִירוּ שָׁלֹא לְאָכְלָם עַל בִּשִׁר, וְעַל הַטְּחוֹל וְהַכָּבֵד הִזְהִירוּ שִׁל בִּשִׁר, וְעַל הַטְּחוֹל וְהַכָּבֵד הִזְהְירוּ שָׁלֹא לְאָכְלָם עַל בִּשִׁר, וְעַל הַמִּים רַק צְלִי אֵשׁ.
- ב. אָסוּר הַחֵלֶב הוּא בְשׁוֹר, שֵׂה כְבָשִׂים וְשֵׂה עִזִּים לְבַד, וְלֹא אֲסָרוֹ הַכָּתוּב מִפְּנֵי טָמְאָה חָלִילָה אֱלָא מִפְּנֵי קְדָשָׁתוֹ שֶׁהוּא הַמִשְׁבָּח מִכָּל חֶלְקֵי הַגּוּף וִהָיָה נִקְטַר עַל הַמִּזִבֵּחַ אָשֵּׁה רֵיַח

Three Additional Prohibitions

After the body has been slaughtered properly, in accordance with everything explained so far, there still remain three forbidden things: the blood, the fat (helev), and the sinew of the thigh vein (gid ha-nashé).

- Blood of any creature, including fish, is prohibited, as it is said: Ye shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of every flesh is its blood (Leviticus 17:14). Scripture mentions this a second time, and a third time, so that this prohibition should not be light in a person's eyes. Therefore, [Scripture] prescribes²¹ the punishment of kareth (being cut off); as it says: all that eat it will be cut off (Leviticus 17:14). Because Scripture prescribes²² the punishment of *kareth* for one who eats blood, [our] sages, peace be upon them, have been stringent and required the purging of meat (niqqur ha-basar); that is, the removal of all arteries from the body of the wild or domestic animal - except from the head, for its arteries are wide, and therefore its blood comes out through washing and salting. In addition, they required that the flesh of all species be washed and salted, and to remove the foam from the sides of the pot at the time of cooking, such that there should be no trace of any blood in the meat. And they exhorted us not to eat the spleen or the liver if they have been merely cooked in water; one should only eat them roasted with fire.
- 2. The prohibition of fat (helev) applies only to oxen, sheep, and goats. The Torah did not prohibit it because it is impure, God forbid! Rather, [it is prohibited] because of its holiness, for

²¹ Literally, "fences it off"; that is, prescribing such a severe penalty keeps people from violating the prohibition, just as a fence keeps people away.

²² Again, our author uses the verb "fences off."

נִיחְוֹחַ לַה': (ויקרא ג' ה') וְעֵל אִסּוּר אֲכִילַת הַחֵלֶב כָּתוּב חְקַתּ עוֹלָם לְדוֹרוֹתֵיכֶם בְּכֹל מוֹשְׁבוֹתֵיכֶם כָּל חֵלֶב וְכָל דָּם לֹא תֹאבֵלוּ (ויקרא ג' י"ז).

> הַחֵלֶב הַנָּאֱסָר לַאֲכִילָה הוּא שִׁשָּׁה חֲלָקִים: הָרִאשׁוֹן, הַחֵלֶב הַמְכַסֶּה אֶת הַקֶּרֶב. הַשֵּׁנִי, הַחֵלֶב שָׁעַל הַקֶּרֶב.

> > הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, הַחֱלֶב אֲשֶׁר עַל הַכְּלֶיוֹת.

ָהָרְבִיעִי, הַכְּלָיוֹת עַצְמָן.

הַחֲמִישִׁי, יוֹתֶרֶת הַכָּבֵד.

ַהַשִּׁשִּׁי, הָאַלְיָה.

פָּל אֵלֶה קְרָאָם הַכָּתוּב חֵלֶב וַאֲסוּרִים בַּהֲנָאָה בְּכָל מְקוֹם וּבְכָל זְמַן.

אָסוּר גִּיד הַנָּשָׁה הוּא בִּבְהֵמָה וְחַיָּה לְבֵד וְלֹא בְעוֹפוֹת. וְהוּא לְזֵכֶר צְּלִיעַת יֶרֶךְ יַעֲקֹב אָבִינוּ, ע״ה, בְּהֵאָבְקוֹ עִם הַמַּלְאָךְ, כְּמוֹ שָׁנָּאֶמֵר עַל בֵּן לֹא־יֹאִּכְלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְּׂרָאֵל אֶת גִּיד הַנְּשֶּׁה אֲשֶׁר עַל בַּן לֹא־יֹאַכְלוּ בְנֵי יִשְּׂרָאֵל אֶת גִּיד הַנְּשֶּׁה אֲשֶׁר עַל בַּן הַיְּבוֹ הִיֹם לֹי הִיְּבְיר הַכְּתוּב הַצְּלִיעָה בְּרֵבוֹ הַיְמָנִית אוֹ הַשְּׂמָאלִית, לָכֵן בְּאִיזֶה צֵד הָיְתָה אִם בִּרְכּוֹ הַיְמָנִית אוֹ הַשְּׂמָאלִית, לָכֵן נְאֶסְר מִשְּׁנֵי הַצְּדְדִים וּמַה שָׁבָּעוֹפוֹת אָמְרוּ הַחֲכָמִים, ע״ה, מִי הָרוֹצֶה לְהַחֲמִיר שָׁלֹא לְאָכְלוֹ בְּכֶל חַי, ר״ל גַּם בְּעוֹף יִשְׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת ה׳. וּכְמוֹ שָׁהוּא בְאִסוּר לְהַדְּבִּיק הַחֵלֶב יִשְׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת ה׳. וּכְמוֹ שָׁהוּא בְאִסוּר לְהַדְבִּיק הַחֵלֶב אֶל הַבְּשָׂר אַחֲרֵי שָׁנִּפְרֵד מִמֶּנִוּוּ, כֵּן הוּא הַדִּין בְּגִיד הַנְּשָׁה. וּכְשֶׁר אֲחָבִי לְהָבְּעֵל הַהְּאָכֵל הַהוּא. וֹרְ לְהֵאָכֵל הַהוּא. וֹרְ תְּבְּל הַמְאַכָל הַהוּא. וֹרְ לְהֵאָכֵל הַהוּא. וּרוֹךְ מַאֲכָל הַהִּבְּיל הָהוּא. הִדִּין בְּגִיד הַנְּשָׁר. אַחְרֵב מְבְּלֵּיל אָסוֹר לְהֵאָכֵל הַהּוּא.

it is the best of all parts of the body, and was burned on the altar, as a fire offering, a sweet savor unto $Y \cdot H \cdot W \cdot H$ (Leviticus 3:5). Regarding [the] prohibition [of eating fat], it is written: An everlasting law for your generations, throughout all your dwelling places – no fat and no blood shall ye eat (Leviticus 3:17).

There are six types of forbidden fat:

- The fat that covers the innards.
- 2. The fat that is on the innards.
- 3. The fat that is on the kidneys.
- 4. The kidneys themselves.
- 5. The lobe above the liver.
- 6. The fat of the [sheep's] tail.

The Torah calls all these "fat," and it is prohibited to derive benefit from them, at any time or place.

3. The prohibition of the sinew of the thigh vein applies only to mammals, whether wild or domestic; it does not apply to birds. [The prohibition] serves as a reminder of the limping thigh of our forefather Jacob, peace be upon him, which happened to him as a result of his struggle with the angel; as it is said: Therefore, the Children of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh vein, which is on the hollow of the thigh (Genesis 32:33). And because Scripture does not mention on which side he limped, his right or left knee, both sides are forbidden. Regarding birds, [which bear no such restriction], our sages, peace be upon them, have said [nonetheless] that one who wishes to be so stringent as to avoid eating it in any animal, even a bird, will be blessed by God. And just as it is forbidden to reattach fat to meat after it has been removed, so is it also for the sinew of the thigh vein. If they are found in any cooked food, that food is prohibited for consumption.

גְּדִי בַּחֲלֵב אִמּוֹ

עוֹד יֵשׁ אִסוּר אֶחָד מִתְיַחֵס לְעִנְיַן הַשְּׁחִיטָה וְהוּא אַזְהָרֵת לֹא תְּבָשֵּׁל גְּדִי בַּחֲלֵב אָמוֹ (שמות כ״ג י״ט), שֶׁאָסַר הַכָּתוּב בִּשׁוּל בְּשֵׂר הַבְּשֵּׁל גְּדִי בַּחֲלֵב אָמוֹ (שמות כ״ג י״ט), שֶׁאָסַר הַכָּתוּב בִּשׁוּל בְּשֵׂר הַבְּשׁוּל הִקִּישׁוּ הַחֲכָמִים לְאִסוּר הַבְּשׁוּל הִיא הָאֲכִילְה. וְטַעַם אִסוּר זָה הוּא אֲכִילְתוֹ, כִּי תַכְלִית הַבִּשׁוּל הִיא הָאֲכִילְה. וְטַעַם אִסוּר זָה הוּא מִשְׁעַם אִסוּר אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת בְּנוֹ לֹא תִשְׁחֲטוּ בְּיוֹם אֶחָד (ויִקרא כ״ב כ״ח), שְׁחָשִׁשׁ הַכָּתוּב לְהֶפְסֵד שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּיוֹם אֶחָד לְהַרְחִיקֵנוּ מִמִּדַת הָעְקִריוֹת וּלְהַלְאִיטֵנוּ בְּמִדַּת הָרַחֲמָנוּת, וּמִשְׁעַם זָה הִקִּישׁוּ לְאָפוּר הָאָב עִם בְּשִׂר הַפֶּרַח אִם יוּכַל הָאָדָם לְהַכִּיר בָּהֶם לְאָפוֹר הָעָקָר, בִּי הַכֹּל לְאָסוּר הָנִבְר הָנְקַר וְבָּרַח עִם חֲלֵב הָעִקָּר, אוֹ בְשַׂר הַפֶּרַח עִם בְּשַׂר הָעִקָּר, אוֹ בְשַׂר הַפֶּרַח עִם בְּשַׂר הָעִקָּר. אוֹ בְשַׂר הַפֶּרַח עִם בְּשַׂר הָעִקָּר.

סוֹף דָּבָר אֵין אִסוּר זֶה נָהוּג אֶלָא בְעִקּר וָפֶרַח בְּכָל מַה שִּׁיִּהְיֶה. וְהָאִסוּר הוּא בֵּין בִּנְגִיעַת זֶה לָזֶה, בֵּין בְּבִשׁוּלָם, בֵּין בַּאֲכִילָתָם. וּבְזוּלַת עִקָּר וָפֶרַח אֵין שׁוּם אִסוּר בְּשׁוּם דְּבָר - לֹא בִאַכִילָה וּמְתָּר לְהֵאָכֵל זֶה קְּדֶם זֶה,

A Kid in Its Mother's Milk.

Another prohibition related to the topic of slaughtering is the rule: *Thou shalt not cook a kid in its mother's milk* (Exodus 23:19), in which Scripture prohibits cooking the flesh of the flower [offspring] along with the root [parent]. From the prohibition of such cooking, our sages derive by analogy [heggesh] also the prohibition of eating it [meat that is cooked in its mother's milk], for the purpose of cooking is eating. The reason for this prohibition is the same as that of the prohibition: Do not slaughter it and its child on the same day (Leviticus 22:28); for Scripture is concerned about the loss of the two of them, [the parent and the child], on the same day, in order to distance us from cruelty and feed²³ us the characteristic of mercy. For this reason, [our sages] derive by analogy that the flesh of the father is forbidden to eat along with the flesh of the flower [the offspring], if one is able to recognize that they are root and flower;²⁴ and similarly, the milk of the kid is forbidden with the meat of the root [the parent], for it is all the same – and similarly, the milk of the flower along with the milk of the root, or the flesh of the flower along with the flesh of the root.

In conclusion, this prohibition applies only to the root and flower, whatever they may be. The prohibition is to touch one to the other, to cook them, or to eat them. But other than in the case of a root and flower, there are no restrictions [on milk with meat] – neither to touch [them to each other], nor to cook, nor to eat. It is permitted to eat one before the other, or one after the

²³ The verb used, *le-hal'it*, means literally "to force-feed." The implication is that what we eat instills values in us, so if we eat meat that was obtained in a cruel way, that instills cruelty in us; however, if we eat meat that was obtained in a proper way, it instills proper values in us.

²⁴ That is, it is obvious what animal is the mother of what animal, so it is definitely forbidden to eat them together; but paternity is less clear, so eating an animal and its father is prohibited only if one is sure of the paternity.

ענין השחיטה 🕻 גְּדִי בַּחֱלֵב אָמוֹ

וְזֶה אַחַר זֶה כַּאֲשֶׁר יִקְרָה, כִּי הַכָּתוּב לֹא דָבֶּר אֶלְּא בִּפְרָטוּת בַּעֲבוּר הָעִקָּר וְהַפֶּרַח, שֶׁהוּא מֵהַטַעַם הַנִּזְכָּר. בָּרוּךְ ה' לְעוֹלָם אָמֵן וְאָמֵן.

Ritual Slaughter * A Kid in Its Mother's Milk

other, however it may be, for Scripture speaks specifically only about [eating the milk and meat] of parent and offspring, for the abovementioned reason.

Blessed is God forever, Amen and Amen!²⁵