

ROYAL ATTIRE
לְבוּשׁ מַלְכוּת
LEVUSH MALKHUTH



AUTHORED BY
Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan
(18th Century CE; Kukizów, Galicia)

VOCALIZED, TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
Gabriel Wasserman

SECOND EDITION

Karaite Sources Supplemented by Tomer Mangoubi

THE KARAITE PRESS



ISBN: 978-1-7330492-0-7

© The Karaite Jews of America 2019, Daly City, CA

Published by The Karaite Press

All rights reserved. The Karaite Jews of America asserts no copyright over the Hebrew text, its vocalization, and emendations to it.

COVER ART: Shimra Starr

PHOTO CREDIT: Benjamin Abram / Alan Rothenberg

INDEXING: Clive Pyne, Book Indexing Services

DESIGN & LAYOUT: Raphaël Freeman, Renana Typesetting

Contents

Introductory Notes from The Karaite Press	v
Corrections to this Second Edition	xi
<i>Royal Attire/Levush Malkhuth</i>	3
Greetings to the King of Sweden	3
Jewish History	7
Commandments from the First Book of Moses's Torah [Genesis]	
1. The Commandment of Circumcision	33
Commandments from the Second Book of Moses's Torah [Exodus]	
1. The Beginning of Months	35
2. The Month of <i>Aviv</i>	37
3. The Festival of Mazzoth	39
4. The Time of the Pesah-sacrifice	39
5. The Commandment of the Sabbath	41
6. The Prohibition on Stealing	45
7. The Meaning of <i>Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth</i>	45
8. The Law Concerning Injuring a Borrowed Animal	47
9. The Prohibition on Usury	47
10. The Prohibition on Following a Multitude to do Evil	47
11. The Meaning of <i>Thou Shalt Not Seethe a Kid in its Mother's Milk</i>	49
12. The Four Spices of Incense	51
Commandments from the Third Book of Moses's Torah [Leviticus]	
1. The Offering of Firstfruits	53
2. The Prohibition on Consuming "Fat" [<i>Helev</i>]	53
3. The Unfitness for Consumption of Sick Animals	55
4. The Two Signs for Kosher Mammals	57
5. The Two Signs for Kosher Fish	57
6. The Permissibility of Certain Birds	57
7. The Permissibility of Four Species of Locusts	59
8. The Prohibition on Certain Animal Carcasses	59
9. The Prohibition on Crawling Creatures	63
10. The Impurities Related to Childbirth	63

11. The Afflictions that Confer Impurity	65
12. The Impurity of Flows and Emissions	67
13. The Seven Days of Menstrual Impurity	67
14. The Prohibition on Certain Relationships	69
15. The Prohibition on False Dealings	73
16. The Law Concerning the Betrothed Female Slave	75
17. The Prohibition on Slaughtering an Animal and its Young in One Day	77
18. The Meaning of <i>On the Morrow of the Sabbath</i>	77
19. The Meaning of <i>Teru'a</i>	81
20. The Festival of Sukkoth	83
Commandments from the Fourth Book of Moses's Torah [Numbers]	
1. The Commandment of <i>Zizith</i> (Tassels)	89
2. The Impurity of the Dead	89
3. The Law Concerning Inheritance	91
4. The Law Concerning Vows	91
Commandments from the Fifth Book of Moses's Torah [Deuteronomy]	
1. The Prohibition on Adding or Subtracting from the Commandments	97
2. The Meaning of <i>Bind them For a Sign Upon Thine Hand</i>	97
3. The Requirement to Follow Judgments	101
4. The Prohibition on Divination	103
5. The Law Concerning the Captive Beautiful Woman	105
6. The Commandment to Return Lost Items	107
7. The Permissible Circumstances for Divorce	107
8. The Maximum Lashes for a Guilty Man	107
9. The Duty of the Deceased-Husband's Brother	109
Philosophical Differences between Karaites and Rabbanites	113
Endnotes	161
Notes on the Hebrew Text	193
Index of Biblical Verses	199
General Index	203
Karaite Works Referenced in this Edition	215

INTRODUCTORY NOTES FROM THE KARAITE PRESS

About the Translator: Dr. Gabriel Wasserman (PhD Yeshiva University, 2016) is a scholar of Jewish texts, with a specialty in *piyyuṭim*, Hebrew liturgical poetry. His doctoral dissertation, *Liturgical Poems of Ḥanukka from Europe: Critical Edition and Investigations*, involves careful philological work in copying these texts from manuscripts, with variants from different versions, and presenting them to the reader, as well as analysis of their background, genre, and sources. He brings many of these skills to this edition of *Levush Malkhuth*. Wasserman has translated both Hebrew academic prose and primary sources, as can be seen, for example, in his English translation of the editors' introduction published in Joseph Yahalom and Naoya Katsumata, eds., *Tahkemoni, or The Tales of Heman the Ezrahite, by Judah Alharizi* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2010). Wasserman is also the author of a Rabbanite Passover Haggada, *Ashira Va'ashannena Baḥashiqoth* (Lulu, 2015), which includes both his scholarship and his original poetic compositions. He would like to thank Shawn Lichaa for inviting him to work on *Levush Malkhuth*, and Tomer Mangoubi for providing him with citations to earlier Karaite authors to include in the footnotes and endnotes.

About Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan: It is believed that Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan was born around 1650 in the city of Troki. In 1688, he followed several Karaite Jewish families who relocated from Troki to Kukizów in Galicia. For this reason, he is also known as Mordecai of Kukizów. He was a prolific author, having penned biblical commentaries and exegetical works. His most famous work is *Dod Mordokhai* (1699), which answers four questions, posed by a Dutch professor at the University of Leiden, about Karaite Judaism. Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan also wrote several poems, including at least one with Kabbalistic overtones. He and his son likely died tragically during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In

the year 1715, the Karaite sage Solomon ben Aaron of Troki sent the Karaite communities in Damascus and Constantinople a letter, in which he referred to the disaster that had fallen upon Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan and his son.¹

About this Edition: This edition is the only known English-language translation of Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan's *Levush Malkhuth* (or *Royal Attire*).² The work was likely written in the early eighteenth century and has received little attention by academics and the Karaite Jewish community itself. *Levush Malkhuth* first came to light in academic circles in 1866, when Adolf Neubauer published an unvocalized version of the text after examining previously unpublished Karaite manuscripts in the Russian National Library in Saint Petersburg.³ In 1956, the nascent Karaite community in Israel published an unvocalized Hebrew version of *Levush Malkhuth* in conjunction with a version of *Sefer Appiryon 'Asa Lo*, authored by the Karaite sage Solomon ben Aaron of Troki.⁴

This edition contains a vocalized text of *Levush Malkhuth*,

1 The Karaite Press extends its gratitude to Dr. Riikka Tuori for providing extensive biographical information, from which we cultivated this section.

2 The words *levush malkhuth* are a reference to the passage in the Book of Esther in which Mordecai was dressed in “royal attire” (Hebrew: *levush malkhuth*): *And Mordecai went forth from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a robe of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan was elated and glad* (Esther 8:15). For centuries, it has been a common practice of Jewish sages named Mordecai to use the title *levush malkhuth* for books that they have authored. It is also a fitting name for this book because *Levush Malkhuth* itself is a letter to a king, serving as a second allusion in the word *malkhuth*, or “royal.”

3 Neubauer published this text in his German work, *Aus der Petersburger Bibliothek: Beiträge und Documente zur Geschichte des Karäerthums und der Karäischen Literatur* (1866) [English: *From the Petersburg Library: Contributions and Documents Regarding the History of Karaism and Karaite Literature*].

4 The main title of that publication was *Sefer Appiryon 'Asa Lo*, and did not identify for readers that the final 30 or so pages were in fact a reproduction of *Levush Malkhuth*.

supplemented by the translator with historical and clarifying footnotes throughout. In order to enhance the reader's experience, this edition also contains endnotes with relevant sources and translations from both Rabbanite and Karaite literature. The endnotes are identified in the English translation with a superscripted romanet, like so: ⁱ. These sources are particularly useful for readers who wish to understand either the basis of the claims in *Levush Malkhuth* or the extent to which Karaite Judaism in the day of the author was similar to Karaite Judaism as reflected in classical Karaite literature.

For several reasons, readers would be *well-advised* to read the footnotes and endnotes. First, the author almost certainly wrote *Levush Malkhuth* with knowledge he had committed to memory, rather than by direct reference to Karaite, Rabbanite, or even biblical sources. This is most evident by the fact that, on occasion, he misquotes a biblical passage or provides an incorrect biblical citation for the passage.⁵ Second, the author was writing from a Karaite Jewish perspective to a Gentile king about, *inter alia*, the differences between Karaites and Rabbanites. Given the era, it is not surprising that the work reads (in many respects) like a polemic. As such, the author did not always take great care in portraying a fully accurate summary of rabbinic Judaism.⁶ Third, even with respect to Karaite Judaism, in a few instances, the

5 In at least two instances, the author's mistakes were of a substantive nature. For example, he claims that Yavan (Greece) was descended from Noah's son Ham, but the Torah tells us that Yavan was from Noah's son Japheth. In another instance, he states that (aside from the Sabbath and Yom Kippur) only Yom Teru'a is referred to as a *shabbathon*. Yet, in fact, the first day of Sukkoth and Shemini 'Azereth are also referred to as *shabbathon* (see Leviticus 23:9).

6 For example, the author states that Rabbanite sage R. Abraham ibn 'Ezra agreed with the Karaite view regarding the definition of *ben ha'arbayim*. This is only partially true, in that R. Abraham ibn 'Ezra agreed only that the Karaite interpretation is a *possibility*. In other instances, the author's description of rabbinic practice and belief may reflect the norms of the rabbinic communities with whom he was in contact, even if those norms do not reflect rabbinically

author's views do not reflect historical Karaite norms.⁷ Finally, in many instances, the author was relying on prior historical sources whose information is now outdated in light of modern research and scholarship. This edition preserves the substance – correct or incorrect – of Mordecai ben Nisan's *Levush Malkhuth*; in most instances, footnotes and endnotes have been added to clarify errors and inaccuracies.

Despite the foregoing, the author, Mordecai ben Nisan, has proven himself a learned student of both Karaite and Rabbanite Judaism, and his work is an important contribution and a font of information to those seeking a quick reference on the differences between the two movements. The footnotes and endnotes are intended to serve as an additional resource in that regard.

About the Hebrew Text: The primary text employed for this edition of *Levush Malkhuth* is Neubauer's 1866 publication. Where Neubauer's publication contains an apparent corruption, typographical error, or other matter needing clarification, the translator consulted and incorporated text from the following three manuscripts:

- A. St. Petersburg – Russian National Library Evr. I 752;
- B. St. Petersburg – Inst. of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy B 563; and
- C. St. Petersburg – Inst. of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy B 243.

binding Talmudic law. The translator has endeavored to provide clarifications on these points in the footnotes and endnotes.

7 For example, the author states that the Karaite sages obligated Karaites to separate the dishes in which a mother's milk was boiled from the dishes in which her offspring was boiled. As far as the collaborators on this edition are aware, this separation is not attested to in any of the classical Karaite works. It may, nonetheless, reflect actual practice and belief of Karaites of the author's generation and location.

Incorporations from these manuscripts are described in endnotes, which are identified by a superscripted, unbracketed Hebrew letter throughout the Hebrew text of this edition, like so: ^ח. These manuscripts are referred to as A, B, and C, respectively, and the Neubauer printing is referred to as Ed. Neubauer.

In addition to fixing corruptions and errors in Neubauer's edition, the translator has made the following adaptations:

- **Vocalization-driven spelling changes:** Neubauer's edition and manuscripts A, B, and C contain an orthography that is customary in unvocalized post-biblical texts, which involves using many instances of vav and yud that would not be present in biblical spellings. In order to produce the vocalized text, the translator followed the common convention of removing these extraneous letters when adding vowels.⁸
- **Modernized Punctuation:** The manuscripts do not reflect modern punctuation norms, and the translator has added punctuation to the Hebrew text of *Levush Malkhuth*.⁹
- **Expanding abbreviations, including numbers:** As was common during the time of the author, *Levush Malkhuth* contains many words and numbers in abbreviated form. The translator has expanded abbreviations in order to assist the modern reader.¹⁰

The reader should be assured, however, that these adaptations do not impact the substance of *Levush Malkhuth*. Academics will take comfort in the fact that Neubauer's publication of *Levush*

8 For example, כולם would be distracting to the modern reader if it were vocalized as כולם. Accordingly, כולם will be vocalized herein as כולם.

9 Similarly, this edition generally retains the paragraph structure of Ed. Neubauer, except in a few instances in which the translator believed that a different structure would enhance comprehension.

10 For example, יר"ה is intended to be read as "yarum hodo," not as "yara." Consistent with the expansion of abbreviations, the translator has replaced יר"ה with ירום הודו.

Malkhuth is available online via Google Books; and scholars can compare any variations in this edition from Neubauer's publication. In order to assist this type of comparison, this edition contains bracketed, superscripted page numbers corresponding to the page number in Neubauer's publication, like so: {31} or {לא}.

CORRECTIONS TO THIS SECOND EDITION

We have made the following changes to the Hebrew text of *Royal Attire*.¹ Where these changes also necessitated a change to the English translation, we have made those changes in the text, but do not note them here.

PAGE (LINE)	FIRST EDITION	SECOND EDITION
2 (5)	וּמַלְכוּתוֹ לְעֵד	וּמַלְכוּתוֹ תְּבוּז לְעֵד
2 (9)	וּבְשָׁמְעִי	וּבְשָׁמְעִי
2 (10)	לְמַעַלָּה	לְמַעַלָּה לְמַעַלָּה
2 (15)	וְאַתְּעוֹדֵד	וְאַתְּעוֹדֵד
6 (11)	אֶחָד	וְאֶחָד
8 (8)	שְׁבַמְפָּנִי	שְׁבַמְפָּנִי
10 (20)	וּבְנוֹת	וּבָנוּ
14 (13)	וְחִזְקִי	וְחִזְקוּ
16 (1)	הַחֲשַׁמְנָאִים	חֲשַׁמְנָאִים
26 (24)	כָּלֹל	כָּלֹל
28 (19)	לְכוּף	לְכוּף
30 (11)	חִלְקָה	חִלְקָה
36 (5)	וְלֹא	לֹא
46 (18)	לִזְקָחִים	וְלִזְקָחִים
56 (1)	אֱלֹהֵי אֵינֶן יְכוּלוֹת לְהֵאכֵל.	וְשֵׂאִינָהּ יְכוּלָּה לִילָךְ אוֹ מִתְגַּלְגֶּלֶת וְשֵׂאִינָהּ יְכוּלָּה לֵאכֹל שָׂכָל אֱלֹהֵי אֵינֶן יְכוּלוֹת לְהִקְרֹא חַיָּה, אֲבָל הַשָּׂאֵר שֵׂאִין בָּהֶן מֵאֱלֹהֵי הַדְּבָרִים, מִתְגַּלְגֶּלֶת לְהִשְׁחֵט וּלְהֵאכֵל.

¹ We have also made minor changes to the orthography of the Hebrew words throughout this Second Edition. We have not noted them here.

PAGE (LINE)	FIRST EDITION	SECOND EDITION
56 (6)	מִתְגַּבְּלוֹת	מִתְנַבְּלוֹת
76 (4)	הַמִּיעֵדָה	וְהַמִּיעֵדָה
96 (8)	חִלּוּקָהּ	חִלְקָהּ
98 (6)	בְּמִשָּׁל	בְּמִשָּׁל עַל
120 (14)	וּבְפִתְחוֹתָם	וּבְפִתְחוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר בַּעֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם חָרַב בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ שֶׁהוּא בֵּית קֹדֶשׁנוֹ וְתַפְאֶרְתָּנוּ.
122 (11)	שֶׁהָיוּ	וְהָיוּ
128 (21)	כָּח	רוּחַ
130 (2)	הַגָּמֶל	הַגָּמֶל
146 (2)	כָּל	בֵּן
150 (5)	מָה	מָוֶה

We also note two substantive changes that we felt compelled to make in this Second Edition.

- i. We have updated footnote 32 (see p. 41) to make clear that our author himself deemed fire to be prohibited on Shabbat.
- ii. We have updated endnote *xxix* (see p. 187) to suggest why our author states that the Rabbanites claim that the proper color of tekheleth is *yaroq*, which we have rendered as *green* (see p. 89).

ספר
לבוש מלכות

ROYAL ATTIRE

ספר
לבוש מלכות

רְצוֹן מַלְכִים שְׁפָתַי צֶדֶק וְדָבָר יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵאָדָב:

[illegible]

שָׁאַל אֶת עַבְדּוֹ הַקְּרָאִים שְׁפַעִיר לִוְצָקָא לְדַעַת אוֹדוֹתֶם -
מַאיִזוּ אִמָּה הֵם וּמָה אַמוֹנָתָם, וּמָה הֶהְפִּירָשׁ בֵּין הַתְּלַמוּדִים
וּבֵינֵיהֶם? וּכְשֶׁמַּעִי אֲנִי עַבְדּוֹ הַקָּטָן וְהַנְּמוּךְ שֶׁבְּמִדְרָם רָגְלוֹ עַבְד
לְאֲדוֹנָגּוֹ בֶּן־הַמֶּלֶךְ קוֹסְטַנְטִין יְרוּם וְתַעַל לְמַעְלָה לְמַעְלָה,
בֶּן אֲדוֹנָגּוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹאֵן שְׁלִישִׁי מִמָּה הֵיטָב בְּמַלְכֵי פוֹלֹנְיָא, בְּמִדְרָשׁ
הַקְּרָאִים שֶׁמִּחֲתִי וְאַפֵּל עַל פָּנֵי אֶרֶצָה, לְבַקֵּשׁ מִלִּפְנֵי בּוֹרֵא
הָעוֹלָמִים שְׁלוֹם וְחַיִּים אֲרָפִים לְאֲדוֹנָגּוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל יְרוּם הוּדוֹ
בְּשָׁנֵי מִזְמוּרִים שֶׁל דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם, שֶׁהֵם מִזְמוֹר כ"א
וּמִזְמוֹר ע"ב. וְאַחֲרַי כִּךְ קִמַּמְתִּי וְאֶתְעוֹדֵד חֲשֵׁתִי וְאֶצִּיתִי לְמַלְאֵת

Royal Attire

*Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and
they love him that speaketh right.*

[Proverbs 16:13]

[To] the great glorious noble invincible prince, of the beautiful name Charles, King of Sweden,¹ may he live forever, may his splendor be great, and may his kingdom be firm eternally. May [God], Creator of heaven and earth, who is the King who reigns over kings of kings, raise up [Charles'] star in his constellation, and make his royal throne great and glorious, and make his foes kneel before him, and crush the loins of his foes, such that his enemies will never be able to rise up,² and may his kingdom be eternal, for all time, Amen, forever, Selah.

He has asked his subjects, the Karaites in the city of Lutsk, to [let him] know who they are – of what nation, and of what faith, and what are the differences between them and the Talmudites. And I, lowly subject of our master Prince Constantine, may his splendor be lofty and high, son of King John III of Poland,³ whom I serve [with humility as if] under the treading of his feet, in the study-house of the Karaites – when I heard this, I rejoiced, and prostrated myself to the ground, to ask the Creator of Eternity to grant peace and long life to our above-mentioned king. [I offered this prayer by reciting] two psalms of King David, namely Psalm 21 and Psalm 72. I then arose and took heart and hastened to fulfill

1 Charles XII (reigned 1697–1718).

2 This is a flowery allusion to Deuteronomy 33:11.

3 Our author was a subject of Prince Konstanty Władysław Sobieski (lived 1680–1726), son of King John III Sobieski of Poland (reigned 1674–1696).

רִצּוֹן הָאֱדוֹן לְכָתוּב בְּיָרוּר וּלְהוֹדִיעַ הַכֹּל, בְּסֶדֶר מְסֻדָּר יָפֶה,
בְּאַפֵּן שִׁימָצָא הָרוּצָה מִבְּקֶשׁוֹ.

כָּל אֵלֹו הַדְּבָרִים דְּבַר הַחֶכֶם הַמְּפֹאֵל אֲשֶׁר חֲכָמְתוֹ בְּכַתָּם
טָהוֹר לֹא תִסְלָה, וְרֵיחַ חֲכָמְתוֹ לְקִצּוֹי אֲרָקִים יַעֲלֶה, הֵלֵא הוּא
הַנֶּעֱלֶה בְּמוֹהֲרֵי מְרַדְּכִי, תִּהְיֶה נִשְׁמָתוֹ צְרוּדָה בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים,
לְעוֹלָם יֵאִיר אוֹר תּוֹרָתוֹ, בֵּין בְּמוֹהֲרֵי נִסָּן זַ"ל. וְאַחֵר זֶה
מִתְחִיל וְאוֹמֵר בְּעֶזְרַת אוֹמֵר וְגוֹמֵר:

the king's request, to write clearly and inform him of all, arranged well in order, in such a way that he will find what he wants.

All these are the words of the wonderful sage, whose wisdom cannot be equaled by pure gold, and the fragrance of his wisdom reaches the ends of the world, the great Rabbi⁴ Mordecai, may his soul be bound in the bond of the living,⁵ may the light of his Torah shine, son of Rabbi Nisan, the righteous of blessed memory. And now he begins and says, with the help of [God], who speaks and decrees:

4 The abbreviation, כְּמוֹהָרָר״ד, pronounced “kemoharar”, used here for both the author and his father, is a term of honor used for Jewish scholars, and stands for כְּבוֹד מוֹרֵינוּ הָרַב רַבֵּינוּ, “the honor of our teacher, the master, our master.” It is simplest to render it in English as “Rabbi.”

5 This expression, *may his soul be bound in the bound of the living*, is from 1 Samuel 25:29, and is common in medieval and modern Jewish terms as an honorific for the dead. Thus, these words are clearly not written by Mordecai ben Nisan himself, but were added by some later copyists. Similarly, the reference to the author as “wonderful” and “great,” and the high praise of his wisdom, were presumably added by later copyists.

לְכָל הָרוּצָה לְדַעַת אוֹדוֹת הַקָּרָאִים מִי הֵם וּמֵאִיזָה אָמָה הֵם:
 נֹדִיעַ בִּי הֵם מִזֶּרַע אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, וּבִפְרֹט מְשִׁנִּים-עֶשְׂרֹת
 שְׁבִטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁבְעִים נֶפֶשׁ יָרְדוּ לְמִצְרַיִם, וְהָיוּ שָׁם בְּגָלוֹת,
 וְהוֹצִיאָם ה' יִתְבָּרֵךְ מִשֵּׁם {לא} בְּאוֹתוֹת וּבְמוֹפְתִים, בְּשָׁנַת
 שְׁנֵי אֲלָפִים תַּמ"ח לְבְרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם. וַיִּדּוּעַ מֶה שֶׁפָּתוּב בְּתוֹרַת
 מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים, שֶׁבָּצַאתֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם בָּאוּ לְהָר סִינִי בְּחֹדֶשׁ
 הַשְּׁלִישִׁי, וְקָבְלוּ שָׁם תּוֹרָה מִפִּי הַגְּבוּרָה, תּוֹרָה אַחַת כְּתוּבָה
 וְאִין זוֹלָתָהּ, שֶׁקָּבְלוּהָ עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן
 בָּאוּ לָאָרֶץ כְּנָעַן וּכְבָּשׁוּהָ בְּשָׁנַת שְׁנֵי אֲלָפִים תַּפ"ח לְבְרִיאַת
 הָעוֹלָם, וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בָּהּ. וַיִּשְׁפְּטוּ אוֹתָם בַּתְּחִלָּה שׁוֹפְטִים שֶׁבְּכָל דּוֹר
 וָדוֹר. וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן קָמוּ עֲלֵיהֶם מְלָכִים: שָׁאוּל וְדָוִד וְשְׁלֹמֹה. וְשְׁלֹמֹה
 בָּנָה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ, בְּשָׁנַת ת"פ
 לִיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, הִיא שָׁנַת שְׁנֵי אֲלָפִים תַּתקכ"ו לְבְרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם,
 וְאַחֲרֵי מוֹת שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ בֶּן דָּוִד נִחְלָקָה מַלְכוּת אֲמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
 לְשְׁנֵי מַמְלָכוֹת; רוּצָה לוֹמַר: שְׁנֵי שְׁבִטִים, שֶׁהֵם יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן,
 נִשְׁאָרוּ בַּמַּלְכוּת בְּנֵי שְׁלֹמֹה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם, וְעֶשְׂרֵת שְׁבִטִים נִבְדְּלוּ,
 וְהַמְּלִיכוּ עֲלֵיהֶם יָרְבֵּעַם בֶּן נִבְט עֶבֶד שְׁלֹמֹה.

וְתוֹרָה אַחַת אֲמוּנָה אַחַת הִיְתָה לְכָל הָאָמָה הַזֹּאת עַד
 זְמַן יָרְבֵּעַם בְּלִי שׁוּם מַחְלָקָת, וּמִזְמַן הַהוּא וְהָלָא מַלְכוּת
 יָרְבֵּעַם הָיוּ תוֹפְשִׁים הַתּוֹרָה הָאֶחָת, אֵלָּא שֶׁאַעֲלַ עֲבוּדָתוֹ
 יִתְבָּרֵךְ הָיוּ מְשִׁתְּפִים עֲבוּדוֹת הָעֲגָלִים וְהַבְּעָלִים שֶׁחִדָּשׁ לָהֶם
 יָרְבֵּעַם מִלְכָּם; אֲבָל מַלְכוּת יְהוּדָה שֶׁבַעֲדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם הָיוּ
 שׁוֹמְרִים הַתּוֹרָה הָאֶחָת הַהִיא וּמְקִימִים מִצְוֹתֶיהָ בְּלִי תוֹסֶפֶת
 וְגֵרֻעַ, וּכְשֶׁהָיוּ חוֹטְאִים הָיוּ הַנְּבִיאִים מְשִׁבִּים אֶל הַתּוֹרָה
 הָאֶחָת, אֲבָל מַלְכוּת יָרְבֵּעַם שֶׁנִּקְרְאָת מַלְכוּת אֶפְרַיִם וּמַלְכוּת

For anyone wishing to know about the Karaites, who they are, and of what nation, let us inform you: they are of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, specifically of the twelve tribes of Israel, who went down to Egypt numbering seventy, and they were in exile there, until God ^{31} took them out of there with signs and miracles, in the year 2448 after Creation. And, as is well known from what is written in the Torah of Moses, the man of God, after their exodus from Egypt, they came to Mt. Sinai, in the third month, where they received the Torah from God's mouth, one written Torah, and there is none besides it; they received it through Moses, the man of God. Afterwards, they came to the Land of Canaan and conquered it in the year 2488 after Creation, and they dwelt there. At first, they were ruled by judges, generation after generation, but later they were ruled by kings: Saul, David, and Solomon. Solomon built the First Temple in Jerusalem, the Holy City, in the year 480 after the Exodus from Egypt, which is the year 2926 after Creation. After the death of Solomon, son of David, the kingdom of the Israelite nation was split into two kingdoms: the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained in the kingdom of Solomon's descendants, [who reigned] in Jerusalem; whereas the other ten tribes split off, and crowned Jeroboam son of Nebat, one of Solomon's servants, as their king.

All this time, through the time of Jeroboam, there had been one Torah, one faith, for the entire nation, with no debate. But from that point onwards, [the inhabitants of] Jeroboam's kingdom kept the one Torah, but in addition to worshipping God, they also worshipped calves and Be'alim [plural of Baal], which their king Jeroboam had invented for them. On the other hand, the Kingdom of Judah, in the holy city of Jerusalem, kept [only] the one Torah, and performed its commandments without adding to nor subtracting from them; [even] when they would sin, the prophets would bring them back to the Torah. But Jeroboam's kingdom, which was called the Kingdom of Ephraim or the

יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֵף עַל פִּי שֶׁהוֹכִיחַם הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ עַל-יְדֵי נְבִיאָיו
 לְהִשָּׁבֵם מֵעֲבֹדָה זָרָה לֹא שָׁמְעוּ וְלֹא הִקְשִׁיבוּ. עַל כֵּן הָעִיר
 ה' אֶת רוּחַ תְּגִלַּת פְּלֹאסָר הַנֶּקְרָא סִנְחֵרִיב מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר, וַיַּעַל
 עַל מַלְכוּת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן, וַיִּגְלַס לָאָרֶץ נֹכְרִיָּה אַחֵר
 נֶהַר סַמְבַּטְיֹן בְּשָׁנַת תִּשְׁנ"ז לִיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם הִיא שְׁנַת שְׁלֹשֶׁת
 אֲלָפִים ר"ה לְבְרִיאָה. וְהֵם יוֹשְׁבֵי שָׁם עַד הַיּוֹם, וְנִשְׁמָע לָנוּ
 שֶׁהֵם שָׁבוּ בְּתִשְׁבֻּבָה וְהֵנִיחוּ עֲבֹדָה זָרָה שֶׁהָיָה בִּידָם, וְאִין בִּידָם
 יוֹתֵר אֶלָּא תּוֹדָה אַחַת שֶׁקִּבְּלוּ בְּסִינִי, אֶלָּא שֶׁמִּפְּנֵי הַשְׁתַּקְעוּתָם
 בְּזִמְזוֹן מַלְכוּתָם בְּהַבְלֵי הַנְּבִיאִים הַשִּׁקְרִיִּים לֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַפְרִיד מֵהֶם
 מִכָּל וְכָל, וְעַל כֵּן יֵשׁ פִּינִיָּהֶם גַּם הַיּוֹם חוֹבְרֵי חֶבֶר וּבְעֵלֵי שִׁמּוֹת.
 אֲמָנָם מַלְכוּת יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם יָשְׁבוּ בְּמַלְכוּתָם אַחֲרֵי
 גְלוּת הָעֶשְׂרָה שְׁבָטִים קל"ג שָׁנִים וַיּוֹתֵר מְעַט; וּכְשֶׁחָטְאוּ גַם
 מַלְכוּת יְהוּדָה בָּא נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל בְּשָׁנַת תת"צ לִיצִיאַת
 מִצְרַיִם, שֶׁהָיָה שְׁנַת שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים של"ח לְבְרִיאָה, וְהַחֲרִיב
 אֶת עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם וְשָׂרַף אֶת בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה
 שְׁלֹמֹה שְׁעָמַד בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם ת"י שָׁנִים, וְהִגְלָה אֶת כָּל מַלְכוּת
 יְהוּדָה לְבָבֶל, כְּפָתוּב {לב} בְּסוֹף סֵפֶר מְלָכִים ב' וּבְסוֹף יִרְמְיָה

Kingdom of Israel, although they received admonitions from God by the hand of His prophets to get them to repent from their idolatrous worship, nonetheless, they did not listen or heed them. Therefore, God inspired Tiglath-Pil'eser, who is known also as Sennacherib, King of Assyria,⁶ and he attacked the Kingdom of Israel, which was in Samaria, and exiled them to a foreign land, past the River Sambatyon, in the year 757 after the Exodus from Egypt, which is the year 3205 after Creation. They still live there today, and we have heard that they have repented and given up their idolatrous ways, and now have only the one Torah, which was received at Sinai. However, because they had been so immersed in the follies of false prophets at the time [when they were in Jeroboam's] kingdom, they have been unable to detach entirely, so even today, they have some sorcerers and manipulators of [magical or mystical] names. On the other hand, the Kingdom of Judah, which was [centered in] Jerusalem, remained in their kingdom for slightly more than 133 years after the exile of the other ten tribes. When they, too, sinned, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylonia, came in the year 890 after the Exodus from Egypt, which is the year 3338 after Creation, and destroyed the holy city of Jerusalem. He burned the Temple built by Solomon, which had stood in Jerusalem for 410 years; and he exiled the whole Kingdom of Judah to Babylonia, as it is written ^{32} at the end of II Kings and

6 In fact, Tiglath-Pil'eser (reigned 745–727 BCE) and Sennacherib (reigned 705–681 BCE) were two different Assyrian kings. The Bible mentions the first as having exiled many cities of the Kingdom of Israel (II Kings 15:19), whereas the second tried to conquer Jerusalem, but failed (II Kings 18:13). However, according to rabbinic literature, Sennacherib and Tiglath-Pil'eser were the same individual, who was called eight names aside from Sennacherib: Tiglath-Pil'eser, Tiglath Pilne'eser, Pul, Shalmaneser, Sargon, Osnappar, Rabba, and Yaqqira (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 94a).

הַנְּבִיא, וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בְּבֶבֶל שְׁבַעַיִם שָׁנָה. וּכְשֶׁלְכַד כּוֹרֵשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס
אֶת מַלְכוּת בָּבֶל בְּזִמְן מַלְכוּת נִינוּ שֶׁל נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר, שֶׁהוּא
בִּלְשָׁאצַּר, כִּפְתּוּב בְּדִנְיָאֵל סִימָן ה', אִזּוֹ כּוֹרֵשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ שָׁלַח אֶת
אֲנָשֵׁי גְלוּת יְהוּדָה מִבָּבֶל. וְעָלָה עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן, עִם זֶרְבָבֶל מִזִּרְע
הַמֶּלֶךְ, שֶׁהָיָה נָשִׂיא מִפֶּקֶד עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֵת מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס; וְעָלוּ
עִמָּהֶם רַב עִם יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר בְּבָבֶל. וְהוּא עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן הָיָה סוֹפֵר
תּוֹרַת ה' וּמִלְמֶדָה לְבָנֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימִין, כְּדִכְתִּיב בְּסֵפֶר רֵאשׁוֹן
מִעֲזָרָא בְּסִימָן ז'. וְלֹא הָיְתָה בִידָם אֵלָּא תּוֹרָה אַחַת, כִּפְתּוּב
שֵׁם (עֲזָרָא יז:): "הוּא עֲזָרָא עָלָה מִבָּבֶל, וְהוּא סֹפֵר מְהִיר בְּתוֹרַת
מֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל", וגו'. וּכְתִיב (שם פסוק י): "כִּי
עֲזָרָא הֵכִין אֶת־לִבּוֹ לְדַרְשׁ אֶת תּוֹרַת ה' וּלְעֲשׂוֹת וּלְלַמֵּד
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל חֹק וּמִשְׁפָּט", וגו'. וְאֵלּוּ הָיָה בִידָם שְׁתֵּי תּוֹרוֹת, כְּמוֹ
שֶׁמֵּאֲמִינִים הָיוּ הַתַּלְמוּדִיִּים, הָיָה כְּתוּב: "סֹפֵר מְהִיר בְּתוֹרוֹת
מֹשֶׁה"; וְכֵן הָיָה כְּתוּב: "לְדַרְשׁ מֵאֵת תּוֹרוֹת ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת". וְכֵן
מִלֵּאכֵי הַנְּבִיא, חוֹתֵם הַנְּבִיאִים, אֲשֶׁר עָלָה עִם עֲזָרָא מִבָּבֶל,
אָמַר (מִלֵּאכֵי ג:כב): "זָכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אוֹתוֹ
בְּחֵרֶב"; וְלֹא אָמַר: "זָכְרוּ תּוֹרוֹת". וּבְעֵלוֹת עֲזָרָא מִבָּבֶל עָלוּ עִמּוֹ
שְׁלֹשָׁה נְבִיאִים, וְהֵם חֲגִי זְכָרְיָה וּמִלֵּאכֵי; וּבְעוֹד שֶׁהָיוּ הַנְּבִיאִים
הָאֵלּוּ חַיִּים, לֹא הָיְתָה שׁוּם מַחְלָקַת בֵּינֵיהֶם, רַק תּוֹרָה אַחַת
וְאַמוּנָה אַחַת הָיְתָה בִידָם. וּבְנוּ בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי וְתַחֲלַת בְּנֵינוּ
בְּשָׁנַת שְׁלֹשָׁת אֲלָפִים שַׁע"ד לַיְצִירָה, וּנְבִנָּה י"ד שָׁנִים; וּמִסּוּף

the end of Jeremiah, and they lived in Babylonia for seventy years. When Cyrus, King of Persia, conquered the Kingdom of Babylonia, during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Belshazzar, as written in Daniel, chapter 5, Cyrus sent the exiles of Judah from Babylonia, and Ezra the Priest went up [to Jerusalem] with Zerubbabel, a descendant of the [last] king; [Zerubbabel] served as a governor, appointed over Israel by the King of Persia. With them came most of the Judeans who were in Babylonia. This Ezra the Priest was a scribe of the Torah of the Lord, and he would teach it to the descendants of Judah and Benjamin, as written in the First Book of Ezra,⁷ chapter 7. They had only one Torah, as it is written there: *This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the Torah of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given* (Ezra 7:6); and it is written: *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Torah of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments* (Ezra 7:10). If they had had two Torahs, as the Talmudites believe today, then [the verse] would have said: "A ready scribe in the *Torahs* of Moses," and "to seek the *Torahs* of the Lord." Moreover, Malachi the Prophet, who sealed the [period of] prophets, and who went up with Ezra from Babylonia, said: *Remember ye the Torah of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb* [Malachi 3:22]; he did not say: "Remember the *Torahs* [of Moses]." When Ezra went up from Babylonia, three prophets went up with him: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. As long as these prophets were alive, there was no argument among [the people], rather, they had one Torah and one faith in their hands. And they built the Temple, and the building of the Second Temple began in the year 3394,ⁱ and took fourteen years; and from

⁷ That is, the biblical Book of Ezra. Because the author here is explaining Karaite Judaism to a Christian, he adopts the terminology used in the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible, where the Hebrew Ezra is called "I Ezra," Nehemiah is called "II Ezra," and two books not found in the Hebrew are called "III Ezra" and "IV Ezra."

בְּנִינוּ עֹמֵד ת"כ שָׁנִים, וְהַחֲרִיבוּהָ אֶסְפָּסְיָאנוֹס וְטִיטוֹס. וּבִימֵי
הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה, כְּשִׁמְתּוֹ הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה נְבִיאִים וְעֹזֵא הַכֹּהֵן וְכָל בֵּית
דִּינוֹ, כְּשֶׁלְכַד אֶלְכַסְנֶדְרוֹס מֶלֶךְ מוֹקֶדוֹן אֶת מַלְכוּת פָּרַס מִיַּד
דָּרְיוֹשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי שֶׁהוּא בֶן אַחֲשֹׁרוֹשׁ שֶׁלָּקַח אֶת אֶסְתֵּר הַיְּהוּדִית
לְאִשָּׁה, וּכְשֶׁעָלָה הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶלְכַסְנֶדְר לִכְבוֹשׁ גַּם אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם,
יָצָא שְׂמֵעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם לִקְרֹאתוֹ לְבוֹשׁ
בָּדִים, וְסִפֵּר הַתּוֹרָה בִּידוֹ. וּמֵצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְלֹא הֶחְרִיב
אֶת הָעִיר וּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, וְהֵיכְל מַלְכוּת יְהוּדָה תַּחַת מְמִשְׁלָתוֹ
עַד מוֹתוֹ. וּכְשִׁמְתָּ אֶלְכַסְנֶדְר וְנַחֲלָקָה מִמַּלְכוּתוֹ לְאַרְבַּע חִלְקִים,
כְּדַכְתִּיבִי בְיוֹסִיפּוֹן, עֹמֵד עַל מַלְכוּת מוֹקֶדוֹן מֶלֶךְ אֶחָד רֶשַׁע,
שָׂמוּ אֲנִטְיוֹכּוֹס, וְעָלָה עַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם וּכְבַּשׁ אֶת הָעִיר, וְטָמָא אֶת
הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, וְחָתַם אֶת כָּל בֵּית מִדְרָשׁוֹת שֶׁל מַלְכוּת יְהוּדָה בְּכָל
עָרֵי מַלְכוּתָם, וְגִזֵּר שְׁלֹא יִלְמְדוּ הַתּוֹרָה, וּבְכָל מָקוֹם שֶׁמֵּצָא שֵׁם
סֵפֶר תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה שָׂרָף בָּאֵשׁ, כִּדִּי לֹא יִבְדֹּק זִכְרֵה הַתּוֹרָה הָאֶחָת
מִן הָעוֹלָם. וְזֶה מִפְּנֵי קִנְיָתוֹ שֵׁשׁ אֲמוּנָה וְדַת בִּישְׂרָאֵל, אֲבָל
בִּשְׂאֵר הָאֲמוּנוֹת אֵין שׁוֹם אֲמוּנָה וְדַת; וְכֵן מִפְּנֵי שֶׁיָּדַע שֶׁכָּתוּב
בַּתּוֹרָה עַל יוֹן שֶׁהוּא מִזְרַע חֵם, שֶׁהוּא מְקַלֵּל מִנַּח הַצַּדִּיק, עַל

the time when the building was completed, it stood another 420 years, until Vespasian and Titus destroyed it. During the period of this Temple, after the death of the three prophets and Ezra and his whole court, Alexander, King of Macedon, conquered the Persian Empire from Darius II, son of Ahasuerus the husband of Esther the Jewess.⁸ When King Alexander came to conquer Jerusalem, Simeon the Righteous, the high priest in Jerusalem, went forth to greet him, wearing linen vestments, and holding a book of the Torah in his hands; the king was pleased with him, and did not destroy the city or the Temple. The Kingdom of Judah was under Alexander's rule until his death; and when he died, his kingdom was split into four parts, as is written in *Josippon*.⁹ A certain wicked man, named Antiochus, became king of the Macedonian Kingdom; he attacked Jerusalem, and conquered the city, and defiled the Temple; and closed all the study-houses of the Kingdom of Judah, in all cities of their kingdom; and decreed that they must not study the Torah. And where he found a book of the Torah, he burned it in fire, in order to wipe out any memory of this Torah from the world. This was because of his jealousy of the Israelite people for having faith and law, whereas all the other nations have no faith or law. It was also because he knew that it is written in the Torah that Yavan (Greece) is a descendant of Ham,

8 The idea that this Darius was the son of Ahasuerus, the husband of Esther, is not historically accurate, but appears in the commentary *Tosafoth* (created by the descendants and students of Rashi and their students, in French and German lands, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) on Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Ha-shana 3b.

9 Not only the splitting of Alexander's empire, but also the preceding story, about Alexander and the high priest, are in *Josippon*, ed. Flusser, §10, pp. 54 f., 59 f. *Josippon* is a medieval Hebrew history of Second Temple times, based mainly on material in the Apocrypha and in Josephus, which the author, a Jew living in tenth-century Italy, read in Latin (which the Christians had preserved), and adapted into Hebrew for Jewish readers. David Flusser, ed., *Sefer Yosippon*, edited with an introduction and notes, Bialik Institute, 1981.

בן רצה להכחיד ^(לג) התורה מן העולם. ונמשך זה הענין זמן רב, עד שנשתכחה התורה מישראל.

ומצד המבוכות והמהומות נשתכח אפן קיום המצות ופרושם שהיו הנביאים ותלמידיהם מנהיגים ומורים לישראל אופני דיוקי המצות ומהו רצון הבורא יתברך בהם. רק נשארה נסחה נאמנה אחת מתורת משה ביד תלמי מלך מצרים, שהעתיקה לעצמו על-ידי שבעים סנהדרין של מלכות יהודה, והיה תופש אותה בכבוד ובתפארת. וכשהחלישו מלכות יון את יהודה לגמרי עד שלא נשאר להם שום חיל ולא כלי מלחמה, לבד פהגי ה' אשר בבית המקדש היו מתאמצים במקדש ה', והיה אצלם חיל לכמה מאות, אזי מתתיה הכהן הגדול עם חמשת בניו, שהיו גבורי חיל, מסרו נפשם על קדשת השם יתברך, וחזקו ידיהם עם החיל שברגליהם. וברחו להר המודעית, והדביקום שם היונים, ונהפכו הפהגים עם החיל שלהם לקראת היונים, ונלחמו בחזקה. ובתוך המלחמה קראו לשם יתברך: "מי כמכה באלם ה'", ומפני זה נקראו הפהגים

who was cursed by [his father] Noah the righteous;¹⁰ therefore, he wanted to destroy ^{33} the Torah from the world. This lasted a long time, until the Torah was forgotten from Israel.

And because of all this confusion and tumult, the [proper] manner of fulfilling the commandments was forgotten, and the explanations of them, which the prophets and their disciples had been teaching to Israel as leaders and teachers – that is, the precise details of the commandments, and God's will in them. All that remained was one accurate version of Moses's Torah, in the hands of Ptolemy, King of Egypt, which he had copied for himself by means of a Sanhedrin of seventy [individuals] from the Kingdom of Judah.¹¹ He kept [this one copy] with dignity and respect. Now, when the Kingdom of Greece had weakened Judah entirely, they had no strength left, and no weapons, except the priests of the Lord in the Temple, who kept up the fight in the Temple of the Lord. They had an army of a few hundred. Then Mattathias, the high priest, along with his five sons, who were mighty warriors, risked their lives to sanctify God's name, and they kept their hands strong, along with the warriors who were with them, and fled to Mt. Modi'ith. When the Greeks overtook them there, the priests and their warriors turned around and mightily fought the Greeks. In their war, they cried out to God: "Who is like Thee among gods, O Lord?" (*Mi Khamokha Ba'elim Adonai*), and therefore, [from

¹⁰ We do not know of this claim from any source other than *Levush Malkhuth*; and it is very strange, for it is clear from Genesis 10:2 that Yavan is the son of Japheth, not Ham.

¹¹ The story of Ptolemy's ordering of the Septuagint translation is reported in many sources, both in sources preserved by Christians, such as the Letter of Aristas (the oldest source) and Josephus (who copies from Aristas), and in Jewish sources, such as rabbinic literature and *Josippon*. Because *Levush Malkhuth* has mentioned its dependence on *Josippon* earlier, this is his most likely source for this story. Nonetheless, I am not familiar with the claim that the copy of the Torah in Ptolemy's library was the only copy that survived Antiochus's persecutions.

"מִכְבִּי". וְנִקְרָאוּ כִּמוֹ כֵּן "חֲשֹׁמְנָאִים". וְעֲזָרָם הָשֵׁם יִתְפָּרֵךְ
בַּמִּלְחָמָה הַהִיא, וְהַחֲלִישׁוּ אֶת הַיּוֹנִים. וְהִתְחַלַּת מִלְחָמוֹתָם
הִיְתָה רִ"ב לְבָנִין בֵּית שְׁנִי, שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים תַּר"ו לַיְצִידָה.
וּמִיּוֹם הַהוּא הָלְכוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלּוֹךְ וְחֹזֵק, וְהַחֲלִישׁוּ אֶת הַיּוֹנִים,
עַד שֶׁמֶת אֲנָטְיוּכּוֹס בַּמִּלְחָמָה, וּשְׂאֵרֵי חֵילוֹ בָּרְחוּ וְשָׁבוּ
לְמִקְוָמָם. וְכֹאשֶׁר שָׁקְטָה הָאָרֶץ מִמִּלְחָמָה וְנִשְׁכַּחוּ הַצָּרוֹת,
נֶאֱסָפוּ פְּלִיטֵי חָרֵב שֶׁל מַלְכוּת יְהוּדָה לְעָרֵיהֶם, וְגַם הַכֹּהֲנִים
וְזָרַע מַלְכוּת בֵּית דָּוִד לִירוּשָׁלַיִם. וְלֹא הָיָה מִזְרַע דָּוִד אִישׁ הַגּוֹן
לְמַלְכוּת, אֲבָל הַכֹּהֲנִים הָיוּ גְבוּרֵי חֵיל; עַל־כֵּן הִסְכִּימוּ שְׂאֵרֵי
יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימִין שִׁימֹלֶךְ מִתְתִּיָּה הַכֹּהֵן עֲלֵיהֶם. וּמִיּוֹם הַהוּא
הִיְתָה הַמְּלוּכָה וְהַכְּהֻנָּה בְּזָרְעוֹ שֶׁל אֶהֱרֹן, וּמֶלֶךְ הוּא וּבָנָיו
וּבְנֵי בָנָיו עַד שֶׁנִּמְשְׁכָה מַלְכוּתָם ק"ג שָׁנִים. וּכְשָׂאוּ מַלְכוּת
יְהוּדָה כִּי נִשְׂאָרוּ בְּלִי תוֹרָה, עַל־כֵּן שָׁלְחוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים לְתַלְמֵי מֶלֶךְ

the initials of these words in Hebrew], these priests were called “Makhbai” [Machabaeus].¹² They were also called Hasmonaeans. God helped them in that battle and weakened the Greeks. Their battle began in the year 212 after the building of the Second Temple, which was 3606 after Creation.¹³

From that day onward, the priests became stronger and stronger, and weakened the Greeks, until Antiochus died in battle, and his remaining soldiers fled and returned home. When the land was quiet after the war, and the terrible things had been forgotten, the people of the Kingdom of Judah who had survived the sword returned to their cities, and the priests and descendants of the Davidic monarchy returned to Jerusalem. There was no descendant of David that was fitting for the throne, but the priests were mighty warriors, so the remainder of Judah and Benjamin agreed that Mattathias the priest should reign over them; and from that day onward, the monarchy and the priesthood were both in the descendants of Aaron.¹⁴ He and his sons and grandsons ruled, and their rule lasted 103 years.¹⁵ When the Kingdom of Judah saw that they were without Torah, the priests sent [emissaries]

12 The original meaning of the name Machabaeus or Maccabaeus is completely unknown; it was an epithet specifically for Judah, son of Mattathias (in 1 Maccabees 2:4), not for any of the other brothers or warriors. In much later times, various dubious explanations were proposed for the name. The etymology of it as an acronym, as explained by *Levush Malkhuth*, is medieval Ashkenazic; one of the earliest sources where we find it is in a fourteenth-century manuscript Ashkenazic *maḥzor* (MS Kaufmann A 384, Southern Germany, about 1320, folio 20r), in the commentary.

13 Following the chronology of *Levush Malkhuth*, this year comes out to 138 BCE. The actual date of the Hasmonaeen rebellion was 168 BCE.

14 The idea that Mattathias himself was ever king is not accurate. He started the rebellion, but died shortly into it (1 Maccabees 2:49 ff.). His sons Judah and Jonathan became military leaders who actually controlled territory, and only his son Simeon, more than two decades later, really became a monarch.

15 This duration of the Hasmonaeen monarchy is given in the ancient rabbinic chronographical work *Seder 'Olam*, chapter 30. This means, according to the chronology of *Levush Malkhuth*, that the Hasmonaeen dynasty came to an

מִצָּרִים וְהַעֲתִיקוּ הַתּוֹרָה מִהֶנֶסְחָה. וְהָיוּ חֻכְמֵי לֵב שְׂבִיהוּדָה לְוָמְדִים הַתּוֹרָה וּמְדִיקִים בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ בְּאִיזָה אֶפֶן לְקִיָּמָם, בְּלִי שׁוּם מַחְלָקֶת בֵּינֵיהֶם. וּכְשֶׁמֶלֶךְ יוֹחָנָן, בֶּן שֹׁמְעוֹן בָּנוּ הָרַבִּיעִי שֶׁל מִתְתִּיָּה חֲשֵׁמְנָאִי, וְנִקְרָא הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹחָנָן בְּשֵׁם הָרִקְנוּס בְּלִשׁוֹן יוֹן, וְהוּא הָיָה הָרֵאשׁוֹן, וּשְׁנַת מַלְכוּתוֹ בְּשְׁנַת רל"ד לְבֵית שְׁנִי, שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים תרכ"ח לִיצִירָה, וּמֶלֶךְ שְׁלֹשִׁים וְאַחַת שָׁנִים; וּבִסוּף מַלְכוּתוֹ הִתְחִילוּ הַחֻכְמִים לְהִתְפַּלֵּג בַּפְּרוּשֵׁי הַמִּצְוֹת, זֶה אוֹמֵר בְּכָה וְזֶה אוֹמֵר בְּכָה. וּבִזְמַן אֶחָד עָשָׂה מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל {לד} חֻכְמֵי הַתּוֹרָה; וּבִזְמַן הַמִּשְׁתֶּה, אֶחָד מִן הַחֻכְמִים הָרִמִּיז לְמֶלֶךְ שֶׁהוּא אֵינוֹ רָאוּי לְהִיּוֹת כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל לְהַכְנִס לִפְנֵי לְפָנִים, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁנֶּחֱשָׁדָה אָמוֹ בְּהִיוֹתָהּ בְּשִׁבִּי בִּידֵי הַיּוֹנִים. עַל־כֵּן חָרָה אָפוֹ וְהִדְגָּ אֶת כָּל הַחֻכְמִים לְפִי חֲרָב, וּבִכֵּן עוֹד כְּמַעַט לֹא נִשְׁתַּכַּחַה הַתּוֹרָה. וּבַתּוֹךְ כֵּךְ מֵת הַמֶּלֶךְ הָרִקְנוּס הָרֵאשׁוֹן, וּמֶלֶךְ בָּנוּ הַגָּדוֹל שְׁנָה אַחַת, וּמֵת. וְאַחֲרָיו מֶלֶךְ אֶלְכָסְנִידְרוּס הִנִּקְרָא יַנָּאִי, בֶּן שְׁלִישִׁי שֶׁל הַמֶּלֶךְ הָרִקְנוּס, בְּשְׁנַת רס"ו לְבֵית

to Ptolemy, King of Egypt, and copied the text of the Torah from his copy; and the wise people of Judah studied the Torah, and carefully examined how to perform its commandments, and had no debates among them. Then came the reign of John [Yohanan], son of Mattathias's fourth son Simeon, the Hasmonaeen; this King John was known also as Hyrcanus in Greek, and he was the first [Judaean king of this name]. His reign began in the year 234 after the building of the Second Temple, which is 3628 after Creation,¹⁶ and he reigned thirty-one years. At the end of his reign, the sages began to disagree about the interpretations of the commandments, some explaining them one way, and others explaining them in other ways. One time, he made a feast for all ^[34] scholars of the Torah.¹⁷ At some point during the feast, one of the sages hinted to the king that he was unworthy to be high priest, to enter the Holy of Holies, because his mother was suspected of [sexual impropriety] during the time that she had been a captive among the Greeks.¹⁸ [The king] became furious, and slaughtered all the sages at sword-point, and thus, the Torah was nearly forgotten. Meanwhile, King Hyrcanus I died, and his elder son reigned for a year, and died; and after him reigned King Alexander, known as Yannai [Jannaeus], the third son of King

end in 35 BCE. In actual fact, the last Hasmonaeen king, Aristobulus II, was deposed by Pompey in 63 BCE (see Josephus, *Jewish War* 1.141).

16 According to the chronology of *Levush Malkhuth*, this corresponds to 116 BCE; in fact, John Hyrcanus reigned from 134 to 104 BCE.

17 The story of this feast is told in *Josippon*, ed. Flusser, p. 119, §30, based on Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIII.172.

18 If such an act of fornication produced John Hyrcanus, he would not be a priest, because priesthood is transmitted from father to son. Moreover, a woman who has committed sexual impropriety is forbidden to marry a priest (see Leviticus 21:7); according to rabbinic halakha, any descendant of a priest and such a woman is not a priest (Babylonian Talmud, Qiddushin 77a). Thus, even if John Hyrcanus was not descended from this act of fornication, but from a union between his mother and his father after the fornication, rabbinic halakha would not consider him a priest.

שָׁנִי, שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים תר"מ לַיְצִירָה. וּמֶלֶךְ שָׁנִים רַבּוֹת וְהַכְנִיעַ
כָּל אוֹיְבֵי יְהוּדָה מִסָּבִיב בְּמִלְחָמוֹתָיו, וַיָּשֶׁב לְבֶטֶח עַל כִּסֵּא
מַלְכוּתוֹ. וּמִפְּנֵי שֶׁכָּבֹד הִיָּתָה הַתְּחִלָּת הַפְּלָגָתָא בֵּין הַחֲכָמִים
בְּפִרוּשׁ הַמִּצְוֹת עֲדִין מִזְמַן אָבִיו הֶרְקֵנוּס, וְכִמו שֶׁנִּכְתָּב לְקַמֵּן
בְּמִצְוֵה עֲשֵׂרִים מִסְפָּר שְׁלִישִׁי כִּי בְּפִרוּשׁ חֲג הַסְּפֹת יֵשׁ גַּם הַיּוֹם
פְּלָגָתָא בֵּין הַקְּרָאִים וְהַתְּלַמוּדִיִּים, כִּי אוֹמְרִים הַתְּלַמוּדִיִּים
כִּי חוֹבָה לַיִּשְׂרָאֵל לַתְּמוּךְ פָּרִי הָאֶתְרָג וְעֵנָף הַתְּמָרִים, שֶׁהוּא
לוֹלֵב, בַּחֲג הַסְּפֹת, בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וּבְבֵיתִי כְּנִסְיֹת וּבְסָפֹת,
דּוֹקָא לַתְּפִשָּׁם בְּיָדִים וְלִשְׁחֹק בָּהֶם, זוּלַת חוֹבַת הַסֶּכָּה. עַל־כֵּן
בְּזִמָּן יֵנְאִי הַמֶּלֶךְ הַזֶּה בְּשִׁבְתָּם לְבֶטֶח בְּשִׁמְחָה וּבְהַשְׁקָט בַּחֲג
הַסְּפֹת בַּחֲצֹר בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, הָיוּ לוֹמְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה לִשְׁנֵי כְּתוּבֹת:
אַחַת מֵהֵן שְׁלֹא הָיוּ תּוֹפְשִׁים הָאֶתְרָג וְהַלוּלֵב, וְהַשְּׁנִית שֶׁהָיוּ
תּוֹפְשִׁים וְשׁוֹחֲקִים בָּהֶם. וְגַם יֵנְאִי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל הָיָה מִכַּת

Hyrkanus, in the year 266 after the building of the Second Temple, which is 3640 after Creation.¹⁹ This king reigned many years, and in his wars, he subdued all the enemies of Judah on all sides; and he sat safely on his royal throne. Now, the various sages had begun to have debates about the interpretation of the commandments already in the time of his father, Hyrcanus.²⁰ As we shall note below, in our discussion of the twentieth commandment of the third book [Leviticus], there is a debate, even today, regarding the observance of the Festival of Sukkoth, between the Karaites and the Talmudites, for the Talmudites say that there is an obligation for Jews to hold the *ethrog* (citron fruit) and the branch of the date-palm, that is, the *lulav*, on Sukkoth in the Temple and in synagogues, specifically to hold them in their hands on Sukkoth, and to play with them, apart from the obligation [to dwell in] the *sukka*. Thus, at the time of this King Yannai, when they were all resting in peace and joy on Sukkoth in the Temple courtyard, the scholars of the Torah were in two groups: one group did not hold the *ethrog* and *lulav*, and the other group did hold them and play with them.²¹ Yannai, the king and high priest, was of the

19 According to the chronology of *Levush Malkhuth*, this corresponds to 184 BCE; in fact, Alexander Yannai reigned from 103 to 76 BCE.

20 We have found no other source that claims that the differences of opinion in interpreting the commandments began during the reign of John Hyrcanus.

21 *Josippon* does not mention any difference of opinion regarding the *lulav* and *ethrog*; he says merely that “it is a rule for the Jews to play with fruit of the beautiful tree and palm-[branches].” *Levush Malkhuth* adapts this to fit the Karaite opinion, not to hold or play with these species, into the story. Indeed, *Josippon* does not mention any inter-sectarian dispute about the laws of Sukkoth as the reason that the people pelted Alexander Yannai; there seems to be no direct impetus, other than the allegations of his descent from a fornicatrix, which is explicitly mentioned there. On the other hand, a similar, yet different, story is told in the Babylonian Talmud, Sukka 48b; in this story, the conflict is not about the question of whether to hold *lulav* and *ethrog*, but a different inter-sectarian dispute, namely the water-libation on Sukkoth: the rabbinic view is that, in addition to the daily wine-libation, there is a special water-

הָרֵאשׁוֹנָה, שְׂאִין תּוֹפְשִׁין הָאֶתְרָג. עַל־כֵּן מָלֵא לֵב אֶחָד מִן הַפֶּת
הַתּוֹפְשִׁין הָאֶתְרָג, וַיִּשְׁלַךְ עַל הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּאֶתְרָג וַיִּכְהוּ בְּמִצְחוֹ בְּזִמָּן
הַיּוֹתוֹ עֹמֵד עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִקְרִיב מוֹסֵף הַמִּזְעֵד. וַיַּחֲר אֶף הַמֶּלֶךְ
וַיֵּצֵה לַגְּדוּדָיו לַתְּפוּשׁ וְלַהֲרוֹג כָּל הַחֲכָמִים שֶׁל שְׁתֵּי הַכְּתוּבֹת,
וְנִהְרְגוּ אִזּוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלָפִים וּשְׁמוֹנֶה מֵאוֹת חֲכָמִים. וְלֹא נִשְׁאָרוּ
לְבַד שְׁנַיִם חֲכָמִים: אֶחָד יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאִי שֶׁהָיָה מִן קְרוֹבָיו שֶׁל
הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְהַשֵּׁנִי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן שָׁטַח אַחִיָּה שֶׁל הַמֶּלֶכָה אֵשֶׁת יִנָּאי
הַמֶּלֶךְ. וַיהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאִי נִסְתֵּר בְּאֶשֶׁר נִסְתֵּר; אֲבָל שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן
שָׁטַח פָּרַח לֵאלֹכְסֵיגְדָרְיָה שֶׁל מִצְרַיִם וְנִסְתֵּר שָׁם שְׁנַיִם רַבּוֹת,

first group, which does not hold the *ethrog*. Therefore, one of the members of the *ethrog*-holding group decided to hurl an *ethrog* at the king and hit him in the forehead, while he was standing on the altar, offering the *musaf* (special festival sacrifice) for the festival. The king was furious, and he instructed his soldiers to capture and kill all the scholars, of both groups, such that 3,800 were killed,²² and only two sages were left: one was Judah ben Ṭabbai, who was one of the people close to the king, and the other was Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ, brother of King Yannai's wife, the queen.²³ Judah ben Ṭabbai hid wherever he hid, but Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ fled to Alexandria in Egypt and hid there for many years.²⁴

libation on Sukkoth; but the "Sadducee" priest refused to perform it, and the people pelted him with their *ethrogim*.

22 I do not know whence *Levush Malkhuth* derives this number; *Josippon* (loc. cit.) says 50,000.

23 This is evidently based on Babylonian Talmud, Berakhoth 48a, which says that King Yannai killed all the sages, and the only one left to recite grace after the meal of the king and the queen was Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ, the queen's brother. We have not found anywhere else that the king also spared Judah ben Ṭabbai; however, Judah ben Ṭabbai is a character known from rabbinic literature, where he is always portrayed as Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ's partner and opponent in matters of specific rabbinic laws, not as his opponent regarding rabbinic halakha as a whole. (See Mishna Avoth 8–9, Mishna Hagiga 2:2.) There is a particularly interesting story in Hagiga 16b, where Judah ben Ṭabbai condemns a certain man to death (as a legal point to prove the Sadducees wrong), and Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ tells him that he has spilled innocent blood. Judah ben Ṭabbai is so horrified that he spends the rest of his life begging forgiveness at the condemned man's grave, and he accepts upon himself never again to rule on any matter of halakha without consulting with Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ.

24 I have found no other source that claims that Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ fled to Egypt or built a temple there. Josephus (*Jewish War*, VII. 420 ff.) tells us that Onias went to Egypt and built a temple there, but this was much earlier, several generations before the time of Yannai. The Babylonian Talmud, too, tells us about this temple in Egypt (and disapproves of it, just like *Levush Malkhuth*), and attributes it, like Josephus, to Onias; see Babylonian Talmud, Menaḥoth 109b for the story, and Mishna Menaḥoth 13:10 for mention of "the Temple of Onias [Ḥonyo]." In the Palestinian Talmud, Mo'ed Qaṭan 2:2, it tells a story that Judah ben Ṭabbai flees to Egypt (when the people of Jerusalem try to appoint

וְנִקְבְּצוּ אֵלָיו שָׁם תַּלְמִידָיו לְכַמֵּה מֵאוֹת. וּבָנָה לוֹ שָׁם הַיֵּכָל לְבַד, וַעֲשֶׂה בְּתוֹכוֹ מִזְבֵּחַ, וְהָיָה מִקְרִיב עֹלֹת וּזְבָחִים בְּזוֹלַת הַמָּקוֹם הַנִּבְחָר, וְעָבַר עַל מִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר חֲמִישִׁי בְּסֹדֶר י"ב: "הַשְּׁמֹר לְךָ פֶּן תַּעֲלֶה עֲלֵתֶיךָ בְּכָל מָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶה, כִּי אִם בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' בְּאַחַד שְׁבֻטֶיךָ שָׁם תַּעֲלֶה עֲלֵתֶיךָ וְשָׁם תַּעֲשֶׂה כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִי מֵצִוֶּךָ." וְאַחַר כֵּן עָשָׂה שָׁם פְּרוּשִׁים עַל הַמִּצְוֹת, עַל קִצְתָּם כִּרְאוֹי וְעַל קִצְתָּם שְׁלֹא כְּפִי הִרְאוֹי, רַק חוּץ מִן הַמִּכּוֹן. וְעַל קִצְתָּם הוֹסִיף וְעַל קִצְתָּם גִּדַּע, כְּמוֹ שֶׁיִּרְאוּ עֵינֵי כָּל מִשְׁכִּיל לְקַמּוֹן.

{לה} אַמֵּנִם יִדַּע שֶׁכְּשִׁישׁוּב לְמַלְכוּת יִהְיֶה יִמָּצְאוּ אֲנָשִׁים שְׁלֹא יִסְפְּימוּ לִפְרוּשֵׁיוֹ וּלְדַבָּרָיו. עַל כֵּן הִשְׁקִיעַ בְּלִב תַּלְמִידָיו וַחֲבָרָיו הַנִּמְצָאִים אֹתוֹ כִּי כָּל מֶה שֶׁהוּא מְדַבֵּר וּמְפָרֵשׁ, הַכֹּל קִבְּלוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ הַנִּהְיָגִים, דּוֹר מְדוּד, עַד מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם, וּמֹשֶׁה עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם קִבֵּל אוֹתָם בְּסִינֵי מִפִּי הַגְּבוּרָה עַל פֶּה. וְכֵן הִשְׁקִיעַ שְׁמֻעוֹן הַהוּא בְּלִבָּם כִּי שְׁתֵּי תוֹרוֹת קִבֵּל מֹשֶׁה אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים בְּסִינֵי, אַחַת כְּתוּבָה וְהַשְּׁנִית עַל פֶּה. וְהַשְּׁנִית, שֶׁהִיא עַל פֶּה, הִיא פְּרוּשׁ עַל הַתּוֹרָה הַכְּתוּבָה. וְנִשְׁתַּקַּע זֶה הָעֲנָן בְּלִבָּם. וְהִלְכָה סִיעָה זֹאת הוֹלֶכֶת וְרֹבֶה עַד לְכַמֵּה אֲלָפִים, כִּי שְׁנַיִם רַבּוֹת נִסְתַּר שָׁם בְּאַלְכֶסְנֶדְרִיא. וַיְהִי כֹאֲשֶׁר נָחַם הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶלְכֶסְנֶדֶר וַיָּנֹא עַל שֶׁהָרַג הַחֲכָמִים, וַאֲמַר: "הִנֵּה לֹא נִשְׁאַר

Many hundreds of his students gathered around him there, and he built a sanctuary there on his own, and made an altar inside, and he would offer *‘oloth* [sacrifices that are utterly consumed by fire] and *zevaḥim* [sacrifices that are eaten by people] outside the chosen place [*i.e.*, the Jerusalem Temple], and thus, he violated the commandment of the Torah, as written in the fifth book [Deuteronomy] in the twelfth chapter: *Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest. But in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee* [Deuteronomy 12:13–14]. Afterwards, he made interpretations of the commandments, some of them correct, and others incorrect and not in accordance with their intention; he added to some [commandments], and subtracted from others, as any intelligent person will be able to see below.

^{35} Now, he knew that when he returned to the Kingdom of Judah, he would find people that would not agree with his interpretations and his words. Therefore, he instilled into the heart of his students and friends, who were with him [in Egypt], that all that he was saying and explaining – all had been received by our slain teachers, generation after generation, from our master Moses, peace be upon him, and Moses had received it from God’s mouth, orally, at Sinai. And thus Simeon instilled it in their heart that Moses, the man of God, had received two Torahs at Sinai, one written and one oral, where the oral one was the explanation of the written one. This matter was [successfully] instilled in their hearts. This group became progressively larger, reaching several thousand [individuals], for he spent many years hiding in Alexandria. After Alexander Yannai regretted having killed the sages, he said: “There is no one left from whom we can study the

him to a high office, for which he is too modest); but not Simeon ben Shāṭaḥ, and with no connection to the temple in Egypt.

לָנוּ מִמֵּי לְלִמּוּד תּוֹרָה!", בְּקֶשֶׁה הַמֶּלֶכָה עַל אַחִיהָ שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן שִׁטָּח רַחֲמִים שֵׁשִׁיב מִן אֲלֶכְסַנְדְּרִיא שֶׁל מִצְרַיִם. וַיֵּשֶׁב הוּא וְכָל סִיעָתוֹ לְמֵאוֹת וְלֶאֱלָפִים, וַיַּחֲלֵל לְהוֹדוֹת הוּא וְתַלְמִידָיו לְכָל עַם יְהוּדָה אֶת מֶה שֶׁחִדָּשׁ, וְלֹהֲשָׁקִיעַ בְּלִבּוֹתָם מֶה שֶׁהִשְׁקִיעַ בְּלִב תַּלְמִידָיו.

ובתוך כך שָׁב גַּם חֲבֵרוֹ יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאי, וּכְשֶׁשָּׁמַע מַעֲשָׂיו מֶה שֶׁעָשָׂה שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן שִׁטָּח, אֲחֻזָּתוֹ הוּא רַעְדָה, וְאָמַר: "וְהֵלֵא גַם אֲנִי לְמִדַּתִּי עִמָּךְ בַּמִּדְרָשׁ אֶחָד, וְשִׁמְשֵׁתִי לְתַלְמִידֵי חֲכָמִים, וְלִמָּה לֹא שָׁמַעְתִּי שְׂתֵּהִיָּה תּוֹרָה שְׁנִית לִישְׂרָאֵל?" וְלֹא חָפֵץ וְלֹא הִסָּפִים יְהוּדָה לְדַעַתּוֹ שֶׁל שִׁמְעוֹן. וַיִּקְרָא: "מִי לֵה' אֵלָיו!" וְכָל מִי שֶׁהִיָּתָה בְּלִבּוֹ יִרְאֵת ה' וְאֶהְבֵּת הָאֱמֶת הַלֵּךְ אַחֲרֵי יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאי, וְאַשֶּׁר אָהֵב הַנְּצִיחַ וּבִקְשֵׁת הַשְּׂרָרָה וְחָפֵץ לְהַקֵּל בַּמִּצְוֹת פָּנָה אַחֲרֵי שִׁמְעוֹן. וְסִיעַת יְהוּדָה נִקְרְאוּ קָרָאִים, רוֹצֵה לֹמַד, סוֹמְכִים לְבַד עַל מִקְרָא הַתּוֹרָה הַפְּתוּבָה וְהַנִּבְיָאִים הָאֲמִתִּיִּים, וְסִיעַת שִׁמְעוֹן נִקְרְאוּ בֵּת הַתַּלְמוּדִיִּים, וְכֵן עֲצָמָם בִּישׁ רַבָּנִים, לְשׁוֹן גְּדֻלָּה וְחִשְׁבִּיבוּת, כָּל זֶה מִפְּנֵי בִקְשָׁתָם הַגָּאוּה וְהַשְּׂרָרָה וְהַנְּצִיחַ. וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה נִחְלָקָה אֱמוּנַת שְׁבִטֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵימִין לִשְׁתֵּי אֱמוּנוֹת וְכַתּוּת. וְהִיא זֶה הָעֲנָן קָרוֹב לְשֵׁנִת שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים תַּר"ן לְבִרְיַאת הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהִיא שְׁנַת רנ"ו לְבֵית שְׁנִי, קָרוֹב לְקַב"א שְׁנִים אַחֵר הַתַּפְּלַג פֶּת צְדוֹק וּבֵיתוֹס מִפֶּת הַפְּרוּשִׁים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּל זֶה הוֹכַחְנוּ בְּרֵאיוֹת בְּסֵפֶר דוֹד מְרַדְּכִי, בְּפֶרֶק ב' בְּתַשׁוּבַתְנוּ לְחֲכָמֵי הוֹלָלָא נִדְיָא. וְהַמַּחְלָקֶת הָאַחֲרוֹנָה הִזְאוֹת כְּבֵד הִיָּתָה בְּכַת הַפְּרוּשִׁים שֶׁנִּחְלְקוּ לְשְׁנִים, רוֹצֵה לֹמַד קָרָאִים וְרַבָּנִים. כִּי כְּבֵד צְדוֹק וּבֵיתוֹס יֵצְאוּ לְמִינּוֹת, וְלֹא קָבְלוּ כָּלֵל הַמִּצְוֹת, רַק קִצְצָתָם; וְתַבִּין. מִיּוֹם הַהוּא וְהִלָּאָה הִיָּתָה הַמַּחְלָקֶת הוֹלָכָה

Torah!" So the queen begged her brother, Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ, to return from Alexandria; and he returned with his whole group of hundreds and thousands of people. He and his disciples began to teach the whole people of Judah what he had invented, and to instill in their hearts what he had instilled in his disciples' hearts.

Meanwhile, his colleague Judah ben Ṭabbai also returned. When he heard what Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ had done, he was seized by trembling, and he said: "Did not I study with you in the same study-house and serve the same masters? Why did I never hear that there was a second Torah for the Jewish people?" Judah did not agree with Simeon's opinions, and he cried out: "Whoever is for the Lord, come to me!" And all those that had fear of God and love of truth in their hearts went to Judah ben Ṭabbai; but those that loved conquest and domination, and wanted to make the commandments easier, followed Simeon. Judah's group was called Karaites (*qara'im*); that is, those that rely exclusively on reading (*miqra*) the written Torah and the true prophets, whereas Simeon's group was called that sect of Talmudites, and they called themselves Rabbanites (*rabbanim*), a word that means greatness and importance – all this because they sought glory and conquest and domination. And thus, the faith of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin was split into two faiths and sects. This was around the year 3650 after Creation, which was the year 256 after the building of the Second Temple, around 121 years after the split of the sect of Zadok and Boethius from the Pharisaic sect, as we have demonstrated with proofs in the book, *Dod Mordokhai*, chapter 2, in our response to the sages of Holland. This last split, between Karaites and Rabbanites, was already within the Pharisaic sect, for Zadok and Boethius had left [observant Judaism] to become heretics, for, you should understand, they did not accept the totality of the commandments, but only some of them.²⁵ From this day onward

25 Cf. Avoth de-Ribbi Nathan 5:2, where it tells a story that Antigonos of Sokho had two students, Zadok and Boethius, who rejected the idea of divine

וְגִדְלָהּ. וְהִם, רוֹצֵה לִזְמֹר הַרְבֵּנִים, הַפְּרִיחוּ וְהִרְחִיבוּ עֲנִינָם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ
מִדְּרָשִׁים בְּתַלְמִידִים לְמֵאוֹת וּלְאַלְפִים, לְלַמֵּד ^(יט) עַל פֶּה כָּל
הַקְּבָלוֹת הָהֵם. וּבְכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר הָיוּ מְחַדְּשִׁים, וְהָיוּ הַכָּל מִיַּחְסִים
לְמִשָּׁה רַבֵּנוּ עָלָיו הַשָּׁלוֹם. וְכִדִּי לְהַחֲמִיר וּלְהַחֲזִיק עֲנִינָם, גָּזְרוּ
וְאָמְרוּ: כָּל הָעֶבֶר עַל דְּבָרֵי תוֹרַת הַתְּנוּכָה חַיֵּב מַלְקוֹת, וְכָל
הָעֶבֶר עַל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁפָּעַל פֶּה חַיֵּב מִיתָה. וְהָיָה הַתְּלָמוּד
הַזֶּה אֲצֵלָם בַּעַל פֶּה עַד שְׁנַת שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים תַּתְקַע"ט לַיְצִירָה,
שֶׁהוּא שְׁנַת קל"ט אַחֲרֵי הַחֲרָבָן בֵּית שֵׁנִי. וּבַעֲדֵי שֶׁהָיָה הַבֵּית
בְּמִקְוָמוֹ, פָּעַם הָיָה כֹּהֵן מִכַּת הַקְּרָאִים וּפָעַם מִכַּת הַתְּלָמוּדִיִּים,
כְּמוֹ שֶׁהֻזְכַּחְנוּ זֶה בְּרֵאיוֹת בְּרוּרוֹת בְּתַשׁוּבַתְנוּ לַחֲכָמֵי מִדְּרַש
לִיד"ה שֶׁבְּמַלְכוּת הוֹלָאנְדִּיא. וְאַחֲרֵי חֲרָבָן בֵּית שֵׁנִי קל"ט שָׁנִים,
שֶׁהוּא שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים תַּתְקַע"ט לַיְצִירָה, עָמַד רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הַנָּשִׂיא
שָׁלָהֶם, וְהָיָה עֹשִׂיר גָּדוֹל וַיְדוּ תַקְפָּה בְּמַלְכוּת רוֹמִי הַמּוֹלֶכֶת
עֲלֵיהֶם, וְהוּא הִסְכִּים לִכְתֹּב כָּל הַקְּבָלוֹת בְּסֵפֶר, לְבַל יִשְׁתַּכַּחוּ.
וּמִזְמָן הָהוּא הִשְׁרִישׁוּ וְקִבְּעוּ שֵׁישׁ לַיִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁתֵּי תוֹרוֹת. אֲבָל
רַבֵּנוּ עֲנֵן הַנָּשִׂיא בֶּן שָׁפֵט הַנָּשִׂיא, כְּמוֹ כֵּן מִזְרַע הַמְּלוּכָה מַלְכוּת
בֵּית דָּוִד, לֹא הִסְכִּים עִמָּהֶם, וַחֲזַק יָדֵי כַת יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאִי,
הַתּוֹמָכִים לְבַד הַתּוֹרָה הַתְּנוּכָה וְדְבָרֵי הַנְּבִיאִים הָאֲמִתִּיִּים
הַנִּמְצָאִים בַּתְּנוּכָה. וְהַתְּלָמוּדִיִּים הָיוּ רוֹצִים לְכוֹף אֶת סִיעֵת
יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאִי בַּחֲזָקָה, שֶׁיְהִיוּ נִשְׁמָעִים לְסִיעֶתָם, וְהַנָּשִׂיא
עֲנֵן בֶּן שָׁפֵט הָיָה תַקִּיף וְגִבּוֹר חֵיל, וְעָרַךְ עִמָּהֶם מִלְחָמָה, וְלֹא

[when the Pharisees split into Karaites and Rabbanites], the debate grew greater and greater, and the Rabbanites flourished and expanded their movement, and established houses of study with hundreds and thousands of students, to study ^{36} orally all of their traditions; and in each generation, they invented new ideas and attributed it all to Moses. And in order to make their ideas stronger and more serious, they made decrees, saying that whoever violates the written Torah is to be punished with lashes, but whoever violates the words of the Oral Torah is to be punished with death. They had the Talmud only orally until the year 3979 after Creation, which was the year 139 after the destruction of the Second Temple. While the Temple was standing, the [high] priest would sometimes be from the Karaites, and sometimes from the Talmudites, as we have demonstrated with clear proofs in our responses to the scholars of the school of Leiden²⁶ in the Kingdom of Holland. Then, 139 years after the destruction of the Temple, which is 3979 years after Creation, Rabbi Judah, their patriarch, who was very wealthy, and had powerful influence with the Roman Empire, which reigned over them, decided to write down all the traditions in a book, so that they would not be forgotten; and ever since, they have established the idea that Israel has two Torahs, and let it take root. However, 'Anan the Patriarch, son of Shafaṭ the Patriarch, who was also from the descendants of the Davidic monarchy, did not agree with them. He strengthened the hands of the sect of Judah ben Ṭabbai, who supported only the written Torah and the words of the true prophets, which are found in Scripture. The Talmudites wanted to force Judah ben Ṭabbai's group to listen to their group, but Patriarch 'Anan ben Shafaṭ was a mighty warrior, and he fought with them, and [his

punishment or afterlife, and thus created two sectarian groups, Sadducees (=Zadokites) and Boethusians.

²⁶ The text uses the Polish form of the city name, Lejda.

נִבְנְעוּ לָהֶם. וּמֵהַיּוֹם הַהוּא יוֹתֵר נִתְחַדְּשָׁה הַמַּחְלָקֶת וְנִמְשְׁכָה
גַּם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.*

וְהַמַּחְלָקֶת הַזֹּאת אֵינָה אֶלָּא בְּשָׁנֵי הַשְּׁבָטִים, שֶׁהֵם יְהוּדָה
וּבִנְיָמִין, שִׁמְעוֹן כָּל אֲנָשֵׁי הַגָּלוּת שֶׁבְּאַרְצֵי קִיסָר וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵל
וּפּוֹלִין וְלִיטָא. וְאַחֲרֵי שֶׁחֲכָמֵינוּ רָאוּ כִּי תוֹרָה שֶׁבַעֲלָפָה שֶׁלָּהֶם,
שֶׁלֹּדְעָתָם הִיא פְּרוּשׁ עַל תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָּב, הִיא לְפַעֲמִים סוֹתֶרֶת
הַכְּתוּב וּמַפְרֶשֶׁת עַל זוּלַת הַמִּכּוֹן, וּבִקְצֵת הַמִּצְוֹת מוֹסְפֶת
וּבִקְצֵתָם גּוֹדֶעַת, וּקְצֵתָם מְבַטֵּלֶת לְגַמְרִי, עַל כֵּן הִתְחִילוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת
פְּרוּשִׁים עַל הַתּוֹרָה הַכְּתוּבָה מִשְׁקוּל דְּעָתָם. וְנִפְּלוּ מַחְלָקוֹת
רַבּוֹת בִּינֵינוּ וּבִינֵיהֶם בִּפְרוּשֵׁי הַמִּצְוֹת. וְהֵנִי עוֹרֵךְ כָּל הַמִּצְוֹת
שֶׁבְּכָל סֵפֶר וְסֵפֶר מִחֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תּוֹרָה שֶׁנִּפְּלָה חֻלְקָה בַּמִּצְוֹת
הֵן, לְמַעַן יֵרָאוּ חֲכָמֵי הָאֱמוּנוֹת הָאוֹהֲבִים לְלַמּוֹד לְשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ
וְתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה אֶצֶל מִי הָאֱמֶת.

* ח בְּנִרְאָה שֶׁיֵּשׁ לְהַפְלִיגַת הַכְּתוּבוֹת אֶלֶף תַּתִּמ"ד שָׁנִים, כְּפִי הַמּוֹבֵן מִדְּבָרֵי
הַחֶכֶם, מִן הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, שֶׁהוּא הַתַּק"ו לְפָדֵט גָּדוֹל.

group] did not give in to them. And from that day onward, the argument was started anew, and continues through today.*²⁷

This argument is only within the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, from which descend all the Jews in exile in the lands of the Kaiser,²⁸ and of the Arabs, and Poland and Lithuania. The Talmudites' Oral Torah, according to them, is a commentary on the Written Torah; but our sages see that it sometimes contradicts the Written [Torah], and explains it in a way other than intended, and that they have added to some commandments and subtracted from others, and even abolished some entirely. Therefore, [our Karaite scholars] have begun to write commentaries on the Written Torah, based on their own understanding. And various debates have come up between them and us, regarding the interpretations of the commandments. I am going to enumerate all the commandments where there is a debate, in each of the five books of the Torah, in order that the gentile scholars, who love to study the Holy Language [Hebrew] and Moses's Torah, may know whose [interpretation] is truth.

27 *The following footnote appears in the original Hebrew, both in the manuscripts and in Ed. Neubauer, evidently composed by some copyist over the course of the transmission of the work: "It seems that there have elapsed 1844 years since the split of the sects, as can be seen from the Ḥakham's words, 'from today, which is the year 5506'."

MS A and Ed. Neubauer update this by adding: "And until this year, 5615, there have been 1953 years."

28 Or "Czar." The Hebrew *qesar*, from Latin "Caesar," can refer in this period either to the Emperor of the Austrian Empire or to that of the Russian Empire, both of whose titles are derived from the Latin "Caesar." Both empires had large Jewish communities in the eighteenth century.

^{12} מצוות מספר ראשון מחמשת ספרי תורת משה

בסדר י"ז מזה הספר כתובה מצוה ראשונה, מצות מילה, שהמכון בזה לכרות הערלה לבד, ולא יותר, ככתוב: "ונמלתם את בשרי" ערלתכם. והתלמודיים הוסיפו במצוה זו מצות פריעה, רוצה לומר: אחר שיכרת הערלה בפסין, שיקרע הקלפה בצפרניו. וחכמינו לא הסכימו לזה, כי התורה אמרה: "לא תוסיפו על הדבר אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם" וגו' [דברים ד, ב].

{37}COMMANDMENTS FROM THE
FIRST BOOK OF MOSES'S TORAH [GENESIS]

In chapter 17 of this book, is written the first commandment, that of circumcision: it means only to cut off the foreskin and no more; as it is written: *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin* [Genesis 17:11]. But the Talmudites added to this a commandment of *peri'a*, “exposing,” which means that after one cuts the foreskin with a knife, one must tear the lining [of the glans, *i.e.*, the prepuce] with one's fingernails.ⁱⁱ But our sages do not agree with this, for the Torah says: *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you* (Deuteronomy 4:2).

מצוות מספר שני מחמשת ספרים שבתורת משה עליו השלום

א בסדר י"ב פתוב: "החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים" וגו', וכן בספר רביעי סדר כ"ח פתיב: "ובראשי חדשיכם תקריבו עליה לה'". על מנן החדש הראשון ועל ידיעת ראשי חדשים של כל חדש וחדש תלוין כל מועדי אמת ישראל. ואף-על-פי שאין פתוב בתורה בברור איך היא אפן הראיה של הלבנה החדשה, מכל מקום מהוראת משה אדונינו ותלמידו יהושע ושאר הנביאים אשר קמו אחריהם נמשך החק בישראל, שבשיראה הירח החדש בראיה הראשונה בערב ראשון אחר המולד, לקדש היום מתחלת הערב שגראה החדש, ובבקר להקריב מוסף החדש הפתוב בספר הרביעי בסדר כ"ח. ונמשך זה החק בכל ימי בית ראשון, ובגלות בבל לא נתבטל ולא נפלה שום חלוקה בדבר זה, ובכל ימי בית שני ואחר חרבן של בית שני לא נראתה ולא נשמעה פלגתא בענין זה. שאפלו בתלמודם פותבים ומרחיבים לדבר איך היו עדים שוקדים על ההרים לראות הירח, ולהשיא משואות על ראשי ההרים שיראה העשן והאש בלילה, שמזה יפירו יושבי ירושלים שהעדים ראו מראשי ההרים את החדש, ויקריבו המוסף בבקר. אבל בשנת שלשת אלפים תתל"ג ליצירה, שהוא שנה ששית אחר חרבן

COMMANDMENTS FROM THE
SECOND BOOK OF MOSES'S TORAH [EXODUS]

1 In chapter 12, it is written: *This month shall be unto you the beginning of months* [Exodus 12:2]; and in the fourth book [Numbers], chapter 28, it is written: *And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord* [Numbers 28:11]. [Thus,] all the designated times of the Jewish people are dependent on knowledge of the first month and the beginnings of the other months. Now, although it is not written explicitly in the Torah how the new moon is to be seen, nonetheless, the law was passed on in the Jewish people, from the instruction of our master Moses,ⁱⁱⁱ and his disciple Joshua, and the other prophets who came after them, that when the new moon is first sighted on the first evening after the *molad* [lunar conjunction], we must sanctify that day, starting from the beginning of the evening of the sighting, and in the morning we must offer the *musaf* sacrifice of the new moon, as is written in the fourth book [Numbers], chapter 28. This law continued throughout all the days of the First Temple, and it did not fall into disuse even in the Babylonian exile, and there was no debate about the matter, and in all the days of the Second Temple, and even after the destruction of the Second Temple, no debate was seen or heard regarding this matter. For even in their Talmud,²⁹ they write at length how the witnesses would stand diligently on mountaintops to see the moon, and to light bonfires on the mountaintops, so that the smoke and fire would be seen at night, so that the inhabitants of Jerusalem would know that the witnesses had seen the moon from the mountaintops, and [thus know to] offer the *musaf* sacrifice in the morning. However, in the year 3833 after Creation, which

²⁹ See Mishna Rosh Ha-shana 1:3–3:1, and both Babylonian and Palestinian Talmud ad loc., for extensive discussions of this whole process.

בֵּית שְׁנֵי, עֶמֶד רֶבֶן גְּמְלִיאל לְנִשְׂיָא בִּישְׁדָּאֵל, וּבְזִמְן נְשִׂאוֹתוֹ
 בְּטַל רְאִית הִירֶחַ מֵעֵקְרָהּ, ^{לח} וְהַעֲמִיד קְדוּשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ עַל פִּי
 הַחֲשֹׁבֵן הָאֲמָצְעִי, שְׁאִין הַחֲשֹׁבֵן הָהוּא אֶפְלוּ לֹא עַל פִּי דְרָכֵי
 הַתְּכֻנָּה הַמְדִּיקָתָּה. וְקִבְעוּ חֻקִּים: לֹא אֲד"ו רֹאשׁ, וְלֹא בִד"ו
 פֶּסַח, לֹא גִה"ז עֵצְרָת לֹא זִב"ד פּוֹר וְלֹא אֶג"ו יוֹם כְּפוֹר, וְדָחוּ
 כָּל הַמוֹעֲדִים מִזְּמַנָּם. וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה הִתְלַמּוּדִים לְפַעֲמִים מְקַדְּשִׁים
 הַחֹדֶשׁ, וְעֲדִין הִישָׁן נִרְאָה; וּלְפַעֲמִים הִירֶחַ הַחֹדֶשׁ כְּבֹר נִרְאָה,
 וְהֵם עֲדִין אֵינָם מְקַדְּשִׁים. וּבִכֵּן דָּחוּ עֵדוּת הַחֹדֶשׁ מִזְּמַנּוּ. אֲבָל
 אֲנַחְנוּ שׁוֹמְרִים גַּם הַיּוֹם מִנְהֵג הַקְּדָמוֹן, עַל־כֵּן מוֹעֲדֵינוּ לְפַעֲמִים
 עֲמָהֶם בְּיוֹם אֶחָד, וּלְפַעֲמִים מִתְאַחֵר בְּיוֹם אֶחָד.

ב בְּסֵדֶר י"ג צִוְּנוּ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁנִשְׁמֹר אֶת חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב
 דְּוָקָא לַעֲשׂוֹת בּוֹ חֵג הַפֶּסַח, וְכֵן זֶה הַמִּצְוָה נִכְפְּלָה בְּסֵדֶר כ"ג,
 וְנִשְׁלָשָׁה בְּסֵדֶר ל"ד, וְנִרְבְּעָה בְּסֵפֶר חֲמִישִׁי סֵדֶר י"ו. וְעַל כֵּן
 אִם לֹא הָיָה נִמְצָא הָאָבִיב בַּחֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן, הָיוּ עוֹשִׂין אוֹתוֹ עֶבֶר.
 וּמִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה שְׁלֵבָד מִפְּנֵי הָעֵדֶד הָאָבִיב יַעֲשֶׂה הָעֶבֶר, וְלֹא
 מִסְפָּה אַחֲרָת. אֲבָל הִתְלַמּוּדִים הוֹסִיפוּ שְׁמוֹנָה דְּבָרִים אֶצֶל
 הָאָבִיב, וְאָמְרוּ: "מִפְּנֵי תִשְׁעָה דְּבָרִים מַעֲבְרִין אֶת הַשָּׁנָה: עַל
 הָאָבִיב, וְעַל הַתְּקוּפָה, וְעַל פְּרוֹת הָאֵילָן, וּמִפְּנֵי קִלְקוּל הַדְּרָכִים

is the sixth year after the destruction of the Second Temple,³⁰ Rabban Gamliel became the patriarch among the Jewish people, and in the time of his patriarchate, he abolished the sighting of the moon, ^{38} and established that the sanctification of the new month be based on mean calculation, which calculation is not even in accordance with precise astronomy.^{iv} They established rules, such as: Rosh [Ha-shana, the first of Tishri] must not fall on Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday; and Pesah must not fall on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday; and 'Azereth [Shavu'oth] must not fall on Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday; and Pur [Purim] must not fall on Saturday, Monday, or Wednesday; and Yom Kippur must not fall on Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday." Thus, they pushed off all the festivals from their times. Therefore, the Talmudites sometimes sanctify their new month when the old moon is still visible, and other times, they do not sanctify it yet, even though the new moon is already visible. Thus, they rejected the testimony about the new moon from his time [onward]. But we observe the old practice even today; and, therefore, our festivals are sometimes on the same date as theirs, and sometimes they are a day later.^{vi}

2 In chapter 13, God commands us to keep the "month of *aviv*," specifically, to observe the Festival of Pesah in it; and this commandment comes up a second time in chapter 23, and a third time in chapter 34, and a fourth time in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 16. Therefore, if the *aviv* [spring grain] is not found in the month of Nisan, we would make it a leap year [by adding an extra month before Nisan].^{vii} The Torah's commandment is that only if the *aviv* is absent should we make a leap year, and not for any other reason. Yet the Talmudites have added eight other reasons, aside from the *aviv*; they say: "There are nine reasons to make a leap year: on account of the *aviv*; and on account of the equinox;

30 This comes out to 78 CE, which is an early estimate for the time of Rabban Gamliel, but no more than a few years before his rise to office.

מִפְּנֵי הַגְּשָׁמִים, וּמִפְּנֵי הַגְּשָׁרִים שֶׁנֶּהְרָסוּ וְאֵין הוֹלְכֵי רֶגְלִים יְכוּלִין לַעֲבֹד, וּמִפְּנֵי תַנּוּרֵי פְסָחִים שֶׁנֶּהְרָסוּ מִן הַמָּטָר וְאֵין מְקוֹם לַעֲלֹת הַפְּסָחִים, וּמִפְּנֵי גְלִיּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנֶּעְקְרוּ מִמְּקוֹמָם, וּמִפְּנֵי הַטְּלָאִים שֶׁלֹּא נוֹלְדוּ עֲדֵין לְהַקְרִיב מֵהֶם פְּסָחִים, וּמִפְּנֵי הַגּוֹזְלוֹת שֶׁלֹּא פָּרְחוּ עֲדֵין שִׁיְהִיו רְאִיוֹן בְּמִי שֶׁנִּתְחַיֵּב קָרֵבָן עוֹף. "וּבִגְן עֲבְדוּ מִצְוֹת "לֹא תוֹסִיף".

ג בְּסֻדְר י"ב כְּתִיב בְּחַג הַמִּצְוֹת: "שִׁבְעַת יָמִים שָׂאֹר לֹא יִמָּצֵא בַּבְּתִּיכִם"; וְכֵן בְּסֻדְר י"ג כְּתִיב: "וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה לָּךְ חֶמֶץ וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה לָּךְ שָׂאֹר בְּכָל גְּבוּלְךָ (שִׁבְעַת יָמִים)"; וְכֵן בְּסֻדְר חֲמִישֵׁי סֻדְר י"ו כְּתִיב: "וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה לָּךְ שָׂאֹר בְּכָל גְּבוּלְךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים". וּכְפִי זֶה חַיֵּב כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבַעַר הַחֶמֶץ מִגְּבוּלוֹ, שֶׁלֹּא יִמָּצֵא בְּגְבוּלוֹ לֹא גְלוּי וְלֹא טָמוּן. וְהַתְּלַמוּדִיִּים הַמְּצִיאוּ עֲרֻמָּנוֹת, וּמוֹכְרִים בְּתִיָּהֶם וְיֻקְבִּיָּהֶם לְנוֹצְרִים, וְאַחֵר שִׁבְעַת יָמֵי מַצָּה עוֹד שְׁבִים וְלֹקָחִים בְּתִיָּהֶם וְיֻקְבִּיָּהֶם עִם כָּל חֲמִצִּיָּהֶם.

ד עוֹד בְּסֻדְר י"ב קָבַע הַפְּתוּב זְמַן שְׁחִיטַת הַפֶּסַח בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים, וְרָצוֹן הַפְּתוּב בָּזֶה: אַחֵר בּוֹא גּוֹף הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ אַחֵר הָאֶפֶק, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכֵּן

and on account of the fruit of trees; and on account of the rain that ruins the roads; and on account of bridges that have collapsed, such that people cannot pass on the way; and on account of the ovens for the Pesah sacrifice, if they have been ruined by the rain, such that there is nowhere to roast the Pesah-sacrifices; and on account of the exiles of Israel, who have been displaced from their homes; and on account of the lambs for the Pesah sacrifice, if they have not yet been born; and on account of the chicks that have not yet flown, in case people need to bring them as sacrifices for the commandment of *re'ayon* [being seen at the Temple].^{viii} And thus, they have violated the commandment: *Ye shall not add* [to the Torah's commandments].

3 In chapter 12, it is written, regarding the Festival of Mazzoth: *Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses* [Exodus 12:19]; and in chapter 13: *and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters (for seven days)* [Exodus 13:7];³¹ and in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 16: *And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days* [Deuteronomy 16:4]. In accordance with this, all Jews are obligated to destroy all leaven from their area, such that it not be found in their area, whether revealed or concealed. Yet the Talmudites have invented all sorts of tricks, such as selling their houses and vineyards to Christians, and then, after the seven days of *mazza*, buying back their houses and vineyards, including all the leavened matter.^{ix}

4 Also in chapter 12, Scripture established the time of the slaughtering of the Pesah-sacrifice as *between the evenings* [*"ben ha'arayim"*, Exodus 12:6]; the meaning of the text here is after the

³¹ The words "for seven days" do not actually appear in this verse; the author is probably citing from memory, and has confused this verse with the verse from Deuteronomy which he cites next.

כְּתוּב גַּם בְּזֶמֶן הַקְטָרֶת בְּסֵפֶר שְׁמוֹת סִימָן ל': "וּבַהֲעֵלֶת אֶהְרֹן
אֶת הַנֹּתָר בֵּין הָעֲרֵבִים יִקְטִירֶנָּה." וַיְדוּעַ כִּי אֵין זֶמֶן הַעֲלֹאת
הַנֹּתָר אֲלָא אַחֲרֵי עֲרִיבַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ. וְהֵם אָמְרוּ כִּי בֵין הָעֲרֵבִים
הוּא מִזְמַן שְׂיִטָּה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מֵעַצְם הַצְהָרִים עַד שְׂיָבֹא גוֹף הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
אַחֲרֵי הָאֶפֶק. * וּכְבֹר חֲכָמֵינוּ {לט} הִרְבּוּ לְהַשִּׁיב עֲלֵיהֶם; וְגַם חָכֵם
שָׁלָחֵם הָרֹאב"ע (=ר' אברהם אבן עזרא) הוֹדָה עַל הָאֱמֶת וּפִירַשׁ
מִלַּת "בֵּין הָעֲרֵבִים" כְּפָרוּשׁ חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל, שֶׁהוּא הַזְמַן מִשְׁקִיעַת
גוֹף הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ אַחֲרֵי הָאֶפֶק עַד שְׂיֵאֶסֶף נִגְהַ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מִשּׁוּלֵי הָרָקִיעַ,
שְׂיֵשׁ בָּאֵן רַחֵב זֶמֶן בְּשַׁעַה וּשְׁלִישׁ שַׁעַה.

ה' בְּסֵדֶר י"ו כְּתוּבָה מִצְוֹת שַׁבָּת, וּפְעַם שְׁנֵי בְּסֵדֶר כ' בַּעֲשֶׂרֶת
הַדְּבָרוֹת, וּפְעַם ג' בְּסֵדֶר כ"ג, וּפְעַם ד' בְּסֵדֶר ל"א, וּפְעַם חֲמִישִׁי
בְּסֵדֶר ל"ה כְּתִיב: "לֹא תַבְעֲרוּ אִשׁ בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת",
וּפְעַם שִׁשִּׁי בְּסֵפֶר ג' בְּסֵדֶר י"ט, עוֹד שָׁם פְּעַם שְׁבִיעִי וּפְעַם
שְׁמִינִי בְּסֵדֶר כ"ג, וּפְעַם תְּשִׁיעִי בְּסֵדֶר כ"ו, וּפְעַם עֲשִׂירִי בְּסֵפֶר
חֲמִישִׁי בְּסֵדֶר ה' בֵּין דְּבָרוֹת שְׁנִיּוֹת. וּמִכָּל אֱלוֹ הַמְּקוֹמוֹת כָּל
מִשְׁכִּיל יִבִּין כִּי בַשַּׁבָּת אֲסוּרָה כָּל מְלָאכָה בֵּין קִשָּׁה בֵּין קָלָה,
כְּמוֹ מִשָּׂא וּמִתָּן, וְהַטְלָטוּל מִרְשׁוֹת אֶל רְשׁוֹת דֶּרֶךְ רַבִּים. וְאַף
עַל כִּי שָׂאִין הַטְלָטוּל כְּתִיב בְּבִרְוֹר, מִכָּל מְקוֹם גַּם הֵם עֲצָמָם

setting of the sun behind the horizon, just as is written about the [burning of the] incense in Exodus 30: *And when Aaron lighteth the lamps between the evenings, he should burn [the incense] [Exodus 30:8].* And it is known that the time for lighting lamps is only after the setting of the sun. But they [=the Rabbanites] say that “*ben ha’arbayim*” is the time from when the sun begins to come down from high noon until the orb of the sun sets behind the horizon. Our sages have ^{39} responded to them at length, and their sage R. Abraham ibn ‘Ezra has admitted the truth,^x and explained the term *between the evenings* in accordance with our sages’ explanation, that it is the time from the setting of the orb of the sun behind the horizon until the sun’s light is finally gone from the edges of the sky, a period of about an hour and a third.

5 In chapter 16, the commandment of the Sabbath is written; and then again in chapter 20, in the Decalogue; and a third time in chapter 23; and a fourth time in chapter 31; and a fifth time in chapter 35, where it says: *Ye shall cause no fire to burn throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day [Exodus 35:3];*³² and a sixth time in the third book [Leviticus], chapter 19; and a seventh and eighth time there, in chapter 23; and a ninth time there, in chapter 26; and a tenth time in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 5, in the second Decalogue. From all these places, anyone intelligent will understand that all labor is prohibited on the Sabbath, whether difficult or easy, such as business, or carrying from domain to domain, by way of the public [domain]. Although

32 This translation reflects our author’s view (see Ma’amar Mordokhai, St. Petersburg – Inst. of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy C 104 239b–240b). Like the medieval Karaite interpretation, he deems the verse to forbid causing a fire to burn on the Sabbath, *even if the fire was lit prior to the Sabbath*. Rabbinic halakha forbids kindling *on* the Sabbath itself; and, therefore, permits keeping a lit flame (such as that of a candle or an oven) on the Sabbath, *if the flame was lit before the Sabbath*. The meaning of this verse was the source of many polemics between Karaites and Rabbanites.

מוֹדִים בְּתִלְמוּדָם שֶׁהוּא אָסוּר. וַיִּדְמֶיהָ הִנָּבִיא בְּסֵדֶר י"ז (פסוקים כא, כב) אָמַר: "הַשִּׁמְרוּ בְּנַפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם וְאַל תִּשְׂאוּ מִשָּׂא מִבְּתֵיכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת... וְכָל מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ." וְכֵן הִטְלִיטוּל נִקְרְאת מְלָאכָה בַּתּוֹרָה, כְּדִכְתִּיב בְּסֵפֶר שְׁנֵי סֵדֶר ל"ו (פסוק ו): "אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה אֵל יַעֲשׂוּ עוֹד מְלָאכָה לְתַרּוּמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ, וַיִּכְלֹא הָעַם מִהִבִּיא". מִכָּל זֶה נּוֹדַע בְּגָלוּי שֶׁהִטְלִיטוּל מִדְּשׁוֹת אֵל דְּשׁוֹת, אֲפִלּוּ דְּבָרִים קָלִים, הוּא אָסוּר. אֲבָל הַתִּלְמוּדִיִּים הִתִּירוּ הִטְלִיטוּל דֶּרֶךְ דְּשׁוֹת הָרַבִּים בְּרַחוּבוֹת וּבִשְׁוָקִים, שְׁקוּשֵׁרִים וְתַרְיָם, וּמִיתְרֵיהֶם לְהַדְבִּיר גְּבוּלוֹת הָעַמִּים. וְכֵן הִתִּירוּ הַסֵּקֶת הַתַּנּוּרִים בַּשַּׁבָּת, וְיוֹצֵאִים מִן הַתַּחֲסוּם וְעוֹבְרִים מִצֻּת "שְׁבוּ אִישׁ תַּחֲתָיו אֶל יֵצֵא אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ" הַפְּתוּב בְּסֵדֶר י"ו בְּזֶה הַסֵּפֶר (פסוק כט).

carrying is not mentioned explicitly [in the Torah], nonetheless they [the Rabbanites] acknowledge in their Talmud that it is forbidden; and Jeremiah the prophet, in chapter 17, says: *Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any labor* [Jeremiah 17:22]. And carrying is called “labor” in the Torah, as it is written in the second book [Exodus], chapter 36: *Let neither man nor woman make any more labor for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing* [Exodus 36:6]. From all this, it is clear that carrying from domain to domain, even light things, is forbidden.³³ But the Talmudites have permitted carrying by way of the public [domain], in wide open places and streets, by tying strings and cords³³ to delineate borders of the nations.³⁴ Moreover, they have permitted lighting ovens on the Sabbath; and they leave the domain, and thus violate the commandment *abide ye every man in his place, let no man go*

33 This is a reference to the rabbinic practice of *‘eruv*. Note that the theoretical basis behind rabbinic *‘eruv* is not to turn a public street into a private domain, but rather to mark certain areas that are already private domains, though in joint ownership of a few people. Thus, for example, within a shared courtyard or apartment building, it should theoretically be permitted to carry from the residences into the hallways or the courtyard, and vice versa, because it is not a public domain; but because it is too similar to a public domain, rabbinic law requires creating an *‘eruv* by collecting flour or money from all residents and using it to bake a single loaf of bread, which sits in the house of one of the residents, and each resident is permitted to eat from the loaf, such that the whole residential complex becomes a single commune. In order to mark the outside boundary of the complex, a string or post (*lehi*) is put up at the entrance.

Later on, some rabbinic groups came up with the idea that even public streets are not truly public domains in the halakhic sense, and, therefore, they allow the creation of an *‘eruv* even in larger communities, enclosing whole streets or even cities. Other rabbinic groups consider this to be a blatant violation of the Sabbath, and this is often a point of great, bitter conflict between different rabbinic groups today, not just between Karaites and Rabbanites.

34 These words, *le-hadber gevuloth ‘ammim*, are a pun on Deuteronomy 32:8: *He set the bounds of the peoples*. Here, they refer to the fact that the *‘eruv* strings enclose communities.

וְכֵן הִתִּירוּ הַמִּשָּׂא וְהַמֶּתֶן בְּמִזִּגָּה. וְכֵן גּוֹזְרִים לְגוֹיִם לַעֲשׂוֹת
מִלְּאכָה בַּשַּׁבָּתוֹת וּבְמוֹעֲדִים, לַפְתּוֹחַ תַּנּוּרִים נְעוּלִים וּשְׂאֵר
מִלְּאכּוֹת; בְּרָמְזוֹ אוֹמְרִים לְגוֹיִם, לֹא בְצוּי; וְנִהְיִים מִמִּלְּאכָה
הַהִיא. כִּי הֵם עֲצָמָם אָמְרוּ אֲסוּר לַהֲנוֹת מִמַּעֲשֵׂה הַנַּעֲשֵׂה
בַּשַּׁבָּת, אֲבָל אַחֲרֵיכֵן הִחְפִּימוּ לְמִצְוַת תַּחְבּוּלוֹת. אֲבָל אֶצְלָנוּ
כָּל אֱלֹוֵי הַדְּבָרִים אֲסוּרִים לְגִמְרִי.

וּ בַּעֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרוֹת בְּ"לֹא תִגְנֹב" כְּמוֹ כֵּן הִקְלוּ וְאָמְרוּ: הֵבֵא
בְּמַחְתָּרֶת וְנִטְלָ פִלִּים הֵרִי הֵם שָׁלוֹ, כִּי מִסֵּר עֲצָמוֹ לַסַּפֶּנֶה בְּבֹאוֹ
בְּמַחְתָּרֶת חִבְרוּ. מִי חָכֵם וְלֹא יִלְעֹג עַל זֶה?!

ז' בְּסִדֵּר כ"א (פסוק כד) מֶה שֶּׁכָּתוּב "עֵין תַּחַת עֵין שֵׁן תַּחַת שֵׁן"
וְגו', גַּם בָּזֶה הִחְלִיפוּ הַכָּתוּב וְאָמְרוּ שֶׁהַמּוֹבֵן דְּמִי עֵין תַּחַת עֵין,
דְּמִי שֵׁן תַּחַת שֵׁן, וְכֵן כָּלֵס, בֵּין יִהְיֶה מִזִּיד בֵּין שׁוּגֵג. וְחֻכְמֵינוּ
ז"ל לֹא הוֹדוּ זֶה; רַק אָמְרוּ שְׂאֵם {מ} יַעֲשֶׂה בְּזֶדֶן כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ

out of his place on the seventh day, which is written in this book [Exodus], chapter 16 [verse 29]. And they have permitted doing business by mixing.³⁵ And they instruct gentiles to do labor on Sabbaths and festivals, [such as] opening locked ovens, and other labors, by giving a hint, not an explicit instruction, to the gentiles; and they benefit from that labor; even though they themselves say that it is forbidden to derive benefit from labors performed on the Sabbath, nonetheless their more recent generations have come up with tricks [around this]. But among us, all these are completely forbidden.

6 In the Decalogue, [it says] *Thou shalt not steal* [Exodus 20:12]; but here, too, they have made leniency and they say that if one comes in stealth and takes items, then one has ownership, for one has put oneself in danger by coming in stealth to one's neighbor. But what wise person will not mock this?!^{xii}

7 In chapter 21, it says: *eye for eye, tooth for tooth* [Exodus 21:24]. But here, too, they have changed [the meaning of] Scripture, and said that it means [to give] the monetary value of an eye in exchange for an eye, and the monetary value of a tooth in exchange for a tooth, and so forth, whether the damage was intentional or accidental. But our sages, of blessed memory,³⁶ do not agree with this; they say ^{40} that if the damage was intentional, then one must suffer the exact [bodily] damage [in punishment];

³⁵ It is unclear what this word means.

³⁶ The author uses the abbreviation HZ"l, for *hakhamenu za"l*, that is, *hakhamenu zikhronam livrakha*, "our sages, of blessed memory." This abbreviation is commonly used by Rabbanite Jews to refer to the sages of the Talmud, and pronounced *hazal*. It is entirely natural for a Karaite author to use the term for Karaite sages of previous generations; however, because the abbreviation is known today as a term for the sages of the Talmud, we have wanted to avoid confusion. So, rather than writing *haza"l* in the Hebrew each time, we have expanded the author's acronym to *hakhamenu za"l*, here and throughout our edition of *Levush Malkhuth*.

דִּוְקָא, אֲבָל אִם יַעֲשֶׂה בְּשִׁגְגָה אוֹ יִהְיֶה הַמוּס מִן הַנֶּרְפָּאִין אֲזִי יִתֵּן כֶּפֶר.

ח בְּסֹדֶר כ"ב מֵה שְׁכָתוֹב: "וְכִי יִשְׁאַל אִישׁ מֵעַם רֵעֵהוּ וְנִשְׁבֵּר אוֹ מֵת", שֶׁהָרִצּוֹן שָׂאֵם יִשְׁאַל אִישׁ בְּהִלּוּאָה מֵאֵת רֵעֵהוּ חֲמוּד אוֹ שֶׁהוּא אוֹ שׁוֹם בְּהֶמְדָּה לְשֵׁאת שׁוֹם מִשָּׂא אוֹ לְנִסּוֹעַ רִיקָם לְאִיזָה מְקוֹם וְנִשְׁבֵּר הַשּׁוֹר אוֹ הַחֲמוּד אוֹ הַסּוֹס אוֹ מֵת, אִם בְּעָלָיו אֵין עֲמוֹ שִׁלֵּם יִשְׁלֵם, וְאִם בְּעָלָיו עֲמוֹ לֹא יִשְׁלֵם. וְהֵם הַמְצִיאוֹ תַחֲבוּלָה וְאָמְרוּ: בְּשִׁישְׁאֵל הַשּׁוֹאֵל הַבְּהֶמְדָּה מִבְּעָלֶיהָ, וְשִׁאֵל מִמֶּנּוּ בְּזִמָּן הֵהוּא מָה וּמָה, אִם לֶאֱכֹל אִם לְשִׁתּוֹת שׁוֹם מֵאֲכֹל וְשׁוֹם מִשְׁקָה בְּעוֹלָם, וְכִשְׂיִתֵּן בַּעַל הַבְּהֶמְדָּה לְשׁוֹאֵל שְׁאֵלָתוֹ זֹאת, אֲזִי בְּאֵלּוֹ הַשְּׁאִיל לוֹ גַּם אֵת עֲצָמוֹ אֶצֶל בְּהֶמְתּוֹ; וּבִכֵּן יִהְיֶה בְּעָלָיו עֲמוֹ אֶפְלוֹ אִם לֹא יֵלֶךְ עֲמוֹ לְדֶרֶךְ, וּבִכֵּן אִם תִּשְׁבֵּר אוֹ תָמוּת הַבְּהֶמְדָּה לֹא יִשְׁלֵם. וְחֻכְמֵינוּ ז"ל לֹא הִסְפִּימוּ לְכָךְ, כִּי גַם זֶה תַחֲבוּלָה.

ט עוֹד בְּסֹדֶר כ"ב כְּתִיב: "אִם כֶּסֶף תִּלְוֶה אֶת עַמִּי אֶת הָעָנִי עִמָּךְ לֹא תִהְיֶה לוֹ כְּנִשָּׂה, לֹא תִשְׁיָמוֹן עָלָיו נָשֶׁךְ." וְכֵן נִכְפְּלָה זֶה הַמִּצְוָה בְּסֹפֶר ג' סֹדֶר כ"ה, וְנִשְׁלָשָׁה בְּסֹפֶר חֲמִישִׁי סֹדֶר כ"ג." וְהֵמָּה יִבְטְלוּ זֹאת הַמִּצְוָה מֵעַקְרָהּ, וְלֹקָחִים נָשֶׁךְ וְתַרְבִּית. וְחֻכְמֵינוּ ז"ל לֹא הִסְפִּימוּ לָזֶה כָּלֵל וּכְלָל.

י בְּסֹדֶר כ"ג בְּרֵאשׁוֹ מֵה שְׁכָתוֹב: "לֹא תִהְיֶה אַחֲרֵי רַבִּים לְרָעוֹת", חֻכְמֵינוּ אָמְרוּ פְּרוּשׁ הַפְּסוּק בֵּין הוּא: לֹא תִהְיֶה אַחֲרֵי רַבִּים לַעֲזוֹד לַעֲשִׂית הָרָעוֹת, וְלֹא תַעֲזוֹד לְרִיב וּמִדּוֹן עַד שְׁתַּלַּךְ לְנִטּוֹת אַחֲרֵי רַבִּים לְהִטּוֹת מִשְׁפָּט אִיזָה אִישׁ אוֹ לַעֲוֹת אִיזָה

but if the damage was accidental, or if it was a wound that heals, then one should give money.^{xiii}

8 In chapter 22, it says: *If a man borrow [an animal] from his neighbor, and it be injured or die* [Exodus 22:13]; it means that if a man borrows an ass or a lamb, or any animal, from his neighbor, to carry any burden, or to travel unburdened to any place, and the ox or the ass or the horse is injured or dies, if the owner is not with him, then [the borrower] must pay up; but if the owner is with him, then [the borrower] need not pay. But they [the Talmudites] have invented a trick, and said that when the borrower borrows the animal from its owner, if he asks anything of him, anything at all to eat or to drink, and the lender gives it to him, then it is as if he has also lent him himself alongside his animal; and thus, the owner is with him even if he does not go along on the journey, so if the animal is injured or dies, [the borrower] need not pay. But our sages, of blessed memory, do not agree with this, for this, too, is a trick.

9 Further, in chapter 22, it is written: *If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury* [Exodus 22:25]. And this commandment is repeated in the third book [Leviticus], chapter 25, and then appears a third time, in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 23. But they [the Talmudites] reject this commandment entirely, for they take usury; and our sages, of blessed memory, do not agree with this at all.

10 In chapter 23, at the beginning, it says: *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; [neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment]* [Exodus 23:2]. Our sages explained this verse as meaning that you should not follow the majority to help facilitate evil, nor should you help a fight or altercation to the point that you *decline after many to wrest judgment* of a certain

ענין ממנהגו הראוי לו, אלא אפלו אם תהיה אחד בין אלף מיטי משפט ומסבמים לעשית הרעות - לא תסבם עמהם, רק אל תירא מלהודות על האמת. וכפי פרוש חכמינו, כל הפסוק הוא מצוה אחת למצות לאו. אבל התלמודיים עשו מזה הפסוק שלש מצות: "לא תהיה אחרי רבים לרעות" - זו מצות לאו אחת; "ולא תענה על רב לנטות" - זו מצות לאו שנית; "אחרי רבים^{טו} להטות" - זו מצוה^{טז} שלישית, והיא מצות עשה. ומזה עשו להם חק ומשפט, ואמרו: "יחיד ורבים הלכה כרבים." וזה דרך כל בעלי הגמרה שלהם, שדקדקו במחלקת בעלי המשנה, בין בית שמאי ובין בית הלל ושאר החולקים בפרושי המצות, שקבעו בעלי הגמרא לעצמם חק להיות נמנין: אם המקלים יותר היו קובעים הלכה כמותם, ואם המחמירים יותר היו קובעין הלכה כמותם. וחכמינו ז"ל אמרו כי אין {מא} האמת אמת, מפני הרב; כי יש אחד שיכריע הפלל בבקשתו ובאהבתו האמת. והפלל אשר להם להכחיש אפלו האמת מעקרו בהיותם רודפים אחרי בקשת השדרה והנצות.

יא עוד בסדר הנ"ל כתיב: "לא תבשל גדי בחלב אמו" (כג:ט), ונכללה מצוה זו בסדר ל"ד (פסוק כו), ונשלשה בספר חמישי סדר י"ד (פסוק כא). חכמינו ז"ל קימו פפי עצם הפתוב שדוקא בחלב אמו אסור, וחייבו לנו להשמר בין הפלים שיבשל בו חלב

man or a certain manner, away from the appropriate customary [judgment] for it. Even if you are only one, and among a thousand people that are wresting judgment and agreeing to do evil, do not go along with them; do not fear to acknowledge the truth. Thus, in accordance with our sages' interpretation, the entire verse is a single commandment, a prohibition. On the other hand, the Talmudites turned this verse into three commandments: *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil* – one commandment, a prohibition; *neither shalt thou speak in a cause* – a second commandment, another prohibition; *to decline after many* – a third commandment, an obligation. They have made this a legal principle, and say: "If there is an individual [arguing against] the majority, the law follows the majority."^{xiv} This is the way of all their masters of Gemara, who look carefully into the debates of the masters of the Mishna, the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai and other disputants, regarding the interpretations of the commandments. For the masters of the Gemara have established an arithmetical principle for themselves: if more [of their sages] are lenient, then they establish the lenient position as the law; whereas if more [of their sages] are stringent, then they establish the law in accordance with their position. But our sages, of blessed memory, say ^[41] "Love the truth more than the majority," for sometimes one individual can outweigh the majority in his quest and love for the truth. But the principle of [the Rabbanites] is that they should deny even the fundamental truth, for they pursue domination and winning.

11 In that same chapter, it is written: *Thou shalt not see the a kid in its mother's milk* [Exodus 23:19]. This commandment is repeated also in chapter 34, and stated a third time in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 14. Our sages, of blessed memory, have established, in accordance with the very meaning of the verse, that this is forbidden specifically with the mother [of the

הָאִם וּבֵין הַפְּלִים שְׂיִבְשָׁל בּוֹ בֶּשֶׂר הֵבֵן, וְכֵן אָפְלוּ בְּכָלִי הָאֲכִילָה
בְּגוֹן קַעְרוֹת וְכַפּוֹת שְׁלֹא יִשְׁתַּפּוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּמְּשׁוּ בְּזֶה תַּמּוּרַת
זֶה. אֲבָל הַתְּלֻמוֹדִיִּים הוֹסִיפוּ עַל הַכְּתוּב וְאָסְרוּ כָּל בֶּשֶׂר בְּכָל
חֶלֶב שֶׁפָּעוּלָם, וְאָפְלוּ בֶּשֶׂר עוֹף בַּחֲלֵב בַּהֶמָּה, וְהַחֲמִירוּ בֵּין
הַפְּלִים יוֹתֵר וְיוֹתֵר מִן חֲמֻרַת טְמֵאֵת הַפְּלִים מִנְּבִילוֹת וּשְׂרָצִים
וְטְמֵאֵת מֵת וְזָב וְנֶדֶה, שֶׁהֵם טְמֵאוֹת חֲמוּרוֹת, כְּמוֹ שִׁיתִּבְיָאָר.
וּבְזֶה עָבְרוּ עַל מִצְוֹת "לֹא תוֹסִיפוּ וְלֹא תִגְרְעוּ."

יב בְּסֻדֵּר ל' (פסוק לד), בְּמִצְוֹת קְטָנֹת הַסְּמִים, הַתּוֹרָה צִוְּתָהּ
אֲרֻבָּעָה מֵינֵי סְמִים. וְהֵם הוֹסִיפוּ עוֹד שֶׁבַע סְמִים, וְהֵם: מוֹד,
קִצְיָעָה, שְׁבִלַת גִּיד, וְכֶרֶס, וְקִשְׁט, וְקִנְמוֹן, וְקִלּוֹפִי, וְעוֹד הוֹסִיפוּ
עֹשֶׁב שֶׁמַּעֲלָה עֵשֶׂן, וְכַפַּת הַיָּדַיִן, וּמִלַּח סְדוּמִית, וְתִשְׁעָה קִבִּין
בּוֹדִית כְּרִשִּׁינָה שֶׁשָּׂף בּוֹ אֶת הַצִּפּוֹן. וְזוֹ הוֹסִפָּה עַל מִצְוֹת הַתּוֹרָה
בְּזֶדוֹן; שֶׁאִם הָיָה רִצּוֹן הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּאֵלוֹ, לָמָּה לֹא כָּתְבָם?

specific kid]; and they have obligated us to be careful [to keep separate] the pots in which the mother's milk is boiled and those in which the offspring's meat is boiled, and even eating utensils, such as bowls and spoons, that we not use them together, and not use one for the other.^{xv} But the Talmudites have added to Scripture and forbidden all meat with all milk in the world, even the meat of birds with the milk of mammals. They are stringent about [separating] the pots even more than the impurity of vessels caused by carcasses and vermin and corpses and genital flows, which are serious impurity, as shall be explained [below]. And thus, they have violated the commandment: *Ye shall not add [unto the word which I command you], neither shall ye diminish ought from it* [Deuteronomy 4:2].

12 In chapter 30 [verse 34], in the commandment of the spices for the incense, the Torah commands four types of spices. But the [Talmudites] add seven more spices: myrrh, cassia, spikenard, saffron, costus, cinnamon, and *qillufa* [aromatic bark]; and they have also added an herb that causes the smoke to rise, and Jordan resin, and Sodomite salt, and nine *qav*-measures of Carshina lye, with which to rub the onycha.^{xvi} This is willfully adding to the commandments of the Torah, for if God wanted these, why did He not write them?

מצוות מספר שלישי מחמשת ספרי תורת משה

א בסוף סדר ב' (פסוק יד) מה שכתוב: "וְאִם תִּקְרִיב מִנְחָת בְּכוֹרִים לַה' אָבִיב קִלְוִי בָאֵשׁ גֶּרֶשׁ כְּרָמְל" - חכמי התלמוד אמרו כי המצוה הזאת היא מצוה אחת עם מה שכתוב בזה הספר סדר כ"ג (פסוק י): "כִּי תָבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וּקְצַרְתֶּם אֶת קְצִירָהּ, וְהֵבֵאתֶם אֶת עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית קְצִירְכֶם אֶל הַכֹּהֵן". כִּי לְדַעְתָּם נִכְפְּלָה מִצְוָה אַחַת, כִּמּוֹ שֶׁהִרְבֵּה מִן הַתּוֹרָה נִכְפְּלוּ וְנִשְׁלְשׁוּ בַּתּוֹרָה. וְחִכְמִינוּ ז"ל לֹא הוֹדוּ לָזֶה, רַק אָמְרוּ כִּי הַכָּתוּב בְּסֵדֶר כ"ג הֵיא מִצְוֹת עֲבוּר וְהֵיא חוּבָה, אֲבָל זֹאת הֵיא מִצְוֹת יָחִיד בְּחוּבָה, כְּדִכְתִּיב סֵפֶר ב' סֵדֶר כ"ג (פסוק יט): "וְרֵאשִׁית בְּכוֹרֵי אֲדָמָתְךָ תָּבִיא ^(מב)בֵּית ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ". וְאֲשֶׁר בְּסֵדֶר כ"ג אֵינָה נִקְרָאת מִנְחָה, רַק עֹמֶר; וְזֹאת נִקְרָאת מִנְחָה, וּבָאָה אֵצֶל שְׂאֵר מִנְחֹת יְחִידִים אֵצֶל מִנְחֹת נְדָבוֹת יְחִידִים, לְהוֹרוֹת עַל אִפְן הַקִּרְבָּתָה שִׁיקְרִיבָנָה גֶרֶשׁ כְּרָמְל וְלֹא עֹמֶר. וְהֵבֵאתָ אַחֵר הַנֶּפֶת הָעֹמֶר, כִּי הַנֶּפֶת הָעֹמֶר הֵיא מִתְּרִי לֹאכֹל מִהֶתְבוֹאָה הַחֲדָשָׁה לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל; וְאִם יִבְיֹאנָה קֹדֶם הַנֶּפֶת הָעֹמֶר, יֵאָסֵר לִכְהֵן לֹאכֹל שִׁירֵי הַמִּנְחָה.

ב בְּסֵדֶר ג' בְּמָה שֶׁכָּתוּב (פסוק ו ואילך): "וְאִם מִן הַצֹּאֵן קָרְבָּנוֹ לְזִבְחַ שְׁלָמִים לַה', וְגו', אִם כֶּשֶׁב הוּא מִקְרִיב וְגו'" - כְּתִיב שָׁם:

COMMANDMENTS FROM THE THIRD BOOK
OF MOSES'S TORAH [LEVITICUS]

1 At the end of chapter 2, it is written: *And if thou offer a meal offering [minḥa] of thy firstfruits unto the Lord, thou shalt offer for the meal offering of thy firstfruits green ears of grain dried by the fire, even grain beaten out of full ears* (Leviticus 2:14). The sages of the Talmud say that this commandment is the same as the one written in this book, chapter 23: *When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest* (Leviticus 23:10). For in their opinion, this commandment is repeated, just as many commandments in the Torah are mentioned two or three times. But our sages, of blessed memory, do not agree with [this interpretation of the verse]; rather, they say that the verse in chapter 23 is a commandment incumbent upon the community, and is obligatory; whereas this one [in chapter 2] is a commandment upon individuals, obligatory, as is written in book 2 [Exodus], chapter 23: *The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring ⁴² into the house of the Lord thy God* [Exodus 23:19]. [Moreover,] the [offering mentioned] in chapter 23 is not called *minḥa* (meal-offering), but 'omer (sheaf), whereas this one [in chapter 2] is called *minḥa*, and is discussed among the other meal-offerings of individuals, the voluntary meal-offerings of individuals, to teach how to offer it, namely, as beaten dried grain, not as a sheaf. [Moreover,] it is to be brought [only] after the waving of the 'omer, for the waved 'omer is [the first grain that it is] permitted to eat from the new crop for the whole Jewish people; and if one would bring [a private *minḥa*-offering] before the waving of the 'omer, it would be forbidden for the priest to eat the relevant portion of the offering.

2 In chapter 3, in the passage: *And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the Lord be of the flock [. . .] If he offer a lamb for*

"והקריב מזבח השלמים אשה לה' חלב וְהָאֵלֶּיָּה תְּמִימָה לְעֹמֶת
הַעֲצָה יִסְרְנָהּ וגו'"; וְכֵן מִמֶּה שֶׁפָּתוּב בְּסִימָן ט' (פסוק ט): "וְאֵת
הַחֲלָבִים מִן הַשּׁוֹר, וּמִן הָאֵיל הָאֵלֶּיָּה וְהַמִּכָּסָּה וְהַפְּלִיּוֹת וְיִתְּרָת
הַכֹּהֵן - נִרְאָה וּמִפְּרָסָם לְכָל כִּי הַפָּתוּב קוֹרָא בְּשֵׁם "חֶלֶב" אֶת
אֲלִיָּתוֹ שֶׁל מִין הַבְּשָׁבִים, בֵּין זָכָרִים בֵּין נְקֻבוֹת, וְכֵן קוֹרָא בְּשֵׁם
"חֶלֶב" יִתְּרָת הַכֹּהֵן וְהַפְּלִיּוֹת שֶׁל כָּל הַמִּינִין הַנֶּאֱכָלִין. אֲבָל
הַחֲלָבִים בְּמִין הַבֶּקָר וּבַעֲזִים הֵם חֲמִשָּׁה: הַמִּכָּסָּה, וְאֲשֶׁר עַל
הַקָּרֶב, וְאֲשֶׁר עַל הַפְּלִיּוֹת, וְהַפְּלִיּוֹת עֲצָמוֹ, וְיִתְּרָת הַכֹּהֵן. אֲבָל
בְּמִין הַבְּשָׁבִים הֵם שְׁשֶׁה, רוּצָה לוֹמַר: אֵצֶל חֲמִשָּׁה הַנִּזְכָּרִים,
הָאֵלֶּיָּה הִיא שְׁשִׁית, וְהַתֵּלְמוּדִים הַתִּירוֹ הָאֵלֶּיָּה שֶׁל מִין בְּשָׁבִים
לֹא־אֵכִילָהּ, וְלֹא חֲשִׁשׁוּ מֵאֹמֶר הַפָּתוּב בְּסִדְר ז' כ"ב מִזֶּה הַסֵּפֶר (פסוק
כג, כה): "דִּבֶּר אֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר, כָּל חֶלֶב שׁוֹר וְכֶשֶׂב וְעִז לֹא
תֹאכְלוּ. [...] כִּי כָל אֹכֵל חֶלֶב מִן הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב מִמֶּנָּה
אִשָּׁה לַה' וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הָאֹכֶלֶת מֵעַמּוּיָהּ. וְהֵם הַתִּירוֹ הָאֵלֶּיָּה
מִן הַבְּשָׁבִים, וְגַם הַיִּתְּרָת מִן הַכֹּהֵן וְהַפְּלִיּוֹת מִכָּל הַמִּינִין;
וְהַחֲטִיאוּ אֶת נַפְשוֹת הַמּוֹנֵס בְּכֶרֶת.

ג בְּסִדְר י"א (פסוק ב) בְּתִיב: "זֹאת הַחִיָּה אֲשֶׁר תֹּאכְלוּ מִכָּל
הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר עַל הָאָרֶץ." מִזֶּה הַמּוֹבֵן כִּי הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה
שֶׁהִיא חִיָּה, רוּצָה לוֹמַר בְּרִיאָהּ, שֶׁהִלִּיכְתָּה פְּרָאוּי וְאֵכִילְתָּהּ
פְּאֵכִילֶת שְׂאֵר הַבְּהֵמוֹת הַבְּרִיאוֹת שֶׁאֵין הֵן חוֹלוֹת, מִתְּרָת
לְהַשְׁחִיט וּלְהֵאָכֵל. וְכֵן פֶּסֶקוֹ חֲכָמֵינוּ, וְכֵן גַּם אֲנִי נוֹהֲגִים, שֶׁלֹּא
אֶסְרוּ לֵאכֹל אֶלָּא הַבְּהֵמָה הַמְּכָה וְהַפְּצוּעָה בַּעֲלַת שָׁחִין, וְשֶׁאֵינָהּ
יְכוּלָה לֵילֵךְ אוֹ מִתְּגַלְגֶּלֶת וְשֶׁאֵינָהּ יְכוּלָה לֵאכֹל שֶׁכָּל אֱלוֹ אֵינָן

his offering [Leviticus 3:6–7], it is written there [verse 9]: *And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering, an offering made by fire unto the Lord: the fat thereof and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone* [. . .]. And in chapter 9, it says: *And the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth the inwards, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver* [Leviticus 9:19]. From this, it is apparent and obvious to all that Scripture includes the rump [*alya*] of sheep, whether male or female, in the category “fat” [*helev*]; and moreover, this category includes the caul above the liver and the kidneys in all species that may be eaten. The fats of cattle and goats are of five kinds: that which covers [*mekhassé*], and that which is on the innards [*qerev*], and that which covers the kidneys, and the kidneys themselves, and the caul above the liver. But the fats of sheep are six: the five listed above, and the rump is the sixth. But the Talmudites permit the rump of sheep for consumption, and disregard the words of Scripture in chapter 7 of this book [verses 23, 25]: *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying: Ye shall eat no manner fat of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.* [. . .] *For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, the soul that eateth it shall be cut off from his people.* And they, by permitting the rump of sheep, and the caul above the liver and the kidneys of all species, have caused their masses to sin, bringing upon their souls *kareth* [being cut off].

3 In chapter 11, it is written: *These are the beasts* [*hayya*] *which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth* [Leviticus 11:2]. From this, it is understood that the kosher animals are those that are *hayya* [literally “living”], that is, healthy, which can walk properly and eat as other healthy animals do, not the sick ones. These are the ones that are permitted to slaughter and eat. This is how our sages have ruled, and this is how we observe, for they forbade only animals that have wounds or boils or that is unable to walk, or rolls around [rather than being able to walk], or that

יכולות להקרא חיה, אבל השאר שאין בהן מאלו הדברים, מתרת להשחט ולהאכל. והתלמודיים הוסיפו מצות בדיקה, שאפלו אם תהיה בהמה מפטמת מרקדת, ויהיו ריאותיה חסר כנף אחד מחמש הכנפים שבדיאה, או תהיה סרבה מכנף אל כנף, שהיא פחוט דק משוך מכנף אל כנף, אסרו לאכל בשר הבהמה. והמציאו י"ח {מג} טרפות שמסבתן מתנבלות הבהמות הנשחטות, הנקראת בלשונם "סרכא". וזה מה שלא עלה על לב נותן התורה.

ד עוד בסדר י"א (פסוק ג) נתנה התורה שני סימנים לטהרת בהמות: האחד^{כב} פרסה שסועה, והשני^{כג} מעלת גרה. והם הוסיפו סימן שלישי, ואמרו: כל שבשרו הלך שתי וערב הוא מתר לאכילה. וחכם אחד מהם אמר: "והלא גם ערוד בשרו הלך שתי וערב?" על בן קבעו הלכה: כל שבשרו הלך שתי וערב מתר לאכילה, לבד שיפיר ערוד במראית עינים, ולא ישחטהו, כי הוא אסור.

ה עוד בסדר הזה נתנה התורה שני סימנים לטהרת דגים: האחד סנפיר והשני קשקשים. והם הוסיפו סימן אחד, ואמרו: הדג שזנבו אינו בשווי ארפן של שתי פאותיו טמא, אבל אם זנבו שוה הוא טהור. וזה לא נזכר בתורה.

ו עוד בסדר הזה נתנה התורה סימן לטהרת העופות, שהעופות הטמאות קראן הכתוב בשמן; ואשר אינה נקרא בשם העוף האסור הנזכר בתורה, הוא בהתר. והם הוסיפו סימנים אחרים

is unable to eat – all these cannot be called *living* [*ḥayya*]; but others, which do not have these issues, may be slaughtered and eaten. But the Talmudites added a commandment to check [the lungs], such that even if an animal is plump and dancing around, but its lungs are missing a single lobe of the five lobes of the lungs, or there is a *sirkha* from one lobe to another, that is, a thin string stretched between them – they have forbidden to eat the meat of such an animal. They have invented eighteen ^{43} invalidating conditions [*terefoth*], which make not kosher [the consumption] of slaughtered animals, and they call them *sirkhoth*.^{xvii} None of these was ever considered by the Giver of the Torah.

4 Further on in chapter 11 [verse 3], the Torah gives two signs for the kosher status of mammals, namely split hoof and chewing the cud. But [the Rabbanites] added a third sign; they claim that any [mammal] whose flesh runs crosswise is permitted for consumption.³⁷ But one of their sages noted that the *‘arod* [wild ass] also has flesh that runs crosswise [and it is obviously not kosher], so they established the law that any [mammal that one finds] whose flesh runs crosswise is kosher for consumption, as long as one is familiar with the appearance of the wild ass, so that one will not come to slaughter it, for it is not kosher.^{xviii}

5 Further on in this chapter, the Torah gives two signs for the kosher status of fish, namely fins and scales. But [the Rabbanites] added another sign, saying that a fish whose tail is not of equal length at both edges is not kosher, whereas a fish whose tail is of equal length [at both edges] is kosher. But this is not mentioned in the Torah.

6 Further on in this chapter, the Torah gives a sign for the kosher status of birds; namely, it lists all the non-kosher birds by name, and whatever is not on this list is permitted. But [the Rabbanites]

³⁷ See Babylonian Talmud, *Hullin* 59a.

אַרְבַּע, וְהֵם שָׂאֵם יְהִיָּה בְּעוֹף זָפֶק, וְקִרְקָבֵן נִקְלָף, וְאַצְבָּע יִתְרָה, וְשִׁאִינָה דִּים וְאֵכֶל - מִתָּר.

ז עוד בפסדר הזה אסר שרץ העוף, חוץ מארבעה מינים שהתירם, והשאיר אסורים. והם אינם חוששים אם יפל שרץ העוף למאכליהם ויתבשל וימות, או במשקיהם. אבל אצלנו, המאכל והמשתה מתנבלים מנפילת שרצי העוף ומיערוב רטיבותם להם.

ח עוד בפסדר הזה כתיב אסור נבלת בהמות וחיות שיש בהן סימן אחד משני סימני טהרת בהמות, כגון <החזיר>^{כד} והשפן והארנבת והגמל שהם מעלי גרה, והחזיר מפדים פֶּרְסָה; אסור הפתוב לגעת בנבלתם אחר מותם מכל וכל, כדכתיב: "מִבְּשָׂרָם לֹא תֹאכְלוּ וּבְנִבְלָתָם לֹא תִגְעוּ" (יא:ח). וכן נבלת חיות ובהמות שאין בהם שום סימן טהרה, כגון סוס חמור ערוד אריה דב זאב כלב חתול שועל, שהתיר הפתוב לגעת בהם אלא בתנאי שיטמא הנגע בהם, כדכתיב: "וְלֹאֲלֹה תִטְמָאוּ" (יא:כד). וכן נבלת שמונה שרצים, שהם החלד והעכבר והצב והאנקה והכח והלטאה והחמט והתנשמת - התורה חיבה בכל אלה לנגע בהם אחרי מותם, אם בכל גופם או בחלק מהם, לטמא עד הערב ולרחץ בשרו במים ולכבס בגדיו; ואם יגעו בהם מאכלים^{מד} ומשקים שיטמאו לעולם,

have added four other signs: that if the bird has a crop, a gizzard that can be peeled, and an extra toe, and does not tear prey when it eats, it is permissible.

7 Further on in this chapter, [the Torah] forbids flying insects, except for four species [of locusts], which it permits. All others are forbidden. But [the Rabbanites] are not concerned if flying insects fall into their food or drinks, and are cooked and disintegrated into them.^{xix} But among us, we consider food to become forbidden if flying insects fall into the food or their fluids mix in with it.

8 Further on in this chapter is written the prohibition of carcasses of mammals that have only one of the two signs of kosher animals, such as <the pig>³⁸ and the hyrax and the cony and the camel, which chew their cud, and the pig, which has a split hoof. Scripture forbids touching their carcasses after their death, in any situation, as it is written: *Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcass shall ye not touch: they are unclean to you* [Leviticus 11:8]. And similarly, [regarding] the carcasses of all the mammals with no signs of kosher status, such as a horse, an ass, a wild ass, a lion, a bear, a wolf, a dog, a cat, or a fox, Scripture permits touching them, but with the qualification that whoever touches them will become impure, as it is written: *and for these ye shall be unclean* [Leviticus 11:24]. And similarly, [regarding] the eight types of crawly creatures, namely *the weasel, the mouse, the tortoise, the ferret, the chameleon, the lizard, the snail, and the mole* [Leviticus 11:29–30]. Regarding all these, the Torah obligates all that touch their corpses, whether the whole corpse or only part of it, to be impure until evening, and then to wash one's body in water and launder one's clothes. And if foodstuffs or drinks come ^{44} in

38 This word appears in all MSS and in Ed. Neubauer, but it is clearly out of place and does not belong here. Pigs do not chew their cud, and anyway are mentioned separately in the second half of the sentence.

וְלֹא יֵצְאוּ לְטְהָרָה; וְאִם יִגְעוּ בָהֶם בְּגָדִים וְכֵלִים, שְׂיִטְמְאוּ עַד
הָעֶרֶב וַיִּדְחֻצּוּ וַיִּשְׁטְפוּ בַּמַּיִם בָּעֶרֶב וַיִּטְהָרוּ; וְאִם כְּלִי חָרָשׁ יִגְעוּ
בָהֶם, שְׂיִשְׁבְּרוּ לְגִמְרֵי וְלֹא יִטְהָרוּ. וְכךָ אָנוּ הַקְּרָאִים נוֹהֲגִים.
אֲבָל הַתַּלְמוּדִיִּים הִתִּירוּ כָּל הַטְּמְאוֹת הַלֵּל, וְאִינֶם חוֹשְׁשִׁים
אִם יִגַּע אֶחָד מִכָּל אֱלֹה לְמֵאֲכָלָם וּלְמִשְׁקֵיהֶם אוֹ לְגוֹפָם אוֹ
לְבִגְדֵיהֶם וְכֵלֵיהֶם, אֲלֹא שְׂאִינֶם אֲכָלִים אֶת בִּשְׂרָם. כִּנְרָאָה
שְׂאִינֶם חוֹשְׁשִׁים אֲפֹלוּ בְּאֲכִילָהּ, כְּגוֹן אִם יִתְבַּשֵּׁל וַיִּמּוֹחַ בְּתַבְשִׁיל
גַּם אוֹ בִּירְקוֹת הַנִּקְרָא בְּלִשׁוֹנָם צִימְעָם, אִזִּי מִבְּטָלִים בְּשֵׁשׁ
וְהַנּוֹתֵר אֲכָלִים; וְגַם בָּזָה אָמְרוּ בָטֵל בְּשֵׁשׁ, רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר אִם
יִהְיֶה מֵאֲכָל בְּתוֹךְ כְּלִי וַיִּפֹּל בּוֹ חֲתִיכַת בִּשָּׂר נִבְלָה מִכָּל אֱלֹה
הַנּוֹזְכִּים הַטְּמְאִים וְהַמְטְמְאִים, אִם יִהְיֶה הַמֵּאֲכָל שֵׁשִׁים חֻלְקִים
כְּשֶׁעוֹר חֲתִיכַת הַנִּבְלָה, וְהַנִּבְלָה תִּהְיֶה עוֹדֶפֶת עַל הַשֵּׁשִׁים -
הַמֵּאֲכָל אוֹ הַמִּשְׁקָה טָהוֹר הַנּוֹתֵר מִחֻלְק הַשֵּׁשִׁים; וְאִם יִהְיֶה
הַמֵּאֲכָל פְּחוֹת מִשֵּׁשִׁים חֻלְקִים מִשְׁעוֹר הַנִּבְלָה, וְהַנִּבְלָה תִּהְיֶה
בְּמִסְפַּר הַשֵּׁשִׁים - הַמֵּאֲכָל אוֹ הַמִּשְׁקָה אָסוּר. וְכֵן בְּכָל חָרָשׁ

contact with them, they become impure forever, and can never be purified. And if clothes or vessels come in contact with them, they become impure until evening, and then must be washed and cleaned with water in the evening, at which point they will become pure. And if earthenware vessels come in contact with them, they must be totally broken and will never become pure. This is how we Karaites behave. On the other hand, the Rabbanites have permitted all these impurities, and are not concerned if any of these fall into their food, drinks, bodies, clothes, or vessels; [the Rabbanites are concerned] only with refraining from eating their flesh.³⁹ And it seems that they are not concerned even about eating them, if it is in a case such that [these animals] are cooked and disintegrated into a thick cooked dish or into [a] vegetable [dish], which they call *tsimmes* in their language;⁴⁰ in such a case, they nullify it in sixty, and eat the rest. Here, too, they say: “It is null-and-void in sixty.” That is, if a food is inside a container, and a piece of non-kosher meat falls in from any of the above-mentioned species, which are impure and confer impurity – if the amount of kosher food is sixty times that of the non-kosher carcass, and the carcass is not counted in those sixty, then [the Rabbanites consider] the food or drink kosher, [including] the one-sixtieth that remains [of non-kosher food]. But if the food is less than sixty times the amount of the non-kosher carcass, and the carcass is counted in the sixty, then the food or drink is

39 The Rabbanites understand these laws of impurity as creating a state that prevents entering the Temple or eating sacrifices (or some other limited circumstances), but they do not view them as absolute prohibitions. Thus, for example, if an earthenware vessel comes in contact with an impure insect, then anyone who eats from that vessel will be prohibited to enter the Temple until undergoing purification; but, according to the Rabbanite understanding, there is no prohibition to use such a vessel at home, far from the Temple. Because the Temple is not standing, this effectively means that Rabbanites do not worry about these laws today.

40 Yiddish, spoken by the Rabbanite Jews of much of Europe.

שִׁינַע בְּנִבְלָה, שְׁאָמַר עָלָיו הַכֶּתוּב "וְאֵתוֹ תִּשְׁבְּרוּ" (יא: לג), רוֹצֶה לומר שְׁלֵא יִצְלַח לִפְלֵי, וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה בּוֹ שׁוּם מְלָאכָה בַּטְּהוֹרִים; וְהֵם אָמְרוּ שְׁבִירָתוֹ טְהוֹרָתוֹ, רוֹצֶה לומר: לְשִׁבֹּר מִמֶּנּוּ חֲתִיכָה אַחַת מִשְׁפָּתוֹ אִזְיָהּ הַכֶּלִי טְהוֹר. וְעַל זֶה ה' יִלְעַג לָמוֹ.

וְכֵן בְּסִימָן הַזֶּה כְּתִיב בְּעַד שְׂרָצֵי הָאָרֶץ, רוֹצֶה לומר נְחָשִׁים עֲקָרִים תּוֹלָעִים וּדְמָשִׁים, כְּדָכְתִּיב: "כָּל הַזֶּרֶם עַל גַּחֲזִין וְכָל הַזֶּרֶם עַל אֲרָבַע עַד כָּל מַדְבָּה רִגְלִים לְכָל הַשָּׂרָץ הַשָּׂרָץ עַל הָאָרֶץ לֹא תֹאכְלוּ... אֶל תִּשְׁקְצוּ אֶת נַפְשֵׁיכֶם בְּכָל הַשָּׂרָץ הַשָּׂרָץ וְלֹא תִטְמְאוּ בָהֶם וְנִטְמַתֶּם בָּם... וְלֹא תִטְמְאוּ אֶת נַפְשֵׁיכֶם בְּכָל הַשָּׂרָץ הָרִמָּשׁ עַל הָאָרֶץ" (יב: מב-מד). רָצוֹן הַכֶּתוּב בְּזֶה שְׁאֵם יִפְלוּ לְמֵאכְלִים וּמִשְׁקִים וּמִחוּ, שְׁאֵסְרוּ הַמֵּאכָל וְהַמִּשְׁקָה. וְהֵם אֵינָם חוֹשְׁשִׁים, רַק מְשֻׁלִּיכִים הַשָּׂרָץ, אֲפֹלוּ נִמְרָח לַחֲתִיכוֹת, וְאֲכָלִים הַמֵּאכָל וְשׁוֹתִים הַמִּשְׁקָה. אֲבָל הַתּוֹלָעִים הַנִּמְצָאִים בַּגְּבִינָה אֵינָם אוֹסְרִים אֲפֹלוּ לְאֲכִילָה מִמֶּשׁ, וּמִמְדִּיחִים עַל הַגְּבִינָה וְאוֹכְלִים. וְזֶה מֶרֶד וְהַתְּנַגְּדוֹת כְּנֶגֶד רָצוֹן הַתּוֹרָה.

י בְּסִדֵּר י"ב צוֹתָה הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁיּוֹלְדֵת תִּטְמָא שְׁבַעַת יָמִים לְזָכָר וְאַרְבַּעַת עֶשֶׂר לְנִקְבָּה, כְּנִדָּה. מֵה נִדָּה טִמְאָה וּמִטְמָאָה לַנָּגָעִים בָּהּ, כֵּן הַיּוֹלְדֵת. וְהֵם אֵינָם נִשְׁמְרִים כָּלָל וְכָלָל, וְהַיּוֹלְדֵת נּוֹגַעַת בְּכָל פְּלִי הַבֵּית וּבְכָל הַמֵּאכְלִים וְהַמִּשְׁקִים, וְאֲכָלִים פָּלִם וְשׁוֹתִים עִם הַיּוֹלְדֵת פְּלִי שׁוּם הַבֵּדֵל וְחֹשֶׁשׁ. וְכֵן אַחֵר עֲבוּר

forbidden. And regarding an earthenware vessel that touches a carcass, Scripture says that it must be broken; that is, it cannot ever be used for anything, and no pure substances may be handled with it; but [the Rabbanites] say that breaking it makes it pure; that is, if one piece from the side is chipped off, then the vessel is pure. But God laughs at them for this.⁴¹

9 Similarly, in the same chapter, Scripture says about the creatures that crawl on the land – serpents, scorpions, worms, and other crawling creatures: *Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon all four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat [for they are an abomination]. Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth [. . .] upon the earth* [Leviticus 11:42–44]. Scripture means by this that, if they fall into foods or drinks and disintegrate into them, then the food or drink is forbidden. But [the Rabbanites] are not concerned about this; they take the creature, even if it has been crushed into pieces, and they toss it out, and then eat the food or drink the drink. And when it comes to the worms that are found in cheese, they do not even forbid eating them directly, and they rub them over the cheese, and eat it. This is rebellion and opposition to the will of the Torah.

10 In chapter 12, the Torah commands that a woman who gives birth becomes impure for seven days for a boy and fourteen days for a girl, just like a menstruant woman. That is, just as a menstruant woman is impure and confers impurity to all who touch her, so too the woman who has given birth. But [the Rabbanites] are not concerned at all about this, and their women who have given birth touch all items in the house, and all foods and drinks, and they all eat and drink with the woman, without any concern or separation. Moreover, after the seven days for a boy and

⁴¹ This expression is based on Psalms 2:4.

שְׁבַעַה לְזִכֹּר וְאַרְבַּעַה עָשָׂר לְנִקְבָּה תֵּשֵׁב שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים
לְזִכֹּר וּשְׁשִׁים וּשְׁשָׁה לְנִקְבָּה עַל דְּמֵי טְהֵרָה, וְאַחֲרָיו אֵלּוּ הַיָּמִים
תִּקְרִיב קָרְבָּן {מִהָ} וְתִטְהַר. וְהֵם הַתִּיּוֹרוֹ הַיּוֹלְדֵת לְבַעֲלָהּ בְּאֵלּוּ
הַשְּׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים לְזִכֹּר וְהַשְּׁשִׁים וּשְׁשָׁה לְנִקְבָּה, אֲפֹלוֹ
תִּהְיֶה שׁוֹפָעֶת דָּם בְּנִהְרָה. וּבַעֲסֵק זֶה אֲפֹלוֹ הַגּוֹיִם נִשְׁמָרִים. אֲבָל
חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל הִזְהִירוּ שְׁלֹא תִגַּע הַיּוֹלְדֵת לְשׁוֹם דָּבָר, כְּמוֹ הַנִּגְדָּה,
וּמִשְׁכָּבָהּ וּמוֹשָׁבָהּ וּמִרְכָּבָהּ טְמֵאִים טְמֵאת שְׁבַעַה וּמִטְמֵאִים
לְנִגְעִים בָּהֶם טְמֵאת יוֹם; וְיִשְׁאַר דְּבָרִים שֶׁתִּגַּע בָּהֶם, כְּגוֹן פְּלִים
וּבִגְדִים, יִטְמְאוּ טְמֵאת יוֹם וִירְחִצּוּ בַּמַּיִם; וְאָדָם הַנִּגַּע בָּהּ יִטְמֵא
יוֹם וִירְחִץ; וּמֵאֲכָלִים וּמִשְׁקִים שֶׁתִּגַּע בָּהֶם הַיּוֹלְדֵת יִטְמֵאוּ
לְעוֹלָם; וְכָלִי חֹרֵשׁ שֶׁתִּגַּע בּוֹ הַיּוֹלְדֵת אֵין לוֹ טְהֵרָה.

יא בְּסֹדֶר י"ג הַתּוֹרָה צִוְּתָה מִדְּאוֹת נִגְעִים לְטָמֵא בָּהֶם נִגְעֵי
עוֹר בְּשַׂר הָאָדָם וְנִגְעֵי הָרֹאשׁ וְהַזָּקֵן, וְכֵן נִגְעֵי בִגְדִים. חֲכָמֵינוּ
חִיבוּ אֵם יִהְיֶה כֹהֵן פָּקִיא בְּהוֹרָאתָם לְהִשְׁמַר מֵהֶם. אֲבָל
הַתְּלֻמוּדִיִּים בְּטָלוּם בְּגִלוֹת מְכַל וְכָל.

the fourteen for a girl, [the Torah commands that] she must sit thirty-three days for a boy and sixty-six for a girl, on “pure blood,” and after these days, she must offer a sacrifice, ^{45} and then she becomes pure. But [the Rabbanites] permit a woman who has given birth [to sleep with] her husband during these 33 days for a boy and 66 for a girl, even if she is gushing blood like a river. Even gentiles avoid such behavior! And our sages forbid the woman who has given birth to touch anything, just like a menstruant; and where she lies down and where she sits and where she rides are all impure for seven days, and confer one-day impurity on all who touch them. And all other items that she touches,^{xx} such as vessels or clothes, contract one-day impurity, and must be washed in water; and all who touch them contract one-day impurity and must bathe. And foods and drinks that the woman touches become impure for eternity, and an earthenware vessel that she touches can never become pure.⁴²

11 In chapter 13, the Torah gives instruction regarding the appearance of various afflictions that confer impurity – skin afflictions, in human flesh; and afflictions in the head and the beard; and afflictions in clothing. Our sages obligate us to be concerned about them,^{xxi} if there is a *kohen* [priest] who is knowledgeable about them [who can declare them impure; for the Torah does not consider the afflictions to confer impurity until a priest declares them impure]. But the Talmudites have completely done away with this in the diaspora.⁴³

42 As explained above, in footnote 39, Rabbanites view the laws of where a menstruant woman may sit and what she may touch as being relevant only to the question of contamination that prevents people from entering the Temple. Because the Temple is not standing, they are not concerned about them today. However, they view the rule against menstruant sexual intercourse as an absolute.

43 Here, too, Rabbanites view these rules as relevant only to the question of who may attend the Temple, and, therefore, as not relevant today.

יב בְּסֹדֶר ט"ו טַמְאֵת הַזֶּבֶב הַזֶּכֶר וְטַמְאֵת שְׂכֶבֶת זָרָע, וְהֵם בְּטָלוּם מִכָּל וְכָל.

יג עוֹד בְּסֹדֶר ט"ו הַפְּתוּב חַיִּב לַנֶּדֶה שֶׁתִּטְמָא שְׁבַעַה יָמִים מִשְׁתַּרְאָה הַדָּם, וְתִטְמָא לְמוֹשֵׁב וּלְמֹשֶׁבֶת טַמְאֵת שְׁבַעַה; וְשֹׂאֵר דְּבָרִים פְּלִיטִים וּבִגְדִים שִׁיטְמָאוּ יוֹם אֶחָד בְּנִגְעָה בָּהֶם; וְאָדָם הַנִּגָּע בָּהּ יִטְמָא יוֹם אֶחָד וְיִרְחֹץ וְיִכְבֹּס; וְהַשּׂוֹכֵב עִמָּהּ וְתִהְיֶה נִדְתָּה עָלָיו שִׁיטְמָא שְׁבַעַת יָמִים; וְאִם תִּגַּע בְּמַאֲכָלִים וּמִשְׁקִים אֵין לָהֶם טְהִירָה; וְכֵן פְּלִי חֲרָשׁ. וְכֵן אָנוּ שׁוֹמְדִים גַּם הַיּוֹם. אֲבָל הֵם בְּטָלוּ זֶה מִכָּל וְכָל, אֶף-עַל-פִּי בְּבִירֹד. וּמֵה שֶׁלֹּא כָתוּב הוֹסִיפוּ וּבְדוּ מִלֵּבָם, וְהוּא שָׂאֵם יִמְלְאוּ לַנֶּדֶה אַחֲרֵי רְאוּתָהּ הַדָּם הָרֵאשׁוֹן שְׁבַעַה יָמִים, חַיְבוּ לָהּ לִסְפֹּר עוֹד שְׁבַעַה יָמִים נְקִיִּים, שֶׁבָּאֵלוּ הָאֲרֻבָּעָה-עָשָׂר יָמִים תִּהְיֶה אֲסוּרָה לְבַעֲלָהּ, שֶׁלֹּא תִשְׁכַּב עִמּוֹ; אֲבָל אֲכָלִים בִּיחָד עַל הַשְּׁלַחַן מְקֻצָּה קַעֲדָה. אֲבָל חֻכְמֵינוּ חַיְבוּ לַנֶּדֶה שֶׁתִּטְמָא לְבַד שְׁבַעַה יָמִים כְּעֵצֶם הַפְּתוּב, פְּלִי תוֹסַפֶּת וּמִגְרַעַת, וּלְבַד בָּאֵלוּ הַיָּמִים הֵיא אֲסוּרָה לְבַעֲלָהּ בְּחִיּוֹב כִּירַת

12 In chapter 15 are the rules of impurity of genital flows from males and of seminal emission. [The Rabbanites] have completely done away with these.⁴⁴

13 Further on in chapter 15, Scripture declares a menstruant impure for seven days from the time that she sees blood; and that she confers seven-day impurity to any object on which she sits or lies down, and one-day impurity to any other items that she touches, such as vessels or clothes; and if other people touch her, they contract one-day impurity, and must then wash themselves and launder their clothes; and if someone sleeps with her while she is menstruating, he contracts seven-day impurity;^{xxii} and if she touches foodstuffs or drinks, they can never become pure; and so also regarding an earthenware vessel. We keep all these [rules] even today, but [the Rabbanites] have completely done away with all this, even though [it is written] clearly. But they added [rules] that are not in Scripture, and invented them out of their own hearts; namely, if the menstruant completes her seven days after her first sighting of blood, they require her to count another seven clean days. And in these fourteen days, she is forbidden to her husband; [that is,] she may not sleep with him. But they eat together at the table, from sides of the same plate. [On the other hand,] our sages declare the menstruant to be impure for only seven days, in accordance with the very words of Scripture, without adding or subtracting from them; only in these days is she forbidden to her husband, on penalty of *kareth*

44 As above, Rabbanites view these rules as relevant, from a strict point of view, only to the time of the Temple. However, there is a Talmudic tradition (Babylonian Talmud, Berakhoth 22b) that Ezra, in early Second Temple times, made a decree extending these laws also to one who wishes to pray or study the Torah. The Talmud (ibid., 22a) reports that the Rabbanite community abolished Ezra's decree in the time of Ze'eri (third century CE); but nonetheless, many Rabbanite men continue to immerse after seminal emission before praying or studying Torah.

אם יהיה מזיד, ואם בשוגג חייב קרבן וטמאת שבעה. ולא חיבנו בנדה שבעה נקיים, כי שבעה נקיים לא חיבה התורה אלא לזבה, שהיא אחר הנדה; כי אין זבה אם לא תהיה נדה. והם לא הפרישו בין פרשת נדה לפרשת זבה, והכתוב הפרישן בברור, ולזבה חיוב קרבן ולנדה לא.

יד בסדר י"ח במצות העריות הכתובה באחד-עשר פסוקים, מחלקת גדולה בין חכמינו וביניהם, וחברו בזה ספרים, ויארך הדבור בספורם; רק בכאן נגיד המפרסם לכל. והוא כי התורה אמרה: {מו} "ערות בת אשת אביך מולדת אביך אחותך היא לא תגלה", שהרצון ב"מולדת אביך" מגדלת של אביך היא, רוצה לומר שגדלה בביתו, כמו "גם בני מכיר בן מנשה ילדו על ברקי יוסף" [בראשית נ', פסוק כג], וכן "חמשת בני מיכל אשר ילדה לעדריאל" [שמואל ב' כא, פסוק ח], כי בשמואל ב' וי"ב (פסוק כג) פתיב: "ולמיכל בת שאול לא היה ולד עד יום

[having their souls cut off], if they do so intentionally, and on penalty of bringing of a sacrifice, if accidentally, and [conferring] seven-day impurity [to the man]. But they do not obligate us to keep seven clean days for a menstruant, for the Torah requires seven clean days only for a *zava* [a woman with a flow], which comes after menstruation, for a woman cannot be a *zava* unless she has already been menstruating. But [the Rabbanites] do not distinguish between the rules for a menstruant and those for a *zava*, even though Scripture clearly distinguishes them, and requires the *zava* to bring a sacrifice, which is not the case for a menstruant.^{xxiii}

14 In chapter 18, in the laws of forbidden sexual relationships, which is written in eleven verses,⁴⁵ there is a great dispute between our sages and theirs. Many books have been written about this matter, and it would take a long time to tell all about it. Here we shall tell only the most famous [parts of the debate]. The Torah says: ⁴⁶ *The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father [moledeth avikha], she is thy sister, thou shalt not uncover [her nakedness] (Leviticus 18:11).* The meaning of “begotten of thy father” is that she has been raised by your father – that is, that she grew up in his house; this usage is found, similarly, regarding the sons of Machir son of Menasseh: *they were begotten upon Joseph's knees* (Genesis 50:23); and about the five sons of Michal, *whom she begat for Adriel* (II Samuel 21:8), for [we know from] II Samuel [6:23] that *Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death*. The text calls

45 *Note from Tomer Mangoubi:* The eleven verses are Leviticus 18:7–17. A twelfth verse, Leviticus 18:18, states: *Neither shalt thou take a woman to her sister to be her rival wife, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her lifetime.* This verse was not considered by the Karaite sages as one of the prohibitions on incest, because they interpreted the term “sister” here to mean “fellow.” By contrast, the Rabbanites interpreted it to mean a literal sister. This concept is explained in greater detail below.

מוֹתָהּ; וְקָרָאָה אַחוֹתֶךָ לְאַסְרָה עָלָיו כְּאַחוֹת הָאִמָּתִית. וְהֵם אָמְרוּ בִּי מוֹלֶדֶת וְדָאִי לְשׁוֹן הוֹלָדָה. וַחֲכַמֵּינוּ ז"ל טַעֲנוּ לָהֶם שֶׁאִם בֶּן לְמָה אָמַר "עֲרוֹת בֵּת אִשְׁתְּ אָבִיךָ", וְהָיָה לוֹ לֵאמֹר "עֲרוֹת בֵּת אָבִיךָ מֵאִשָּׁה שֶׁהִיא^כ זוֹלָת אִמֶּךָ". וְעוֹד שֶׁכִּבֵּר אָמַר לְעִיל: "עֲרוֹת אַחוֹתֶךָ בֵּת אָבִיךָ אוֹ בֵּת אִמֶּךָ."

וְהֵם הִקְשִׁיחוּ עֲרָפָם וְהִתִּירוּ אֶת אִשְׁתְּ הָאָב, וְלִקַּח הָאָב אֶת הָאִם וְהִבִּין אֶת בֵּת הָאִם שֶׁלִּקְחָהּ הָאָב.

וְכֵן הִתִּירוּ שְׂיֻקָּח הָאִישׁ אֶת בֵּת אַחוֹתוֹ; וְאֶף-עַל-פִּי שְׂאִינוּ זֶה כְּתִיב בַּתּוֹרָה, סוֹמֵךְ אַחֲרֵי שֶׁהוּא יוֹצֵא בְּהִקְשׁ גִּזְרָה שְׂוֵה, שֶׁאִם אָסוּר לְאִישׁ לִקַּח אַחוֹת אָבִיו וְאַחוֹת אִמּוֹ, כִּפְתּוּב בַּתּוֹרָה, בֶּן אָסוּר לְאִשָּׁה לְהִנָּשֵׂא לְאִחִי אָבִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ.

וְכֵן הִתִּירוּ כְּשֶׁתָּמּוּת אִשְׁתּוֹ שֶׁל אִישׁ שְׂיֻקָּח אַחוֹת אִשְׁתּוֹ, מִמָּה שֶׁכְּתוּב: "וְאִשָּׁה אֶל אַחוֹתָהּ לֹא תִקַּח, לְעֹרֹר לְגִלוֹת עֲרוֹתָהּ עָלֶיהָ בְּחַיֶּיהָ" (ויקרא יח:יח), וְלֹא יִדְעוּ בִּי מִכּוֹן הַכְּתוּב

[your step-sister] *thy sister*, to indicate that she is as forbidden to you as your real sister. But [the Rabbanites] say that this word *moledeth* [“begotten”] means literally begotten. Our sages argue against them, for if so, why would Scripture call her *thy father’s wife’s daughter*, rather than simply “thy father’s daughter from a woman that is not thy mother”? Moreover, Scripture has already mentioned [the biological sister], when it says [in verse 9]: *The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother* (Leviticus 18:9).

Thus, [the Rabbanites] stubbornly permit [a man to marry his] father’s wife; and a father will marry a woman, and his son marry her daughter.⁴⁶

Moreover, they permit a man to marry his sister’s daughter. Now, although this is not explicitly mentioned in the Torah, [it is clearly forbidden] based on analogy: if it is forbidden for a man to marry his father’s or mother’s sister [*i.e.*, his aunt], as written in the Torah, then it must also be forbidden for a woman to marry her father’s or mother’s brother [*i.e.*, her uncle].

Moreover, they permit a man to marry the sister of his late wife, after the death of said wife; [they base this] on the verse: *Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to be her rival wife, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her lifetime* (Leviticus 18:18).⁴⁷ And they do not understand that the [true] meaning of this verse

46 For further discussion, see endnote xxxvi.

47 *Note from Tomer Mangoubi*: Karaite sages historically held it forbidden for a man to marry two sisters even after the death of one sister. They viewed marrying two sisters to be equivalent to the prohibited case of marrying a woman and her daughter: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter . . . they are near kinswomen* (Leviticus 18:17). The Karaite sages concluded that just as one may not marry a woman and her daughter because they are near kin, so too one may not marry a woman and her sister because they are near kin. Indeed, the Torah refers to a sibling relationship as being one of close kinship: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother’s sister, for she is thy mother’s near kinswoman* (Leviticus 18:13).

אינו על אחיות אמתיות אלא על אחיות בדין, כמו שיש מזה
המין הרבה במקרא; ואפלו על מי שאינו חי, כך הפתוב אומר:
"איש אל אחיו", "אשה אל אחותה"; ורצון הפתוב שלא יקח
איש אשה חדשה אצל אשתו הראשונה כדי לצרור הראשונה,
שתשב צרורה ושנואה ועגונה בחייה, ורואה בעיניה שאישה
חושק החדשה ושובב עמה ואוכל ושותה עמה ומתרחק
מהראשונה, כי זה לה צער גדול; והוא המכון במאמר "לצרור".
והם פרשו מלת "לצרור" - "לא צרור", רוצה לומר: לא היא
ולא צרתה ולא צרת צרתה, רוצה לומר, שלא יקח איש אחות
אשתו בעוד שאשתו חיה, לא אחותה של אשתו ולא צרתה
של אחות אשתו בעוד שהיא חיה; אבל אחרי מותה מתר
שׂישא. והחליפו הפתוב במפרסם.

ומפני שמתחתנים באסור, ילדיהם ממזרים נקראים; אבל
הם ראויים הקרא ממזרים, ולא אנחנו. ומפני המחלוקת גדולה
בינינו וביניהם בעריות, על כן אסרו חכמינו להתחתן בס כלל
וכלל.

טו בסדר י"ט (פסוק יא) כתיב: "לא תגנבו, ולא תכחשו ולא
תשקרו איש בעמיתו". ונכפלה זאת המצוה גם בסדר כ"ה
(פסוק טו): וכי תמכרו ממכר לעמיתך או קנה מיד עמיתך, אל
תונו איש את אחיו. והם הרסו המצוה הזאת, ואמרו: כל הקונה
ומצא בו תערבת צרור אבנים {מ} ועפר ואפר, אין על המוכר
כלום, כי היה לו לקונה לפשפש. וחכמינו ז"ל אמרו: והלא יש
סחורות שאי אפשר לפשפשן, כגון חביות שמן וגלומי מסכות,

is not about actual sisters, but about “sisters in judgment.” This usage is found many times in Scripture, which says, even about inanimate objects, “one man to his fellow,” “one woman to her fellow” [see, e.g., Exodus 26:3]. The meaning of [our] verse is that a man may not marry a new wife, in addition to his first wife, in order to rival (*lizror*) the first one, such that she will sit bound up (*zerura*) and hated and chained in her lifetime, while she sees in front of her eyes that her husband loves the new wife and sleeps with her and eats and drinks with her, and stays away from the first wife, for this would cause great anguish [to the first wife]. This is what is meant by the word *lizror*. But [the Rabbanites] interpret *lizror* as *lo zaror*, that is, not [*lo*] she, nor her rival wife [*zara*], nor the rival wife of her rival wife; in other words, he may not marry his wife’s sister while his wife is alive, nor may he marry a woman who has been together with his wife’s sister in a polygamous marriage, while she is alive; but after her death, it is permitted to marry them. [The Rabbanites] have changed [the meaning of] Scripture in an obvious way.

And because they contract forbidden marriages, their children are called bastards.^{xxxiv} But they [themselves] deserve to be called bastards, and not we. Because of the great debate between us and them regarding sexual relationships, our sages have forbidden us to ever marry them.

15 In chapter 19, it is written: *Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another* [Leviticus 19:11]. This commandment is repeated in chapter 25: *And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour’s hand, ye shall not oppress one another* [Leviticus 25:14]. But [the Rabbanites] have completely done away with this commandment, for they say: If one buys an item, and finds garbage in it, [such as] rocks ^{47} or dirt or ashes, the seller is not responsible, for the buyer should have examined it [before buying]. But our sages say: Aren’t there items of sale that are impossible to check, such as jugs of oil or bundles of fabric

הַצְּרוּרִים וּמִכְפָּתִין בַּעֲבוֹתוֹת. וְקוֹנֶה אוֹתָם עַל נְאֻמָּנוֹת הַמּוֹכֵר -
הָאֵם תִּסְבֵּים הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהַמּוֹכֵר יִזְיף סְחוּרְתּוֹ?! וְכֵן הִתִּירוּ לְנוֹתֵן
סְחוּרָה בְּהִקְפָּה לְתֵת שְׂוִיהַ מֵאָה בְּמֵאָה וְחֲמִשִּׁים, וְזֶה אוֹנָאָה
גְּדוֹלָה וְעִבְרַת נֶשֶׁךְ וְתַרְבִּית. וְכֵן הִתִּירוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹנָאָה בְּמִקָּח
וּמִמְכָּר עַד חֵלֶק הַשְּׂשִׁי מִסֵּךְ הַמִּמְכָּר.

טז עוֹד בְּסֵדֶר י"ט (פסוק כ) כְּתִיב בְּשִׁפְחָה חֲרוּפָה: "בְּקֶרֶת
תִּהְיֶה." הֵם פָּרְשׁוּ שֶׁהָאִשָּׁה תִּהְיֶה לוֹקָה בְּרָצוּעָה שֶׁל בָּקָר
עַל שֶׁשָּׁכַב אִישׁ עִמָּה; אֲבָל הָאִישׁ הַשּׁוֹכֵב יִהְיֶה פָּטוּר. וְכָל
מִשְׁכָּל יִלְעַג עַל הַמִּשְׁפָּט הַזֶּה, וְחִלְלִילָה שֶׁשּׁוֹפֵט כָּל הָאָרֶץ
יֹאמֶר לְרָשָׁע "צִדִּיק אַתָּה!" אֲבָל חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל פָּרְשׁוּ "בְּקֶרֶת"
לְשׁוֹן בָּקָר וְחִקְיָה, רוֹצֶה לֹאמַר לְחֹפֶשׁ וּלְדְרוֹשׁ אִם חִפְשָׁה לֹא
נָתַן לָהּ עֵדִין הִיא אֵינָה אִשָּׁת אִישׁ, עַל כֵּן אִם יִהְיֶה מִפְּתָה חֵיב
הָאִישׁ הַשּׁוֹכֵב עִמָּה לְקַחְתָּהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה, בְּדִכְתִּיב בְּסֵפֶר שֵׁנִי סֵדֶר
כ"ב (פסוק טו): "וְכִי יִפְתָּה אִישׁ בְּתוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא אִרְשָׁה וְשָׁכַב
עִמָּה, מֵהוּר יִמְהַרְנֶה לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה"; וְאִם יִהְיֶה אוֹנֵס חֵיב לְתֵת
עֲנֹשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים כֶּסֶף וְשִׁשָּׁאָנָה לְאִשָּׁה וְלֹא יוֹכֵל שְׁלַחָה כָּל יָמָיו,
בְּדִכְתִּיב בְּסֵפֶר ה' בְּסוֹף סֵדֶר כ"ב (פסוקים כח-כט). אֲבָל אִם תִּהְיֶה
הַשִּׁפְחָה מִחִפְשָׁה בְּכַתֵּב חֹפֶשׁ, שֶׁהוֹצִיָּאה הָאָדוֹן הַקּוֹנֶה אוֹתָהּ
מִשִּׁפְחוֹת לְגִבְרֹות, כִּבְרָה הִיא מֵאִרְשָׁה וְאִשָּׁת אִישׁ; וְהַשּׁוֹכֵב
אוֹתָהּ אִם יִהְיֶה מִפְּתָה אוֹ אוֹנֵס הוּא חֵיב מִיתָה, כִּי נֶאֱמַר אֵת

that are tightly rolled up and tied? When one buys those, one relies on the trustworthiness of the seller. Would the Torah agree that a seller may counterfeit the merchandise?! Moreover, [the Rabbanites] permit selling merchandise on credit, to give what is worth 100 [monetary units] for 150. But this is great [financial] oppression, and the sin of usury. Moreover, they permit oppression in business, up to [overcharging] one-sixth the value of the merchandise.

16 Further in chapter 19, it is written about a betrothed female slave: *there shall be biqqoreth* [Leviticus 19:20]. The Rabbanites interpret this to mean that the woman must be lashed with an ox[tail]-whip because the man has slept with her, but the man that has slept with her is not punished in any way.⁴⁸ Anyone intelligent will mock such a judgment; and far be it from the Judge of the Whole World to tell a guilty man that he is innocent! But our sages, of blessed memory, interpret *biqqoreth* as meaning an examination, an investigation – that is, [we] must investigate to see whether or not her freedom has been given to her yet; for, if not, then she is not considered a married woman. And therefore, if a man has seduced her, he must marry her, as is written in the second book [Exodus], chapter 22 [verse 16]: *And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife* [Exodus 22:16]. And if he rapes her, then he must pay a penalty of fifty pieces of silver and marry her, and he may never divorce her, as is written in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], at the end of chapter 22 [verse 29]. On the other hand, if the female servant has been freed, with a writ of manumission that her master has sent her out from slavery to freedom, then she is betrothed, and thus has the legal status of a married woman; and if a man sleeps with her, whether by seduction or rape, he must

48 See Babylonian Talmud, Karethoth 11a.

אֶשֶׁת רַעְהוּ; וְהָאִשָּׁה אִם תִּהְיֶה מִפֶּתַח חֵיבַת מוֹת, וְאִם תִּהְיֶה אֲנוּסָה פְטוּרָה מֵהַמוֹת, כְּדֹכְתִּיב בְּסֵפֶר ה' סִמָּן כ"ב (פסוק כו): "לִנְעָרָה לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה דָבָר, אֵין לִנְעָרָה חֹטָא מוֹת"; רַק חֵיבַת לְהַתְגַּדֵּשׁ בְּגִט מְאֹדוֹנָה הַמְאָרְסָה וְהַמֵּיַעֲדָה לוֹ אוֹ לְבָנוּ. וְזֶהוּ הַבְּקוּר הַנִּפְלֵא שְׁאֻמְרָה הַתּוֹרָה, לְבַקֵּר וּלְדַרֹּשׁ שְׁלֹא תוֹמַת הָאִשָּׁה בְּלִי חֻקִּיָּה וּדְרִישָׁה, שְׁאֻפְשָׁר תוֹמַת וְהִיא אֵינָה חֵיבַת מִיתָה, אוֹ תַפְטִיר וְהִיא חֵיבַת מִיתָה.

יז בְּסוּף סִמָּן כ"ב (פסוק כח) כְּתִיב: "וְיִשׁוּר אוֹ שָׁה אֶתוּ וְאֶת בָּנוּ לֹא תִשְׁחֲטוּ בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד." וּמִזֶּה אָסְרוּ חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל לְשַׁחֵט גַּם הַבְּהֵמָה הַהֲרֵגָה. וְהֵם הִתִּירוּ וְאָמְרוּ כִּי הָעֶבֶר עִם אִמּוֹ הֵם גּוֹף אֶחָד, וְאִם תִּשְׁחֲטוּ הָאִם וְיִמָּצֵא הָעֶבֶר חַי וְגִדְלָה, הוּא כְּאִלוֹ נִשְׁאָר אֶבֶר אֶחָד חַי מֵאִמּוֹ, וְעַל כֵּן אֵינוּ צָרִיךְ אֲפֹלוֹ לְשַׁחֲטָהּ; שְׁאֲפֹלוֹ אִם יוֹמַת, מִתֵּר לֵאכֹל נִבְלָתוֹ, וְאִם הָעֶבֶר יִמָּצֵא מֵת בְּבֶטֶן אִמּוֹ, הִתִּירוּ לֵאכֹלוֹ, וְאָמְרוּ: הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַיְּפָה תֵּאכְלֵנוּ. וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה אָסְרוּ חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל לֵאכֹל הַבֶּשֶׂר מִשְׁחִיטָה שְׁלֵהֶם, כִּי שְׁחִיטָתָם מִנְּבֵלָה.

יח {מח} בְּסֵדֶר כ"ג בְּמִצְוֹת הַנֶּפֶת הָעֹמֶר, שְׁזָמַן הַנֶּפֶת בְּתוֹךְ שְׁבוּעַת שָׁל חַג הַמִּצּוֹת כְּתִיב (פסוק יא): "מִמָּחֳרַת הַשַּׁבָּת יִנִּיפְנוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים." בְּזֶה פְּלִגְתָּא גְדוּלָּה וְעֻקְרִית בִּינֵינוּ וּבִינֵיהֶם. כִּי חֲכָמֵינוּ

receive the death penalty, for he has committed adultery with his neighbor's wife; and if the woman has been seduced, she too must receive the death penalty, and if she has been raped, she is exempt from death, as is written in the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 22: *But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter* [Deuteronomy 22:26]. But [in the case of the betrothed slave-woman], she needs a writ of divorce from the master, who designated her for himself or for his son. This is the elusive *biqqoreth* of which the Torah speaks, that [we] must investigate carefully, so that the woman should not be put to death without a careful investigation. For [otherwise,] she might be put to death without being worthy of it, or acquitted, but actually deserving of death.

17 At the end of chapter 22, it is written: *And whether it be cattle or sheep, ye shall not slaughter it and its young both in one day* (Leviticus 22:28). For this reason, our sages, of blessed memory, forbid slaughtering a pregnant animal. But [the Rabbanites] permit this, and they say that a fetus counts as one body along with the mother. So, if the mother is slaughtered, and the fetus is found alive, and then it grows up, it still remains [in the status of] a limb of its mother, and, therefore, it does not even need to be slaughtered; and if it dies, it is permissible to eat its carcass; and if the fetus is found dead in its mother's womb, they permit eating it, and say that a person that is not disgusted by it should eat it.^{xv} Therefore, our sages, of blessed memory, forbid eating any meat slaughtered by [the Rabbanites], for their slaughter is not kosher.

^[48] **18** In chapter 23, in the commandment of waving the 'omer [sheaf-offering], the time of its waving [is stated as being] within the week of the Festival of Mazzoth. It is written: *on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it* (Leviticus 23:11). Regard-

ז"ל פִּרְשׁוּ כַפְשׁוֹטוֹ שֶׁל מְקַרָּא, שֶׁהַהֲנָפָה תִּהְיֶה מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת בְּרֵאשִׁית דּוֹקָא. וְהֵם הִחֲלִיפוּ הַכְּתוּב, וְאָמְרוּ מִמַּחֲרַת יוֹם טוֹב הָרֵאשׁוֹן שֶׁל חַג הַמִּצּוֹת. וְלֹא שָׁמוּ לֵב כִּי לֹא נִקְרָא שׁוֹם מוֹעֵד בְּשֵׁם שַׁבָּת חוּץ מִמוֹעֵד יוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים; וְשָׂאֵר הַמוֹעֲדִים נִקְרָאוּ שַׁבְּתוֹן וְלֹא שַׁבָּת; וְגַם בְּשֵׁם שַׁבְּתוֹן לֹא נִקְרָאוּ כָּל הַמוֹעֲדִים אֲלֵא מוֹעֵד יוֹם תְּרוּעָה בְּאַחַד לַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי; וּמֵהוּ שָׁגַם בַּשַּׁבָּת וּבַכַּפּוּר כְּתִיב שַׁבָּת שַׁבְּתוֹן, הוּא מוֹדָה עַל הַהוֹסָפָה שֶׁמוֹסִיפִים מִחוּל עַל קֹדֶשׁ. וְכֵמוֹ כֵּן לֹא שָׁמוּ לֵב לְמַה שַּׁכְּתוּב (פסוקים טו-טז): "וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הִבִּיאֲכֶם אֶת עַמֹּד הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַת שַׁבְּתוֹת תְּמִימוֹת תִּהְיֶינָה. עַד מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִית תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם", וְיוֹם הַחֲמִשִּׁים הוּא חַג הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת. וּלְפִי פִּרְשָׁם הָיָה צְרִיךְ שִׁיְהִיָּה אֵיזָה מוֹעֵד גַּם לִפְנֵי הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת, כִּדִּי שִׁיְהִיָּה גַם יוֹם הַחֲמִשִּׁים מִמַּחֲרַת יוֹם טוֹב. וְכִשְׂרָאוּ זֶה, נִדְּחָקוּ וּפִרְשׁוּ "מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת יִנִּיפְנוּ הַכֹּהֲנִין", הַנִּרְצָה בּוֹ מַחֲרַת יוֹם טוֹב; וְאָמְרוּ "עַד מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִית תִּסְפְּרוּ", הַנִּרְצָה

ing this, there is a great, fundamental debate between us and them. For our sages, of blessed memory, interpret the verse in accordance with its plain meaning: the waving should be on the day after Saturday. But [the Rabbanites] change [the meaning of] Scripture, and say that it means the day after the first festival day of the Festival of Mazzoth.^{xxvi} But they did not notice that no festival is called “*shabbath*” other than Yom Ha-kippurim [the Day of Atonement]; all other festivals are called only “*shabbathon*,” but not “*shabbath*.” Moreover, even the term “*shabbathon*” is used only for Yom Teru’a, on the first of the seventh month, not for any other festivals.⁴⁹ And though the Sabbath and Kippur are called “*shabbath shabbathon*” in Scripture, this refers to the supplement that is added from the secular [days] to the sacred.⁵⁰ Similarly, they did not notice what is in what is written [in the following passage]: *And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days* (Leviticus 23:15–16) – where the fiftieth day is the Festival of Shavu’oth [Pentecost]. According to their understanding [of the phrase “the morrow after the Sabbath”], there would need to be a festival immediately before Shavu’oth, so that the fiftieth day would also be the morrow of a festival. And when they did notice it, they came up with the following forced explanation: [the first use of the phrase “the morrow after the Sabbath”] in the verse *on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it*, means the day after a festival, but [the second use of the phrase] in the verse *even unto the morrow*

49 The author is mistaken on this point: The first day of Sukkoth and Shemini ‘Azereth are also referred to as *shabbathon* (Leviticus 23:39). Nevertheless, the author’s point remains: the first day of the Festival of Mazzoth is not referred to as a *shabbath* or even a *shabbathon*, as these other holidays are.

50 That is, the extra minutes that are added to the Sabbath and Yom Kippur before and after the technical beginning of the holiday.

בו עד ממחרת השבוע השביעי. וחקמינו ז"ל טענו להם כי "מחרת" לא נאמר בשום לשון לא על סוף שבוע ולא על סוף חדש ולא על סוף שנה אלא^כ על סוף יום האתמול, רוצה לומר: כשיעבר יום האתמול, היום הבא אחריו הוא מחרתו. ומפני זה, מועד חג השבועות אצלנו לעולם ביום ראשון לשבוע, ובהם נופל בכל ימי השבוע. ובעד זו המצוה, קדמונינו ערכו אתם מלחמות, והיו רוצים להכניענו, ולא נתננו השם יתברך לידם.

י עוד בסדר כ"ג (פסוק בד) כתיב: "בחדש השביעי באחד לחדש יהיה לכם שבתון זכרון תרועה מקרא קדש". חכמינו ז"ל פשו "תרועה" לשון שבח ותהלה והלל, בדכתיב תלים ע"ה^{כט} (פסוק א): "לכו נרננה לה' נריעה ליצור ישענו." "הריעו לה' כל הארץ" (תלים ק') (פסוק א). והתלמודים אמרו: דוקא תרועת שופר. ואמת שבמקרא במקומות רבות זכר "תרועה" אצל תקיעת שופר וחצוצרה. אבל בכל מקום שיזכר זה אין שם בלי זכר שופר או חצוצרה עצמם. ומאחר שלא זכר כאן

after the seventh Sabbath, it means the day after the [end of the] seventh week. But our sages argue against them that the word *mohorath*, “the morrow,” is never used to refer to the end of a week, or the end of a month, or the end of a year, but only the end of the previous day; that is, when the previous day is over, the next day is called its morrow. Therefore, we always observe the Festival of Shavu’oth on Sunday, whereas for them it can fall on any day of the week.⁵¹ Our early [sages] waged wars against them regarding this commandment; they wanted to make us submit, but God did not give us into their hands.

19 Further on in chapter 23, it is written: *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a day of rest, a remembrance of teru’a, a holy convocation* (Leviticus 23:24). Our sages, of blessed memory, explain the word *teru’a* as meaning praise and words of glory, as is written in Psalms 95: *O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us sing out praise [nari’a] to the rock of our salvation* (Psalms 95:1). And in Psalms 100: *Sing out praise [hari’u] to the Lord, all ye lands* (Psalms 100:1). But the Talmudites say that this *teru’a* must be performed specifically with a shofar [ram’s horn]. And indeed, in many places in Scripture, it uses the word *teru’a* to refer to blasts of a shofar or a trumpet; but wherever that is the case, it never uses [the word on its own] without specifically mentioning the shofar or the trumpet. And since here it does not mention either shofar or trumpet, it is understood that Scripture is not talking about *teru’a* with a shofar, but with a voice.^{xxvii}

⁵¹ It was certainly the case historically, for the Rabbanites and their Temple-era predecessors, that Shavu’oth could fall on any day of the week. However, the Rabbanites today use a calendar, in which the Festival of Mazzoth cannot begin on Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday nights. As mentioned by our author, the Rabbanites start counting the fifty days leading up to Shavu’oth on the second day of the Festival of Mazzoth. Accordingly, under the current rabbinic calendar, Shavu’oth can only fall on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, or Friday.

לא שופר ולא חצוצרה, מובן שאין רצון הפתוב לתרועת שופר, אלא בקול.

אבל הם, כפי פרושם, חייבו לתקוע בשופר קודם זה המועד ובמועד עצמו וגם אחריו. והמציאו מצות באופני התקיעה, מה שלא כתוב. והם אמרו כי ביום הזה נעקד יצחק לעולה, והשטן הביא מטת מת לשדה, ואמר: "דאי, ^{מט} מת בנג". ואמנו שרה צעקה בצוחות; ולזכר זה תוקעים בקרן האיל, להזכיר באילו של יצחק ולערבב השטן, שלא יקטרג את ישראל. ואומרים שקול תקיעת שופר בקול צוחת שרה אמנו. מי ישמע ולא ילעג על זה? כי איך לא נשבחו הקולות שפכתה שרה עד שנתנה התורה במשך שע"ד שנים? כי לפי דעת האומר כי בשנת כ"ו ללידת יצחק היתה עקדתו, הלא היא השנה שנת ע"ד לאלף השלישי מבריאת העולם, והתורה נתנה בשנת תמ"ח לאלף השלישי; אם כן מעקדה עד מתן תורה שע"ד שנים. וכל זה בדיאה מלבס, כמנהג נביאי השקר האומרים ה' דבר, והוא לא דבר.

ב עוד בסדר כ"ג (פסוקים מ-מג), במצות חג הסוכות, כתוב: "ולקחתם לכם [...] פרי עץ הדר וגו' ויחגגתם אותו חג לה' וגו'".

But [the Talmudites], in accordance with their interpretation, state an obligation to blow the shofar before this festival and on the festival itself, and also after it.⁵² They invented commandments regarding the ways of blowing, which are not written [in Scripture]. And they say that, on this day, Isaac was bound to be a burnt offering, and the Satan brought a bier to Sarah, and said: “See, ^{49} your son is dead.” And our mother Sarah cried out, wailing; and in memory of this, they blow a ram’s horn, to remember the ram [that was substituted as a sacrifice instead of Isaac], and to confuse the Satan, so that he will not prosecute the Jewish people [in the divine courtroom]. And they say that the sound of the shofar blasts is like the cry of Sarah, our mother. Who can hear this [argument], and not mock it? For how is it that the sounds that Sarah cried were not forgotten for all the 374 years until the Torah was given? For according to the opinion that Isaac was 26 at the time of the *Aqeda* [the binding on the altar], that would be year 2074 since Creation, and the Torah was given in the year 2448; if so, from the *Aqeda* through the giving of the Torah was 374 years. But [in fact, the Rabbanites] invented all this [about Sarah’s cries and the shofar] in accordance with the custom of false prophets, who say that God has spoken, though [in fact] He has not.

20 Further, in chapter 23, in the commandment of the Festival of Sukkoth, it is written: *And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees [. . .] And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord [. . .] ye shall dwell in booths seven days, [. . .]* (Leviticus 23:40–42).

⁵² In fact, Rabbanite Judaism considers the blowing of the shofar to be a commandment only on the holiday itself, and only this is mentioned in the Talmud. A later tradition, attested in the work *Pirqé De-ribbi Eli‘ezer* (chapter 46), of approximately the eighth century, mentions a custom of blowing the shofar starting from the first day of Elul, a month before the holiday; this is widely practiced among Rabbanite communities today, but is by no means universal, and certainly not viewed as an obligation.

בַּסְּכוֹת יִשְׁבוּ שְׁבַעַת יָמִים וּגו' - בֵּינָן שְׁאֶחָד מִצְוֹת לְקִיחַת
הַדְּבָרִים צִוָּה לְשַׁבֵּת בַּסְּכוֹת, מִזֶּה מְבֹאָר וְנִגְלָה בִּי הַתּוֹרָה צִוָּתָהּ
לְקַחַת הַדְּבָרִים לַעֲשׂוֹת מֵהֶם סְכוֹת וְלִשְׁבֵּת בָּהֶן שְׁבַעַת יָמִים.
וְכֵן כָּתִיב גַּם בְּעֶזְרָא בַּסֵּפֶר שְׁנֵי סִימָן ח' (נחמיה ח:טו): "צֵאוּ הָהָר
וְהִבֵּיאוּ עָלַי זֵית וְעָלַי עֵץ שֶׁמֶן וְעָלַי הַדָּס וְעָלַי תְּמָרִים וְעָלַי עֵץ
עֵבֶת לַעֲשׂוֹת סֶכֶת בְּכַתוּב" - רוֹצֶה לֹאמֹר, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה
שֶׁתִּקְחוּ דְּבָרִים אֵלֶּה לַעֲשׂוֹת מֵהֶם סְכָה. הֵרִי עֶזְרָא הִכָּהֵן פִּרְשׁ
לָנוּ אֶפֶן קִיּוֹם הַמִּצְוֹת, וְהֵם לֹא שָׁמְעוּ לִפְרוֹשׁוֹ שֶׁל עֶזְרָא, רַק
אָמְרוּ שֶׁמֶאֱמַר "וְלִקְחֶתֶם בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֶשְׁוֶן" הִיא מִצְוָה בְּפָנַי עֲצֻמָּה,
חוּץ מִמִּצְוֹת סְכוֹת, רַק חוֹבָה לְקַח הַדְּבָרִים וְלִשְׁחַק בָּהֶם.
וּמִפְּנֵי שֶׁאֵין הַדְּבָרִים נִמְצְאִים בָּאֵלֶּה הָאֲדָצוֹת, הִתִּירוּ לַחֲלֹל
שְׁבֻתוֹת וּלְאָכַל מֵאֲכָלִים אֲסוּרִים כְּדִי לְהִבְיֹא הַדְּבָרִים. אֲמַנְס

Right after the commandment to take these [plant] materials, it commands to dwell in *sukkoth* [booths]; from this, it is clear and obvious that the Torah commands to take those materials in order to make *sukkoth* out of them, in which to dwell for seven days. And indeed, it is written in Ezra in the second book [*i.e.*, Nehemiah], chapter 8: *Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written* [Nehemiah 8:15] – that is, as it is written in the Torah, to take these [plant] materials to build a *sukka*. Thus, Ezra the Priest interpreted the manner of performing the commandment for us. But [the Rabbanites] do not heed Ezra’s interpretation; rather, they say that the verse, *ye shall take you on the first day*, is a separate commandment, aside from that of the *sukka*, an obligation to take these [plant] items and play with them.⁵³ And because these species are not found in our lands, they permit violation of the Sabbath and eating of forbidden foods in order to obtain them.^{xxviii} But our sages say that we should take species, whichever of the species in the verse, that we can find, and build *sukkoth* out of them; and as for

53 The source of the dispute between the Karaites and the Rabbanites arises from the fact that the Torah does not expressly command the Israelites to build *sukkoth*, only to dwell in them. The Torah says that on the first day of the holiday, the Israelites are to “take” *the fruit of the splendid tree [or a splendid fruit tree], fronds of date palms, and branches of thick trees, and brook-willows; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days* (Leviticus 23:40). As noted by the author of *Levush Malkhuth*, the Jews living at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (see Nehemiah 8:15) understood this to indicate that there was a commandment to build *sukkoth* with the items mentioned. The majority of Karaite sages have adopted this interpretation. A minority of Karaite sages believe that the items mentioned in Leviticus were intended to fulfill the requirement to *rejoice before the Lord your God*, which appears in the verse immediately after the list of greenery. According to these sages, the Israelites would make bundles of greenery and fruits of all kinds to eat throughout the festival. A description of these practices is found in Aaron Ben Elijah, *Gan Eden*, ‘Inyan Sukkoth, Chapter 1, pp. 65a–65b.

חֲכַמֵּינוּ אָמְרוּ כִּי הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁנוֹכֵחַ לְמִצְוָה מִן הַפְּתוּבִים לַעֲשׂוֹת
סְבוֹת נֶקֶח וְנִעְשָׂה, אֲבָל בְּמָה שֶׁאֵין יָדֵינוּ מִשְׁגָּת בְּמִצְוֹת
אֲנוּ פְּטוּרִים מִמֶּנָּה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁפְּטוּרִים אֲנוּ בְּגִלוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ מִרְחָקִים
מִמִּצְוֹת הָאֲבִיב. וְלָמָּה נַחֲלִיל שִׁבְתוֹת, שֶׁהַעֲבֵר בָּהֶן חַיֵּב מִיתָה
וְכִרְת, וְנִתִּיר לֶאֱכֹל נִבְלוֹת, בְּעֵד מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה אַחַת?

whatever we are unable to obtain, we are exempt from it, just as we are exempt here in the distant exile from the commandment of *aviv* [the spring grain]. And why should we violate the Sabbath, which incurs the death penalty and *kareth* [being cut off], and permit eating forbidden foods, just in order to fulfill a single positive commandment?

מצוות מספר רביעי מחמשת ספרי תורת משה

א בסוף סדר ט"ו מזה הספר כתובה מצות ציצית. ובפתיל תכלת שעל הציצית כמו כן התלמודיים חדשו דבר שלא עלה על לב נותן התורה, ואמרו כי התכלת צבע ירק, ושהוא היה צבוע בדם ^(א) חלזון, שהוא תולע נמצא בכרפי היס, והתולע אינו נמצא עכשו. וזה זולת מכון הפתוב, כי התכלת אינו צבע ירק רק דומה לעין השמים, שהוא צבע בין הלבן ובין השחור. ובכן בטלו המצוה, ועושים ציציותיהם לבד חוטים לבנים. אבל בציציותינו^א יש פתיל תכלת.

ב בסדר י"ט (פסוק יד) כתיב: "זאת התורה אדם כי ימות באהל, כל הבא אל האהל וכל אשר באהל יטמא שבעת ימים" וגו'. מפרש בפתוב כי טהרת טמאת המת תלויה בשני דברים: בחטוי אפר הפרה, ובחריצה וכבוס המים. וכן זה הענין בסדר ל"א, גבי שבי מדן. ואחר שבגלות מפני העדר המקדש וכהני הקדש בטלה מצות אפר הפרה, אנו פטורים ממנה; אבל החריצה והכבוס לא בטלו בכל מקומות מהעולם, על כן חיבנו חכמינו ז"ל לטהר אחר שבעת ימים במים, בחריצה וכבוס, וכן לטהר הפלים והבגדים הנוגעים והמתאהלים עם המת במים אחר שבעת ימים. אבל התלמודיים בטלו טמאת מת בגלות מכל וכל, באמרם מפני כי אפר הפרה בטלה על כן גם הטמאה של מת בטלה. וכל זה עשו כדי להקל במצות. כי הנה שאר הטמאות הפתובות בספר שלישי, בדלעיל,

COMMANDMENTS FROM THE FOURTH BOOK
OF MOSES'S TORAH [NUMBERS]

1 At the end of chapter 15 of this book is written the commandment of *zizith* (tassels) and the *tekheleth* string on the *zizith*. Here, too, the Talmudites have invented something that the Giver of the Torah never considered. They say that *tekheleth* is a green (*yaroq*) dye, and that it was dyed with the blood of ^{50} the *hillazon*, which was a kind of worm that was found in the cities near the sea, and that it cannot be found now.^{xxx} And this is not Scripture's intention, for *tekheleth* is not a green dye, but rather is similar to the color of the [blue] sky, which is between black and white. And thus, they have abolished this commandment, and make their *zizith* only white threads. But our *zizith* have a *tekheleth* thread.^{xxx}

2 In chapter 19, it is written: *This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days* (Numbers 19:14). It is explicit in Scripture that the purification of corpse-impurity is dependent on two things: sprinkling with the ashes of the [Red] Heifer, and bathing and laundering with water. This comes up also in chapter 31, about the [soldiers, who] returned from Midian. In exile, we have no Temple or active priests, so the commandment of the ash of the Heifer is impossible, and, therefore, we are exempt from it – but bathing and laundry are not unavailable in any place in the world. Therefore, our sages, of blessed memory, instruct us to purify ourselves after seven days through bathing and laundry, and also to purify all vessels and clothes that have touched a corpse or been under a tent with it, [by washing them] in water after seven days. But the Talmudites have entirely done away with corpse-impurity in the exile, for they say that the absence of the ashes of the Heifer means that corpse-impurity is inoperative. They did all this in order to make the commandments easier, for the other kinds of impurity, which are discussed in the third book [Levit-

אֵינָן תְּלוּיּוֹת בְּאֶפֶר הַפָּרָה בְּתִהְרָתָן, וְהֵם עַל כָּל פָּנִים בְּטָלוּם
מִעֲקָרָן - כָּל זֶה כִּי שְׁלֹא יִכְבֹּד עֲלֵיהֶם עַל הַדָּת. וְכֵן אָמְרוּ כִּי
מִתִּי הַגּוֹיִם אֵינָם מְטַמְּאִים, כִּי כָתִיב "אָדָם כִּי יָמוּת בְּאֶהֱלִי",
וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל לְבַדּוֹ קָרוֹי "אָדָם", כְּדִכְתִּיב בִּיחֻזְקָא לְסִימָן ל"ד בְּסוּפּוֹ
(פסוק לא): "וְאַתָּה צֵאנִי צֵאן מִדְּעִיתִי אָדָם אָתָּם"; עַל כֵּן מִתִּי גּוֹיִם
בְּחֻזְקָת נִבְלָת בְּהֶמָּה. וְחֻכְמֵינוּ מְרַאִים לָהֶם בְּהִרְבֵּה מְקוֹמוֹת
מִהֲתוֹרָה שֶׁהַגּוֹיִם קְרוּיִין אָדָם.

ג בְּסֻדֵּר כ"ז כְּתוּבָה מִצְוֹת יִרְשׁוּת. גַּם בְּזוֹ הַמִּצְוָה בָּמָה שֶׁכְּתוּב
(פסוק כז:יא) "וְנִתַּתָּם אֶת נַחֲלָתוֹ לְשִׂארוֹ הַקָּרִיב אֵלָיו מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ
וַיִּרְשׁ אֹתָהּ", פִּרְשׁוּ הַפֶּךָ רִצּוֹן הַכְּתוּב, וְאָמְרוּ כִּי מֵאִמֶּר "וַיִּרְשׁ
אֹתָהּ" הִיא מִצְוָה בְּפָנֶי עֲצָמָה, וְהַרְצוֹן שֶׁהִבְעֵל יִרְשׁ אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ.
וְלֹא שָׁמוּ לֵב כִּי אֵין בְּזֶה הַפֶּךָ זִכָּר לְאִשָּׁה, אֲלֵא זִכָּר נִחְלָה;
וְרִצּוֹן הַכְּתוּב לִיִּירֵשׁ אֹתָהּ הִנְחִלָה. וְהֵם הִחֲלִיפוּ הַכְּתוּב מִעֲקָרוֹ,
וּמָה שְׁלֹא עָלָה עַל לֵב נִתֵּן הַתּוֹרָה הֵם חִדְּשׁוּ מִעֲצָמָם. וְאִפְּלוּ
חֻכְמֵיהֶם הָאֲחֵרוֹנִים אֵינָם מְסַבִּימִים לִפְרוֹשׁ זֶה, אֲבָל מִפְּנֵי
גְאוּתָם אֵינָם יְכוּלִים לָשׁוּב מִסְכָּלוּתָם.

ד בְּסֻדֵּר ל' (פסוק ג) כְּתִיב: "אִישׁ כִּי יִדָּר נָדָר לַה' אוֹ הַשְּׁבַע
שְׁבוּעָה לְאַסֹּד אֶסֶד עַל נַפְשׁוֹ לֹא יַחֲלֵ דְבָרוֹ, כָּכָל הַיֵּצֵא מִפִּיו

icus], as we have mentioned above, are not dependent on ashes of the Heifer for their purification, but [the Rabbanites] have nonetheless entirely done away with them – all so that the yoke of the law would not be too difficult for them. Moreover, they say that the corpses of gentiles do not impart impurity, for Scripture speaks of a man [*adam*] who dieth in a tent, and only Jews are called *adam*, as it is written in Ezekiel, at the end of chapter 34: *And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men* [*adam*] (Ezekiel 34:31); therefore, [argue the Rabbanites,] corpses of gentiles can be assumed to be like animal carcasses. But our sages show them that, in many places, the Torah calls gentiles “adam.”

3 In chapter 27 is written the commandment of inheritance. Scripture says: *Ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall inherit it* [*veyarash othah*] (Numbers 27:11). Here, too, [the Rabbanites] interpret Scripture in a way opposite to its intent; they say that the words *he shall inherit her* are a commandment on their own, and they mean that the husband inherits his wife[’s property].⁵⁴ But they did not notice that this chapter never mentions a wife, but rather mentions inheritance; Scripture is referring to the man that inherits that inheritance, but they have reversed Scripture’s meaning, and they have invented what the Giver of the Torah never considered. Even their later sages do not agree with this explanation, but because of their haughtiness, they are unable to give up their folly.

4 In chapter 30, it is written: *If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth*

⁵⁴ The word *nahala* [inheritance] is feminine in Hebrew, and therefore, the word *othah*, “it,” is the same as the word meaning “her.” The Rabbanite understanding of the verse as meaning “he shall inherit her” is discussed in the Babylonian Talmud, Bava Bathra 111b.

יַעֲשֶׂה" - רִצּוֹן הַכֶּתוּב מִפָּרֶשׁ שְׁנֵדְרֵי אִישׁ בּוֹגֵר שְׁלֹם בְּדַעְתּוֹ
 אֵין נִדְרֵיו תְּלוּיִין {נא} בְּשׁוּם בְּרִיָּה שְׁיִתִּיר לוֹ, רַק "כָּכָל הֵיִצָּא
 מִפִּי יַעֲשֶׂה", בְּלִי שְׁנוּי וְהִתְנַצְלוֹת. אֵלֶּא נִדְרֵי הָאִשָּׁה תְּלוּיִין
 בַּבַּעַל, וְנִדְרֵי הַבַּת תְּלוּיִין בָּאָב, אִם לְהַקִּימָן אוֹ לְהַפְּרֹן, כְּמוֹ
 שְׁמִפְּרֶשׁ מִהַכֶּתוּב. אֲבָל הַתְּלַמּוּדִים הִמְצִיאוּ תַּחְבּוּלָה, וְהוֹסִיפוּ
 עַל הַכֶּתוּב, וְאָמְרוּ: הוּא לֹא יַחַל דְּבָרוֹ, אֲבָל אַחֲרִים מוֹחֲלִין
 לוֹ; רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר, כְּשִׁילַךְ הַנֶּדֶר אֵצֶל תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים, יִתִּירוּ לוֹ
 נִדְרוֹ. וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה הִמְצִיאוּ בְּדִוּוֹת, מֶה שְּׂאִין הַשֶּׁכֶּל סָבֵל אוֹתָן:
 שְׂאֵם יָבוֹא בְּעַל הַנֶּדֶר לִפְנֵי תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ לוֹ "עַל
 מִנֵּת כֶּךָ נִדְרָתְךָ, אוֹ עַל מִנֵּת כֶּךָ נִדְרָתְךָ?", וַיַּעֲנֶה "הֵן", לֹא יוֹכֵלוּ
 לְהַפְּרֹ; וְאִם יִמָּצֵא בְּתוֹךְ דְּבָרָיו שְׂאֵמֶר "לֹאוּ", מִיד מִתִּירִין נִדְרוֹ.
 וְהִבִּיאוּ בְּתַלְמוּדֵם מִמַּעֲשֵׂה קִדְמוּנֵיהֶם, כִּי רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן הָיָה לוֹ
 נֶדֶר לְהַפְּרֹ, וּבֹא לוֹ אֵצֶל תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: "עַל מִנֵּת כֶּךָ
 נִדְרָתְךָ?" עַל כָּל מֶה שְׂשִׂאלוּהוּ אָמַר "הֵן". וְהָיוּ תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים
 מַצִּטְעֲרִין שְׁלֹא מָצְאוּ אֶפֶן לְהִתִּיר נִדְרוֹ. אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי בְּטָנִית: "אִי
 רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן, אִם עַל מִנֵּת כֶּךָ נִדְרָתְךָ שְׂיִצְטַעְרוּ תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים?"
 אָמַר לוֹ: "לֹאוּ". מִיד הִפְּרוּ. וְכֵן רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל הָיָה עָלָיו נֶדֶר
 וְלֹא יָכַל לְהִתִּירוֹ. בָּא לוֹ לִפְנֵי תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים; אָמְרוּ לוֹ: "עַל
 מִנֵּת כֶּךָ נִדְרָתְךָ, אוֹ עַל מִנֵּת כֶּךָ נִדְרָתְךָ?" עַל דְּבָרֵיהֶם הִשִּׁיב:
 "הֵן". בָּא כּוֹבֵס אֶחָד וְהִכָּה לוֹ לְרַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל. שְׂאֵלוּהוּ: "עַל
 מִנֵּת כֶּךָ נִדְרָתְךָ, שְׂיִכְךָ הַכֶּבֶס?" אָמַר לָהֶם: "לֹאוּ". מִיד הִתִּירוּ

(Numbers 30:3). This verse is clear that the vows of an adult sane man are not dependent ^{51} on anyone else who might release him of them; rather, *he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth*, without any change or excuse. Only a wife's vows are dependent on her husband, and a daughter's vows are dependent on her father, who can affirm them or annul them, as is explained in Scripture. But the Talmudites have invented a trick and added to Scripture, saying: he shall not break his word, but others can absolve him of it; that is, the man that made the vow can go to sages, who will annul his vow. And regarding this, they have invented falsehoods that the mind cannot bear. For example, if the man that made the vow goes to the sages, they ask him: "Would you have made your vow with such-and-such situation in mind?" If he says "yes," then they cannot absolve him; but if they find a question to which he says "no," then they absolve him immediately. And they have a story in their Talmud from one of their early [sages] that R. Simeon had a vow that he wanted to get absolved, so he went to the sages, and they asked him: "Would you have made your vow with such-and-such situation in mind?" He kept saying "yes" to all their questions, so the sages were sad that they could find no way to annul his vow. Then R. Bitnith asked him: "R. Simeon, would you have made your vow if you knew that it would make the sages sad?" He said: "No." Immediately, they annulled his vow.⁵⁵ [And another story:] R. Ishmael had a vow which he could not [find a way to] annul. He came to the sages, and they asked him: "Would you have made your vow with such-and-such situation in mind?" He kept responding: "Yes." Then a launderer came, and slapped R. Ishmael. [The sages] asked him: "Would you have made your vow if you knew that the launderer would slap you?" He said: "No." Immediately, they annulled his

55 This story is found in the Babylonian Talmud, Nedarim 22b–23a.

לו נִדְרוּ. מִי חָכֵם וַיֵּבֶן אֱלֹהִים וַיִּשְׁמַע וְלֹא יִלְעִיג וַיִּשְׁחַק מֶהֱם? כִּי
בְזִדּוֹן עָמְדוּ לְסִתֵּר הַכְּתוּבִים מֵעֵקֶרָם בְּמִרְמוֹת וְעֲרֻמוֹת, וַיַּחֲסוּ
לְעֵצָמָם חֲכָמָה גְּדוּלָּה בָּזָה, כֹּאֲלוֹ חֲכָמָתָם גְּדוּלָּה מִחֲכָמַת נִתֵּן
הַתּוֹרָה וַיִּתְּרָה וַיִּתְּרָה.

vow.⁵⁶ What wise person will hear these and understand them, and not mock them and laugh at them? For they wantonly arise to topple the Scriptures from their foundation, with tricks and guile, and they take pride in their own great wisdom in doing so, as if their wisdom were greater than the wisdom of the Giver of the Torah.

⁵⁶ This story, too, is found in Nedarim 23a. Note that both of these stories are in Aramaic in the Talmudic source, but our author re-tells them in Hebrew.

מצוות מספר חמישי מחמשת ספרי תורת משה

א בסדר ד' (פסוק ב) כתיב: "לא תוסיפו על הדבר אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם ולא תגרעו ממנו." והתלמודיים הוסיפו וגרעו, כמו שעיני כל משפיל רואות בכל מה שכתבתי ואכתב.

ב בסדר ו' (פסוקים ה-ו) כתיב: "וקשרתם לאות על ירך והיו לטטפות בין עיניך. וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך." וכן זו המצוה כתיב גם בספר שני סדר יג שתי פעמים (פסוקים ט, טז); וכן בספר חמישי הזה עוד כתוב בסדר יא. בזו המצוה נפלה חלקה גדולה בין חכמינו וביניהם, כי הם אמרו שצריך דוקא לקיים המצוה בפשטו, ועל כן חיבו להניח ^(נב) תפלין ביד ובמצח ומזוזות פתחים. ואלו היו כותבין בתפלין ובמזוזות הפתחים כל התורה כלה, אזי היו צודקים מעשיהם. אבל עכשו לבד הארבעה מקומות שבהם כתובה המצוה הזאת הם פותבין בתפלין; ולפי האמת אין צורך לכתב הארבעה מקומות הללו, אלא כל המצוות שבתורה, שבעבורן מזהיר באלו הארבעה מקומות. אבל חכמינו עליהם השלום בראותם כי באחד מאלו הארבעה מקומות כתיב "ולזכרון בין עיניך", רוצה לומר בסדר י"ג מספר שני, ובשלשה מקומות כתיב "לטטפות בין עיניך", מזה למדו שמוכן "טטפות" הכתובים בשלשה מקומות הוא "זכרון". ואמרו כי הבינה היא בראש האדם במצחו, למעלה מנקבי האף בין העינים, על כן צוהה התורה שבינס האדם בבינתו, ויתמכם בזכרונו, כמו שלא ישפח דבר

COMMANDMENTS FROM THE FIFTH BOOK
OF MOSES'S TORAH [DEUTERONOMY]

1 In chapter 4, it is written: *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it* (Deuteronomy 4:2). But the Talmudites have added and subtracted, as anyone with intelligence can see from all that I have written [above], and will continue to write [below].

2 In chapter 6, it is written: *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates* (Deuteronomy 6:8–9). This commandment is written also in the second book [Exodus], chapter 13, in two places; as well as another time in this fifth book, in chapter 11. There is a great debate between our sages and [the Rabbanites] regarding this commandment. [The Rabbanites] say that one needs to fulfill this commandment literally; therefore, they say that it is obligatory to place ^{52} *tefillin* on the hand and the forehead, and *mezuzoth* for the doorways. Now, if they would write the entire Torah in the *tefillin* and in the *mezuzoth* of the doorways, then this action would be right; but now they write in the *tefillin* only the four passages where this commandment is stated. But in truth, there is no need to write specifically these four passages; but rather, all the commandments in the Torah, for it speaks about [all of] them in these four passages. But, [anyway,] when our sages, peace be upon them, saw that one of these four passages said *and for a memorial between thine eyes*, in the second book [Exodus], chapter 13 [verse 9], whereas the other three passages say *frontlets between thine eyes*, from this they learned that the word frontlets [*toṭafoth*], which is written in the three passages, means “memory.” And they say that [the seat of] understanding is in the head, [specifically] in the forehead, above the nostrils of the nose, between the eyes; therefore, the Torah commands that one

שִׁיְהִיָּה נָתַן בְּמִצְחוֹ בֵּין עֵינָיו. וַיְהִיָּה מֵאֹמֶר "וְקִשְׁדָּתָם לְאוֹת
עַל יָדְךָ וּלְטֹטְפוֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ" ו"עַל מְזֻזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ" עַל
דֶּרֶךְ מֶשֶׁל, כְּמֵאֹמֶר שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם בְּמִשְׁלִי ו' (פסוק
כא): "קִשְׁרָם עַל לִבְךָ תָּמִיד, עֲנֹדָם עַל גְּרָדְתֶּיךָ"; וְכֵן בְּסִימָן ז'^{לב}
(פסוק ג): "קִשְׁרָם עַל אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ, כְּתֹבָם עַל לִיחַ לִבְךָ", שֶׁאֵמֵר זֶה
בְּמֶשֶׁל עַל רֹב הַהֲתַמָּד וְהַהֲשָׁקֵד בָּהֶם וְהַעֲלָצָה וְהַשְׁתַּעֲשָׁעוֹת
בָּהֶם, כְּמֵאֹמֶר דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם: "וְאֶשְׁתַּעֲשַׁע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ
אֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי" (תהלים קיט: מז), וּכְדוּמָה לָזֶה. וְזֶה הַמִּנְהַג אֲשֶׁר
בְּמִקְרָא יֵשׁ בַּהֲרִיבָה מְקוֹמוֹת, שֶׁבְּמִקְוִים שֶׁלֹּא נוֹכַל לַעֲשׂוֹת
הַמִּצְוָה כְּפִשׁוּטָהּ הַנִּגְלָה נִקְחָה עַל דֶּרֶךְ מֶשֶׁל, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב
בַּסֵּפֶר הַזֶּה סֵדֶר י' (פסוק טז): "וּמִלֵּתָם אֶת עֲרֵלֹת לִבְבָּכֶם", שֶׁאַחֲרֵי
שֶׁאֵי־אֶפְשָׁר לְכַרֹּת חֵלֶק מִן הַלֵּב, כִּי לֹא יִחְיֶה הָאָדָם; וְכֵן בַּסֵּפֶר
חֲמִישִׁי סִימָן ו' (פסוק ו): "וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִכִּי מִצִּוְךָ
הַיּוֹם עַל לִבְבְּךָ"; וְכֵן בַּסֵּפֶר יא'^{לד} (פסוק יח) כְּתִיב: "וּשְׁמַתָּם אֶת
דְּבָרֵי אֱלֹהִים עַל לִבְבָּכֶם וְעַל נַפְשְׁכֶם", וְאִיךָ יוֹכַל אָדָם לִשְׁאֹת
יוֹמָם וּלְלַיְלָה אֶת הַתּוֹרָה עַל לִבּוֹ וְעַל נַפְשׁוֹ? רַק כָּל זֶה דֶּרֶךְ
מֶשֶׁל לְהַתְמַדֵּת הַזִּכְרִיה וְהַשְׁקָד שְׁמִירַת הַמִּצְוֹת, כְּאֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ
דוּמָה לָזֶה גַם בְּגִבֵּי מִצְוֹת צִיצִית, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב שֶׁם בַּסֵּפֶר ד'
סֵדֶר טו'^{לה} (פסוק לט): "וְלֹא תִתּוּרוּ אַחֲרֵי לִבְבָּכֶם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם",

should understand [the commandments] with understanding, and support them in one's memory, just as one would not forget something that is placed on one's forehead, between one's eyes. So, [when Scripture says:] *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates*, the meaning is metaphorical, just as when King Solomon, peace be upon him, says in Proverbs 6: *Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck* [Proverbs 6:21], and in chapter 7: *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart* [Proverbs 7:3]; this is a metaphor, referring to the constancy with which one should eagerly study [the words of wisdom], and the joy and delight [that one should take] in them, as King David, peace be upon him, says: *And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved* (Psalms 119:47), and similar such statements. And this is Scripture's habit [to talk in this metaphorical way], for there are a number of places where it is impossible to perform the commandment according to the literal meaning of the words, so we take it metaphorically. For example, it is written in this book [Deuteronomy], chapter 10: *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart* (Deuteronomy 10:16); for it is impossible to cut off a piece of the heart, for one would die from that. And similarly, in [this] fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 6: *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart* (Deuteronomy 6:6). And in chapter 11, it says: *Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul* (Deuteronomy 11:18); and how can someone bear the Torah, night and day, on one's heart and soul? Rather, all this is metaphorical, to indicate how constant one must be in one's memory and diligence in observing the commandments. And [we find language] similar to this in [the passage] about the commandment of *zizith*, as is written there in the fourth book [Numbers], chapter 9: *And that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which*

אֵלֶּא אֵין זֶה אֱלֹא לֵה הֵיאֵךְ אֶפְשָׁר לְאָדָם לְפָרֵשׁ אֱלֹה הַכְּתוּבִים
עַל פִּי מִשְׁמָעַן הַפְּשׁוּט, רַק לֹא יִמְלִטוּ מִלְּהִתְפָּרֵשׁ בְּדֶרֶךְ שְׁפָרְשׁוֹ
חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל בְּנִזְכָּר לְעֵיל, וְכֵן תִּקְיֵשׁ עַל שְׂאָר דְּבָרִים, וְעַל כֵּן
נִפְרָשֶׁהוּ עַל שְׁבִירַת וְהִסָּרֵת הָעֵקֶשְׁנוֹת וְהִסָּרְבָנוֹת שִׁישׁ בְּלֵב
הָאָדָם. כֵּךְ - מִפְּנֵי שְׂאִי־אֶפְשָׁר לְגִשּׁוֹא כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כְּלָה עַל הַמִּצְוָה
וְעַל הַיָּד, כִּי יֵלֶאֱה הָאָדָם, עַל כֵּן נִפְרָשֶׁהוּ שֶׁהַמְכֹּן בּוֹ הַזְכָּרוֹן
וְהָאֱהָבָה שְׁלֹא יִלְיֻזוּ מִלְּבָנוּ וּמִמִּחַ שְׁבִתָּנוּ וּמִרְצוֹנָנוּ, שְׁנִקְיָמָם
בְּבֵית וּבַחוּץ מִבֵּית, וְכֵן בַּמִּצְוֹת הַשְּׁכָלִיּוֹת שְׁעָקֶרֶן בְּרֹאשׁ
וּבַמִּצְוֹת הַמַּעֲשִׂיּוֹת שְׁנַעֲשׂוֹת בְּיָד. כֵּךְ הִיא דַּעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל,
וְעַל כֵּן לֹא חִיבָנוּ לְהַנִּיחַ תְּפִלִּין וּמְזוּזָה. וְכֵן נוֹכַח לְטַעוֹן עֲלֵיהֶם
מִדְּבָרֵיהֶם, כִּיֹּן שְׂאוּמְרִים שְׁמִיּוֹת מְזוּזָה מְכַרְחַת ^(ג) לְהַתְקִים
עַל פְּשׁוּטָה, לָמָּה אֵינָם כּוֹתְבִים עַל הַמְּזוּזוֹת הַדְּבָרִים, כְּפָתוּב
”וּכְתַבְתֶּם עַל מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ”, רַק מְנִיחִים כְּתוּב חֲתִיכַת
גּוֹיֵל עַל גִּיר? וְעוֹד טַעְנָה אַחֶרֶת: לָמָּה אֵינָם מְקִימִים ^ל מִצְוֹת
”וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ”, שְׁגָם בִּשְׁעָרֶיךָ צָרִיךְ לְכַתֵּב כְּפִי דַּעַתְּ, וְהֵם אֵינָם
כּוֹתְבִים וְאֵינָם מְנִיחִים, רַק הַנִּיחַ כָּלָל וּכְלָל.

ג בְּסֻדֵּר י"ז (פסוק יא) כְּתִיב: ”עַל פִּי הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר יוֹרֹךְ וְעַל
הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ לְךָ תַּעֲשֶׂה, לֹא תִסּוֹר מִן הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ
לְךָ יָמִין וּשְׂמָאל.” גַּם עַל זֶה אָמְרוּ הַתַּלְמוּדִיִּים: אֶפְלוּ יֹאמְרוּ
לְךָ עַל יָמִין שְׂמָאל וְעַל שְׂמָאל יָמִין, אֶפְלוּ יִהְיוּ שׁוֹגְגִין אֶפְלוּ
יִהְיוּ מְטַעֲיִין ^ל חִיבִין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשִׁמְעַ לָהֶם. וְחֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל אָמְרוּ:
אֵין אָנוּ חִיבִין לְשִׁמְעַ אִם יִהְיוּ שׁוֹגְגִין אוֹ מְטַעֲיִין וְאוּמְרִים עַל

ye go astray (Numbers 9:34). It is impossible to interpret these verses according to their literal meaning; they can be interpreted only as our sages, of blessed memory, explained them, as stated above. And we can extend this to the other matters; and thus, we explain [the circumcision of the heart as meaning] breaking and removing all the stubbornness and rebellion that is in the heart. And similarly, because it is impossible to bear the entire Torah on the forehead or the hand, for it would exhaust people, therefore we explain that it means that memory and love of God should never depart from our hearts and thoughts and wills, for we should fulfill them at home and away from home; and similarly, [we fulfill] the commandments for the intellect, which are based in the head, and the practical commandments, which are performed with the hand. This is the opinion of our sages, of blessed memory, and, therefore, they do not obligate us to put up *tefillin* or *mezuzoth*. And we can argue against [the Rabbanites] from their own words; for if they say that the commandment of *mezuza* must be ^{53} performed literally, why do they not just write the words directly, as it is written: *thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates*? Rather, they place a piece of leather or paper [onto the doorpost]. And another argument: why do they not fulfill the commandment “and on their gates”? For according to their opinion, it should be necessary to place them also on thy gates; but they do not write [*mezuzoth* for their gates] and do not place them there at all.

3 In chapter 17, it is written: *According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left* (Deuteronomy 17:11). Here, too, the Talmudites have said: “Even if they tell you that right is left, and that left is right. Even if they be mistaken, and even if they be led astray, the Jews are

יָמִין שְׂמָאל וְעַל שְׂמָאל יָמִין, כִּי בִמְנוֹי הַשּׁוֹפְטִים צוֹתָה הַתּוֹרָה שִׁיהוּ חֻכָּמִים וְנְבוֹנִים אֲנָשִׁי אִמָּת יִרְאִי אֱלֹהִים שׁוֹנְאֵי בָצַע, אֲבָל עַל הַמְּהַפְּכִים שְׂמָאל לְיָמִין וְיָמִין לְשְׂמָאל אָמַר הַנְּבִיא יִשְׁעִיָּה (סימן ה') (פסוק ב): "הוּא הָאֹמְרִים לָרַע טוֹב וְלַטּוֹב רָע, שָׁמַיִם חֶשֶׁךְ לְאוֹר וְאוֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ, שָׁמַיִם מֵד לְמִתּוֹק וּמִתּוֹק לְמֵד".^{לח} וְעַל הַשּׁוֹגִים וְעַל הַמְּטָעִין אָמַר הַנְּבִיא יִשְׁעִיָּה, סִימָן כ"ח (פסוק ז): "כִּהֵן וְנְבִיא שָׁגוּ בַּשֶּׁכֶר נִבְלָעוּ מִן הַיֵּין, תָּעוּ מִן הַשֶּׁכֶר שָׁגוּ בְּרָאָה פָּקוּ פְּלִילִיָּה".^{לט} וְיִדְמֶיָה הַנְּבִיא^מ אָמַר, סִימָן ב' (פסוק ח): "הַכֹּהֲנִים לֹא אָמְרוּ אֵיךְ ה' וְתַפְּשִׁי הַתּוֹרָה לֹא יִדְעוּנִי וְהָרַעִים פָּשְׁעוּ בִּי, וְהַנְּבִיאִים נִבְּאוּ בַּבַּעַל וְאַחֲרֵי לֹא יוֹעִלוּ הֵלְכוּ".^{מא} וּבִנְבוּאָת מֶלֶאכִי הַנְּבִיא סִימָן ב' (פסוקים ח-ט) כְּתִיב לַכֹּהֲנִים: "וְאַתֶּם סִדַּתֶּם מִן הַדֶּרֶךְ הַכְּשִׁלְתֶּם רַבִּים בַּתּוֹרָה, שִׁחַתְתֶּם בְּרִית הַלְוִי אָמַר ה' צְבָאוֹת. וְגַם אֲנִי נִתַּתִּי אֶתְכֶם נְבִזִּים וּשְׁפָלִים לְכָל הָעָם, כִּפִּי אֲשֶׁר אֵינְכֶם שׁוֹמְרִים אֶת דְּרָכֵי וְנִשְׁאִים פָּנִים בַּתּוֹרָה".^{מב} מִכָּאן שָׁאִין לָעַם ה' לְשִׁמְעַ לְבֵית דִּין הַגָּדוֹל הַשּׁוֹגֵין וְהַמְּטָעִין וְהָאוֹמְרִין עַל יָמִין שְׂמָאל וְעַל שְׂמָאל יָמִין.

ד בְּסֹדֶר י"ח (פסוקים י-יא) כְּתִיב: "לֹא יִמָּצָא בְךָ מַעֲבִיר בְּנוֹ וּבִתּוֹ בָּאֵשׁ, קִסֵּם קִסְמִים מְעֻזָּן וּמִנְחָשׁ וּמִכִּשֶׁף. וְחֹבֵר חֶבֶר, וְשֹׂאֵל אוֹב וְיִדְעֵנִי וְדֹדֵשׁ אֶל הַמֵּתִים." וְהַתְּלַמוּדִים מְעֻזָּנִים, כִּי בּוֹחֲרִים הָעֵתִים בְּאֹמְרָם אֵין מְקִיזִים דָּם בְּאַחַד וּבַעֲשָׂרָה לַחֲדָשׁ וּבִשְׁלֹשָׁה לַחֲדָשׁ, וְלֹא בְיוֹם אַרְבָּעָה לַחֲדָשׁ שֶׁנֶּפֶל בְּיוֹם

obligated to listen to them.”⁵⁷ But our sages, of blessed memory, say that we are not obligated to listen if they are mistaken or led astray, or if they say that right is left or that left is right. For the Torah gives instructions about appointing judges: they must be wise and understanding men of truth, who fear God and hate covetousness. But regarding people that flip right and left, and left and right, the prophet Isaiah said in chapter 5: *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness* (Isaiah 5:20). And regarding those who are mistaken or in error, the prophet Isaiah said in chapter 28:7: *The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine [they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment]* (Isaiah 28:7). And Jeremiah the prophet said in chapter 2: *The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not* (Jeremiah 2:28). And in the prophecy of the prophet Malachi, chapter 2, addressing the priests, it is written: *But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law [. . .] Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people* (Malachi 2:8–9). From [all] this, [we learn] that the people of the Lord should not listen to the great court if they are mistaken and wrong and say that right is left and left is right.

4 In chapter 18, it is written: *There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer* (Deuteronomy 18:10–11). But the Talmudites are “observers of times” [*me’onenim*], but they choose specific times, saying that one should not undergo bloodletting on the eleventh day of any month, or the third day, or the fourth

⁵⁷ Sifré Deuteronomy §154.

אַרְבַּעָה לַשָּׁבוּעַ; וְאֵין יוֹצְאִין לְסַחֲוֹדָה וְלֹא מְגַלְחִין סֶפֶר רֹאשׁ
וְלֹא פוֹדֵשִׁים נֶסֶם וְיוֹדְדִים עַל הַיָּם וְלֹא נוֹשָׂאִים אִשָּׁה. וְכֵן אָמְרוּ:
בְּיוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי וּבְיוֹם שְׁשִׁי בַשָּׁבֹת אֵין מְקִיזִין דָּם, כִּי מֵאֲדִים^מ
בְּזוּיוֹת^{מד} רְבִיעִית בְּאֵלוֹ הַיָּמִים. וְכֵן מִנְחָשִׁים בְּנִחוּשִׁים הִרְבֵּה,
כִּי חִיבוּ בַשָּׁעֵת הַתְּקוּפָה לָשׂוּם עַל כָּל כְּלִי מִשְׁקָה וּמֵאֵכָל דֶּק
חֲתִיכַת בְּרוֹזֵל, שֶׁלֹּדְעָתָם אִם לֹא יוֹשֵׁם בְּרוֹזֵל יִהְיֶה הַדָּבָר לָדָם.
וְכֵן קוֹסְמִים קוֹסְמִים עַל דֶּרֶךְ הוֹבְרֵי שָׁמַיִם הַחוּזִים בְּפּוֹכְבִּים,
שְׁאוּמְרִים: מִי שֶׁנִּלְד בְּמִזְל פְּלוֹנִי יִהְיֶה כֵךְ וְכך. וְכך אָמְרוּ:
חַיִּי בְנֵי וּמְזוֹנֵי לֹא בְּזִכּוֹתָא תִּלְיָא מִלְתָּא אֱלָא בְּמִזְלָה. וְכֵן הֵם
דּוֹרְשִׁים אֶל הַמֵּתִים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתְבוּ סְפָרֵיהֶם, שֶׁנִּקְבְּצִים לְקַבֵּר
רַבֵּי יוֹסִי הַגָּלִילִי וּמִקְטִידִים קְטָרֶת וּמִדְּלִיקִים גִּרּוֹת שֶׁמֶן; וְכָל
אִשָּׁה עֲצוּדָה מְלִילָה, לוֹקָחִים מִשְׁאֲרֵית הַשֶּׁמֶן, וְסִכָּה^{נד} אֶת
בִּטְנָהּ, וְאוֹמְרִים: "אֵי רַבִּי יוֹסִי, הַבְּטִינֵנִי הַבְּטִינֵנִי וְתֵן לִי הַרְיוֹן!"
וְכֵן בִּקְבֻרֵי שְׁאָר חֲכָמִים שֶׁבְּאַרְצֵי הַקְּדוּשָׁה, וְכֵן יֵשׁ הִרְבֵּה בִּינֵיהֶם
בְּעֵלֵי שִׁמּוֹת שֶׁהֵם חוֹבְרֵי חָבֵר.

ד בְּסִדְר כ"א (פסוק יא-יג) כְּתִיב: "וְרָאִיתָ בַּשָּׁבִיָּה אִשֶּׁת יִפְתַּח הַאֲדָם
וְחִשְׁקָתָהּ בָּהּ וְלִקְחָתָהּ לָךְ לְאִשָּׁה. וְהִבֵּאתָהּ אֵל תוֹךְ בֵּיתְךָ" וגו',
עַד "וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן תָּבֹוא אֵלֶיהָ וּבְעַלְתָּהּ".^{מה} מִכָּל הַסֵּדֶר גָּלוּי וּמְפֹדֵשׁ

day that falls on Wednesday, and one should not go do business or shave the side⁵⁸ of the head, nor should one spread out a sail and go to sea, nor should one get married. And similarly, on Tuesday and Friday, one should not do bloodletting because Mars is in the fourth corner on these days.^{xxx} And they do much enchantment, for they require [their constituents], at the time of the equinoxes and solstices, to place a piece of iron on every dish containing a drink or a thin [*i.e.*, liquidy] food; and according to their belief, if this iron is not placed, the [food or drink] will turn into blood. Moreover, they engage in divination, by means of astrologers, who gaze at the stars, and say: "He who was born under such-and-such constellation will be such and such." They also say: "[Length of] life, children, and sustenance are dependent not on merit, but on the constellation."⁵⁹ And they do necromancy, as they have written in their books; for they gather around the grave of R. Yosé the Galilean, and burn incense, and light oil lamps, and any woman with difficulty conceiving children takes the leftovers of the oil and rubs ^{54} it on her belly, and says: "Oh R. Yosé, do my belly, do my belly, and give me pregnancy!"⁶⁰ And [they do] similarly at the graves of other sages in the Holy Land. And many of them are charmers, using [divine or magical] names.

5 In chapter 21, it is written: *And thou seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest take her to thee as a wife, then thou shalt bring her home to thine house [. . .] and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband* (Deuteronomy 21:11–13). And from the order [of these

58 Hebrew *sefar*; this word is used to refer to the seashore, but I have never seen it used to refer to the side of the head, which it must mean here.

59 Babylonia Talmud, Mo'ed Qaṭan 28a.

60 This ritual at the grave of R. Yosé the Galilean is known from no rabbinic sources, but is described in the work *Tokhaḥath Megullé* by the early Karaite author Sahl Ha-kohen. (Published by Sh. Pinkser in *Liqquṭé Qadmoniyoth*, volume 2, p. 32.)

כִּי אַחֲרֵי שִׁיקִים הִתְנַאֲס מִתֵּר לְבֹא עָלֶיהָ; אֲבָל קֹדֶם הִתְנַאֲס אֲסוּר. וְהֵם הִתִּירוּ בִּיאָה רִאשׁוֹנָה קֹדֶם הִתְנַאֲס.

וּ בְּסֹדֶר כ"ב (פסוק כג) כְּתִיב: "וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְכָל אֲבֹת אַחִיךָ אֲשֶׁר תֵּאבֹד מִמֶּנּוּ וּמִצֵּאתָה, לֹא תֹכֵל לְהִתְעַלֵּם." וְהִתְלַמּוּדִים אָמְרוּ: הַמוֹצֵא מַעוֹת חִבְרוּ בְּבִתִּי כְּנִסְיוֹת וּבְבִתִּי מִדְּרָשׁוֹת, מְקוֹם שֶׁהֲרַפִּים מְצוּיִן שָׁם, הֵם שְׁלוֹ וְלֹא שֶׁל חִבְרוּ. וְכֵן אָמְרוּ: אֲבִידָה שֶׁשְּׁטָפָה הִנָּחַל, אֵין מוֹצֵאָה חַיִּב לְהִשְׁיבָה, כִּי הַפְּתוּב אָמַר: אֲשֶׁר תֵּאבֹד מִמֶּנּוּ וּמִצֵּאתָה - רוֹצֵה לֹמֵר, שִׁידַע מִמִּי נֶאֱבִידָה הָאֲבִידָה וּמִי הוּא מוֹצֵאָה; אֲבָל אִם יִשְׁטְפוּ הַמֵּים נִכְסֵי עֵיר אַחַת אוֹ עִירוֹת רַבּוֹת, הֲלֹא יֵשׁ שָׁם אֲבִידוֹת רַבּוֹת וּמוֹצֵאִים רַבִּים, אִם כֵּן בְּטֻלָּה מִצוֹת "אֲשֶׁר תֵּאבֹד מִמֶּנּוּ וּמִצֵּאתָה."

ז' בְּסֹדֶר כ"ד (פסוק א): "כִּי יִקַּח אִישׁ אִשָּׁה וּבִעֻלָּהּ, וְהָיָה אִם לֹא תִמְצָא חֵן בְּעֵינָיו כִּי מִצָּא בָּהּ עֲרוֹת דָּבָר וְכָתַב לָהּ סֵפֶר כְּרִיתוֹת." חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל פָּרְשׁוּ בְּ"עֲרוֹת דָּבָר" שֶׁהֲרָצוֹן בּוֹ אִם תִּהְיֶה מוֹרְדָת בְּאִשְׁתָּה אוֹ בַּעֲלַת מְדוֹת מְגִנּוֹת, אֵינָה שׁוֹמֶרֶת אֲמוּנָתָה, אוֹ שִׁיחֵיו בָּהּ מוֹמִין שְׁלֹא יוּכַל לְסַבֵּל בַּעֲלָהּ כְּגוֹן עוֹרוֹן גְּמוּר, סֶרְחוֹן הֶפֶה, וְדוּמִיָּהֶם. אֲבָל הִתְלַמּוּדִים אָמְרוּ: אֲפֹלוּ הַקִּדְיָחָה תִּבְשִׁילָה, אֲפֹלוּ מִצָּא נָאָה הִימָנָה.

ח' בְּסֹדֶר כ"ה (פסוק ב) כְּתִיב: "וְהָיָה אִם בֵּן הַפּוֹת הֲרָשָׁע וְהַפִּילוּ הַשֹּׁפֵט וְהִכְהוּ לִפְנֵינוּ כִּדִּי רִשְׁעָתוֹ בַּמִּסְפָּר. אֲרַבְעִים יִכְּנוּ, לֹא

verses], it is absolutely clear that only after one fulfills the conditions [bringing her into his house, cutting her nails, and more] is it permitted to sleep with her; but before fulfilling the conditions, it is forbidden. But [the Rabbanites] permit one act of sex before fulfilling the conditions.

6 In chapter 22, it is written: *and with every lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself* (Deuteronomy 22:3). But the Talmudites say: If one finds someone else's coins in the synagogue or the house of study, a place where many people are found, then they belong to [the finder], and not to the other person.^{xxxii} And they say: If a lost item has drowned in a river, then the person that finds it is not obligated to return it; for Scripture says which he hath lost and thou hast found, which [they interpret as meaning] that one must know who has lost the item and who has found it; but if water comes and drenches the possessions of a whole city, or many cities, then there are many lost items, and many finders, and, therefore, the commandment which he hath lost and thou hast found is inoperative.

7 In chapter 24 [it is written]: *When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some nakedness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house* (Deuteronomy 24:1). Our sages, of blessed memory, explained the words *found some nakedness* as meaning that she has betrayed her husband; or she has bad character traits and is faithless; or she has physical blemishes that her husband cannot stand, such as complete blindness, foul breath, or the like. But the Talmudites say: even if she has burned his food, or even if he has found a prettier woman than she is.^{xxxiii}

8 In chapter 25, it is written: *And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and*

יוסיף" - והם אמרו שלא יפה ארבעים שלמים אלא פחות אחת, במנין פסוק "והוא רחום" שלש פעמים.

ט עוד בסדר כ"ה (פסוק ה) כתוב: "כי ישבו אחים יחדו ומת אחד מהם וכן אין לו לא תהיה אשת המת החוצה לאיש זר יבמה יבא עליה ולקחה לו לאשה ויבמה". וגו'. התלמודיים אמרו כי האחים אחים אמתיים, ולקחו ראייה מאונן בן יהודה, שישבם אשת ער אחיו, כפתיב ספר א' סימן ל"ח (פסוק ח). אבל חכמינו ז"ל טענו להם כי אין לקחת ראייה מער ואונן, כי זה היה קדם מתן תורה; והלא גם שתי אחיות מתר היה לשאת קדם מתן תורה, כי יעקב נשא שתי אחיות, ועמרם נשא דודתו. אבל אחר מתן תורה נאסר הדבר. והנה מאחר שהתורה הזהירה בספר ג' סימן יח (פסוק טז), במאמר "ערוות אשת אחיך לא תגלה, ערוות אחיך היא", וכן בסדר כ' (פסוק כא) אמר "ואיש אשר יקח את אשת אחיו, נדה היא, ערוות אחיו גלה, ערירים יהיו" - איך תבוא התורה במקום אחר ותתיר מה שאסרה כבר? כי תהיה סתירה בדברי התורה! על כן חכמינו אמרו

to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed . . . (Deuteronomy 25:2–3). But [the Rabbanites] say that one should not give a full forty lashes, but one fewer [*i.e.*, 39],^{xxxiv} three times the number of the words in the verse: *But he, being merciful* (Psalms 78:38).⁶¹

9 Further in chapter 25, it is written: *If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her* (Deuteronomy 25:5). The Talmudites write that this means actual [biological] brothers, and they bring evidence from Onan son of Judah, who performed levirate marriage with the widow of his brother Er, as is written in the first book [Genesis], chapter 35. But our sages, of blessed memory, argue against them that we cannot bring evidence from Er and Onan, for they were before the giving of the Torah. After all, it was also permitted to marry two sisters⁵⁵ before the giving of the Torah, for Jacob married two sisters. And Amram married his aunt,⁶² but this was forbidden after the giving of the Torah. Now, the Torah prohibits [a man from marrying his brother's wife], in the third book [Leviticus], chapter 18, in the verse: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness* [Leviticus 18:16]; and again in chapter 20: *And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless* [Leviticus 20:20]. So how could the Torah come in another place and permit what it has already forbidden? That would be a contradiction in the words of the Torah! Therefore, our sages say that the verse [in

61 According to the Mishna as it appears in the printed Babylonian Talmud, Makkoth 22b, this verse from Psalms is recited by a member of the court while the lashes are being administered.

62 See Exodus 6:20; Amram and his aunt Jochebed were the parents of Moses.

כִּי כֹונֶת הַכֶּתוּב בְּאַחֵי מִשְׁפָּחָהּ, בְּמִשְׁלֵי שְׁנֵי בָשָׁנִי אוֹ שְׁלִישֵׁי
 בְּשְׁלִישֵׁי אוֹ דוֹדוֹ הַקָּרוֹב בְּמִשְׁפָּחָתוֹ. וְרֵאִיתָם שֶׁל חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל
 מַעֲנִין רוֹת הַמוֹאבִּיָּה, שְׁלִקְחָהּ בְּעֵז הַנְּשִׂיא, וְהוּא לֹא הָיָה אָח
 אֲמִתִּי לְמַחֲלוֹן בֶּן אֱלִימֶלֶךְ, אֲלֵא^מ אָח מִשְׁפָּחָהּ הָיָה. וְכֵן אָמְרוּ
 חֲכָמֵינוּ ז"ל, מֵאַחֵר שֶׁהִיבֹוס נְתִלָּה עַל הַנְּחִלָּה בְּאַדָּעַן יִשְׂדֵּאֵל,
 פְּטוּרִים אָנוּ מִהַמְצוּה הַזֹּאת בְּגָלוֹת. אֲבָל הַתְּלֻמוּדִים עוֹשִׂים
 חֲלִיצָה גַם בְּגָלוֹת, בְּאַחִים אֲמִתִּים.

Deuteronomy] refers to brethren of one clan, for example, first cousins, or second cousins, or an uncle who is close in his clan. And our sages bring evidence from the story of Ruth the Moabite, whom Boaz the chieftain married, for he was not a true brother of Maḥlon son of Elimelech, but they were only⁶³ brethren in the clan. And our sages said further that because levirate marriage is dependent on the inheritance in the Land of Israel, we are exempt from it in the exile. But the Talmudites perform the *ḥaliẓa* ceremony⁶⁴ even in the diaspora, for true brothers.

63 These words are found in all MSS, but missing from Ed. Neubauer.

64 To get out of levirate marriage (see Deuteronomy 25:7–10). Occasionally, even today, Rabbanites will perform actual levirate marriage, rather than the *ḥaliẓa* ceremony, but this is generally discouraged by the Rabbanite leaders, so it is rare; the author of *Levush Malkhuth* seems to be unaware of it.

אמר החכם המחבר זה הספר: עד הנה הגיעו המצות אשר נחלקו בהן הקראים והתלמודיים. ואף על פי שיש מחלוקת גם במצות אחרות, לא הביאותם, כי אין מחלוקתם^מ מביאה להפרד לשתי אמות. והנני כותב עוד ענינים שהאמינום התלמודיים ולא האמינום הקראים, כי הם מקעקעים יסודות התורה והאמונה; וקצתם אף על פי שאינם מקעקעים ממש, אין שפיטת השכל סובלת אתם, וטבע העולם אינו גוזר להמצאם, והם שקר גמור ושוא שאין לו רגלים. עד כאן דברי החכם הנזכר לעיל^{מח}, ועוד מתחיל ואומר: מט

בספר חמישי סימן ו' (פסוק ד) כתוב: "שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד." ובסימן ד' (פסוק טו) כתוב: "ונשמרתם מאד לנפשתיכם כי לא ראיתם כל תמונה ביום דבר ה' אליכם בחורב מתוך האש." וזאת היא אמונת ישראל, כי הבורא יתברך אחד מכל צד, ואין לו שום רבוי, לא בפעל ולא במחשבה, ולא יגדר בגדרים גשמיים, כי אין לו גוף ולא כח בגוף, כי הוא משלל מהגשמות וממשיגי הגשמות, ולא יתחלק ולא ישער בשום שיעור, לא בשעור פמות מתדיק ולא בשעור פמות מתפרק. אבל התלמודיים אמרו יש שתי רשויות, ששניהם נקראים בשם הנכבד והנורא, האחד הבורא יתברך שהוא ה' הגדול, והשני מטטרוז שר הפנים שנקרא ה' הקטן, וגם קורין אותו

The sage, the author [of this book], says: Up to here, [we have listed] the commandments about which the Karaites and Talmudites disagree. And though there are also debates about other commandments, I have not included them here, for those debates do not cause us to be two peoples. Now I will write about further matters, which the Talmudites believe, but the Karaites do not, for these beliefs tear down the foundations of Torah and faith, or, in some cases, do not tear down [foundations], but nonetheless are intolerable to a logical mind, and the nature of the universe does not allow their existence, and they are complete falsehood and baseless lies. Thus far, the [introductory] words of the above-mentioned sage.⁶⁵ [And then] he begins and says:

In the fifth book [Deuteronomy], chapter 6, it is written: *Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord* [Deuteronomy 6:4]. And in chapter 4, it is written: *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire* [Deuteronomy 4:15]. And this is the faith of Israel: the Creator, blessed be He, is one, from all aspects, and He has no multiplicity, whether in deed or in thought, and He cannot be defined by physical boundaries, for he has no body, and no bodily force, for He is utterly lacking any physicality or anything that physicality can touch. And he cannot be divided, nor can He be estimated by any quantitative estimate, neither of amount nor of number. But the Talmudites say that there are two powers, which are each called by the dignified awesome Name; one is the Creator, who is the Great Name [the Great Y · H · W · H], and the other is Metatron, the Prince of [God's] Presence, who is called the Lesser Name [the Lesser Y · H · W · H],

65 This sentence, with its reference to the author as “the above-mentioned sage,” is clearly the insertion of a later copyist.

שְׂדֵי, וְאָמְרוּ: שְׁמוּ כְּשֵׁם רַבּוֹ. וְהָלֹא הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ אֲמַר בְּסִפְּר
שְׁנֵי סִימָן ג' (פסוק טו): "זֶה שְׁמִי לְעֹלָם וְזֶה זִכְרִי לְדֹר וָדֹר". וַיִּשְׁעִיָּה
אָמַר, סִימָן מ"ב (פסוק ח): "אֲנִי ה' הוּא שְׁמִי, וְכִבְדִּי לְאַחֵר לֹא
אֶתֶּן."

וְהֵם נָתַנוּ שְׁעוֹר לְיוֹצֵר הָעוֹלָם יִתְבָּרֵךְ. אָמְרוּ:

רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל כִּהֵן גָּדוֹל וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָה חֲבֵרוֹ, כְּשֶׁעָלוּ לַמָּדוּס
רָאוּ לְיוֹצֵר הַכֹּל יוֹשֵׁב בְּכִסֵּאוֹ. ^[13] וְקָרְבוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם לִפְנֵיו, וּבָאוּ
הַמַּלְאָכִים לְדַחֲפָם לָאָרֶץ, וְה' גָּעַר בָּם וְאָמַר לָהֶם: הִנֵּיחוּ
לְזִקְנֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל, שֶׁהוּא כָּשֵׁר לִפְנֵי לְשִׁרְתָּנִי מִכֶּם! וְגַם
לְזִקְנֵי זֶה רִזִּי לִי וְאֶגְלֶהוּ לְמַטְטְרוֹן מִשְׁרָתִי וְנַעֲרִי זֶה, וְהוּא
יְגַלֶּה לְזִקְנֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל. וְאִזּוּ בָּא מַטְטְרוֹן וְגִלְּהוּ ה' שְׁעוֹר
קוֹמָתוֹ, וְהוּא גִלְּהוּ לְזִקְנֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל, וְרַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל
לְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָה. וְזֶהוּ הַשְּׁעוֹר: אָמְרוּ כִּי רָאִשוּ עָגַל וְשְׁעוֹרוֹ
שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אֲלָפִים פְּרָסָאוֹת. וּפְרָסָאוֹת אֵלֶיךָ מִדָּתֶךָ שְׁמֹנֶה
מִלִּין בְּמִדַּת אֲמֵת בֶּן אָדָם, (וְכָל פְּרָסָא) ¹⁴ וְכָל מִיל אַרְבַּעַת
אֲלָפִים אֲמָה, כָּל אֲמָה אַרְבַּע זֵרוֹת בְּזֵרוֹת אֲמֵת ¹⁵ בֶּן אָדָם.
זֵרוֹתוֹ שֶׁל יוֹצֵר מְקֻצָּה מְזֻרָח וְעַד קֶץ מַעֲרָב. מִצָּחוֹ - אֲרָכּוֹ
וְרַחְבּוֹ י"ב אֲלָפִים רְבוֹת מִפְּרָסָאוֹת בְּנֵי אָדָם. שְׁחָדוֹת עֵינָיו
שֶׁל יְמִינוֹ וְשְׁמָאלוֹ שְׁנֵי רְבּוּא וְאֲלָפִים וְחֲמִשׁ פְּרָסָאוֹת; לְבָן
עֵינָיו שְׁתֵּי רְבּוּבוֹת וְאֲלָפִים אֲמוֹת בְּאֲמֵת אִישׁ. שְׁעוֹר לְשׁוֹנוֹ
עִם גָּדֹל זָקְנוֹ מְקֻצָּה עוֹלָם וְעַד קֻצָּה הָעוֹלָם. שְׁכֻמוֹ הֵימָנִי

and they call [Meṭatron] also “Shaddai,” and say that his name is like that of his Master.^{xxxv} But does not the Creator, blessed be He, say in the second book [Exodus], chapter 3: *This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations* [Exodus 3:15]? And in chapter 42 of Isaiah: *I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another* [Isaiah 42:8].

And [the Rabbanites] give a measurement of the Creator of the Universe, blessed be He. For [they say, in their work *Shi’ur Qoma*]:

R. Ishmael the High Priest and R. ‘Aqiva, his colleague, ascended to heaven, and they saw the Creator of all, sitting on His throne.^{56} The two of them drew near to them, and the angels tried to push them away to earth. [But] the Lord rebuked [the angels], and said to them: “Leave the old man R. Ishmael alone, for I find him more proper to serve me than you are. And for this old man, my secret is mine, and I will reveal it to Meṭatron, this servant and boy of mine, and he will reveal it to the old man, R. Ishmael.” Then Meṭatron came, and the Lord revealed the measurement of His height to him, and he revealed it to the old man, R. Ishmael, and R. Ishmael to R. ‘Aqiva. And [the Rabbanites] say that this is the measurement: His head is round, and it measures 300,000 parasangs, and these parasangs measure 8 *mil* in human measurements; (and each parasang)⁶⁶ and each *mil* measure 4,000 cubits; and every cubit measures four hand-spans in the hand-span of a human arm. The hand-span of the Creator is from the farthest east to the farthest west. His forehead is 1,200,000 parasangs of humans. The eyeballs of His right and left [eyes] are [each] 22,005 parasangs; the whites of His eyes are 22,000 cubits of human cubits. His tongue, along with His great beard, measures from one edge of the universe to the other. His right shoulder, and the width to His left shoulder, are

66 Though these words appear in Ed. Neubauer and in all MSS, they seem to be a mistake, and should be omitted.

וּרְחַבּוֹ עַד שְׁמָאלוֹ שֵׁשׁ רִבְבוֹת פְּרָסָאוֹת. זְרוּעוֹתָיו מִדַּת שְׁתֵּי
 יָדָיו י"ב אֲלָפִים רִבְבוֹת פְּרָסָאוֹת. מַדּוֹת שֶׁל שְׁתֵּי הַכַּתְּפוֹת
 שִׁבְעָה אֲלָפֵי רִבְבוֹת פְּרָסָאוֹת. מַדּוֹת אֲצַבְעוֹתָיו מֵהֵן יִתְּרוֹת
 מֵהֵן חֲסֵרוֹת, עֵבֶין וּגְדִלָן אֲלָפִים רִבְבוֹת פְּרָסָאוֹת, הָאֲחֵרוֹת
 קְטָנוֹת וַחֲסֵרוֹת עֶשְׂרֵת אֲלָפִים פְּרָסָאוֹת. גּוֹיָתוֹ מְשַׁכְּמוֹ
 עַל צִדּוֹ שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים רְבּוּא פְּרָסָאוֹת וַחֲמִשָּׁת אֲלָפִים
 פְּרָסָאוֹת. יְרֵכֵי רַגְלָיו כ"ד אֶלֶף רִבְבוֹת פְּרָסָאוֹת. אֲרַבְּבוֹתָיו
 י"ב אֶלֶף רְבּוּא פְּרָסָאוֹת וְאֶלֶף פְּרָסָה. בְּרַפִּים עַד קְרִסְלִים
 תִּשְׁעָה אֲלָפִים רְבּוּא פְּרָסָאוֹת וַחֲמִשׁ פְּרָסָה. אֶרֶךְ רַגְלוֹ
 עַד קֶץ קְרִסְלוֹ אֶלֶף רְבּוּא פְּרָסָאוֹת וַחֲמִשׁ אֲלָפִים פְּרָסָה
 פְּרָסָאוֹתָיו עִם כָּל אֲצַבְעוֹתָיו מִמְּזִרְחַ עַד מַעֲרֵב. וְרַב נָתַן
 (ל) תִּלְמִידוֹי שֶׁל רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעְיָאל אָמַר שֶׁמִּדַּת חוֹטְמוֹ שֶׁל יוֹצֵר
 מִסֵּר מְטָרוֹן לִישְׁמַעְיָאל. וְשִׁפְתוֹתָיו - אֶרְכָּן חֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת
 אֲלָפִים פְּרָסָאוֹת, וְרַחְבָּן חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף פְּרָסָאוֹת.

וְאָמַר רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעְיָאל: רָאִיתִי אֶבְתְּרִיאֵל יְה' ה' צְבָאוֹת וְנִעֲנַע לִי
 רָאִשׁוֹ, וְאָמַר: "בְּרַכְנִי, בְּנִי יִשְׁמַעְיָאל."

60,000 parasangs of His arms. The measure of His two hands is 12,000 myriad parasangs. The measure of His two shoulders is 70 million parasangs. The measurement of His fingers [is variable], some are longer and some are shorter; their width and size is 20 million parasangs; and the other ones, which are shorter, are 20,000 parasangs. His torso, from His shoulder on His side, is 30 million and five parasangs. The thighs of His legs are 240 million parasangs; His knees are 120 million and 1,000 parasangs. [The distance from] His knees through His ankles is 900 million and five parasangs. The length of His legs [or: feet] through the edge of His ankles is 100 million and five parasangs, [of] His parasangs, including the extent of His fingers from east to west. And Rav Nathan, the student of R. Ishmael, said that the measurement of the Creator's nose was transmitted by Meṭaṭron to Ishmael; and His lips are 500,000 parasangs long and 50,000 parasangs wide.⁶⁷

And R. Ishmael said: I saw Akkathriel Yah Y · H · W · H Sabaoth [=of Hosts], and He nodded to me with His head, and said: "Bless me, O my son Ishmael."⁶⁸

67 For all this material, see the *Shi'ur Qoma* literature. There are various texts and recensions in this literature; it is not widely transmitted among Rabbanites, nor considered as authoritative as the Talmud and classical midrashim; rather, it is transmitted, in various forms, among the members of various mystical circles. For an academic collection of *Shi'ur Qoma* texts, see: Martin Samuel Cohen, ed., *The Shi'ur Qomah: Texts and Recensions*, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1985.

Karaite attacks on *Shi'ur Qoma* literature are old, going back to the tenth-century Karaite author Salmon ben Yeruḥim, *Milḥamoth Adonai* (ed. Israel Davidson, New York, 1934, p. 125). Note that in addition to the Karaite opposition, there were also Rabbanite authors that fiercely attacked *Shi'ur Qoma* literature, most prominently Maimonides, who writes that it is a great deed "to erase this book, and cut off any memory of it" (*Responsa of Maimonides*, ed. J. Blau, Jerusalem: Meqizé Nirdamim, 1958, §117, pp. 200 f.).

68 This statement of R. Ishmael appears in the Babylonian Talmud, Bera-khoth 7a.

וְאֵלֹהֵי הַהֶבְלִים כְּתוּבִים קֶצֶתָם בְּמִסְכַּת חֲגִיגָא וּקֶצֶתָם בְּבִבְא
 בַּתְּרָא וּקֶצֶת בְּמִסְכַּת יוֹמָא. וְהֵלֵא הַנְּבִיא יִשְׁעִיָּה צִוָּח וְאָמַר
 בְּסִימָן מ'י^ד (פסוק יח): "וְאֵל מִי תִדְמִיּוּן אֵל, וּמִה דְמוּת תַּעֲרֹכוּ
 לוֹ"; (פסוק כה): "וְאֵל מִי תִדְמִיּוּנִי וְאַשּׁוּה - יֹאמַר קָדוֹשׁ". וְהַבּוֹרָא
 יִתְפַּרֵּךְ אָמַר לְמֹשֶׁה (שמות לג:כ): "כִּי לֹא יֵרָאֵנִי הָאָדָם וְחִי."
 וְהַחֲוֹתֵם הַנְּבוּאָה אָמַר (מלאכי ג:ח): "הֵיקָבַע אָדָם אֱלֹהִיו"^נ וְגו'.

עוֹד אָמְרוּ כִּי הַבּוֹרָא יִתְפַּרֵּךְ פַּעַם נִרְאָה בַּחוּד וּפַעַם זָקֵן.
 וְאָמְרוּ שֶׁהַמִּלֻּאֲכִים מְמַנִּים עַל כָּל אֶבֶר וְאֶבֶר שֶׁל הַשֵּׁם יִתְפַּרֵּךְ.
 וְאָמְרוּ שֶׁמִּטְטְרוֹן הוּא חֲנוּךְ, וְהוּא קוֹשֶׁר תְּפִלִּין בְּרֹאשׁוֹ שֶׁל
 הַבּוֹרָא יִתְפַּרֵּךְ, וְשֶׁהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מַתְּעֵטֵף בְּטִלִּית לְבָן וְעֵסֶק
 בַּתְּלָמוּד, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵךְ בְּטִלִּית אָדָם וְעֵסֶק בְּדַבְרֵי נְבִיאִים, וְשֶׁהוּא
 יִתְפַּרֵּךְ מִלְּמוֹד נַפְשׁוֹת שֶׁל תִּינוּקוֹת הַמֵּתוֹת.^נ וְחֲנוּךְ, שֶׁהוּא
 מִטְטְרוֹן, יֵשׁ לוֹ פֶּסֶא כְּמוֹ לִדְבוֹ, וְיוֹשֵׁב עָלָיו וּמְקַטִּיר נַפְשׁוֹת
 הַצְּדִיקִים בְּמִזְבֵּחַ שֶׁל מַעֲלָה.

וּבְמִסְכַּת עֲבוּדָה זָרָה אָמְרוּ כִּי רוּחוֹת שָׂאִין הַזְּגוּת תְּלָמוּד -
 מִטְטְרוֹן וּמִכֵּאל הַשֵּׁר הַגָּדוֹל שׁוֹרְפִין אֹתוֹ בָּאֵשׁ וּמְקַטִּידִין אֹתוֹ
 כְּרִיחַ נִיחוּת. וְאָמְרוּ כִּי הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בּוֹכָה בְּכָל יוֹם וּמוֹדִיד
 שָׁלֹשׁ דְּמָעוֹת, וְאָמַר: "אֲוִי לִי שֶׁהִתְחַבְּבְתִּי אֶת פִּיתִי וְהִגֵּלִיתִי אֶת
 בִּנְיִי", וַיְמִינֵנו הַשֵּׁיב לְאַחֲזָרֵינוּ, וּמִתְאַפֵּל עַל עַמּוֹ בְּאַרְבֶּךָ גְּלוּתָם,
 וּמִלֻּאֲכֵינוּ בּוֹכִים עַמּוֹ בְּצָרָתוֹ, שָׂאִינוּ יָכוֹל לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת עַמּוֹ.

And these nonsensical ideas are written [in various places in the Babylonian Talmud]; some in Tractate Ḥagiga,⁶⁹ and some in Tractate Bava Bathra, and some in Tractate Yoma. But did not Isaiah cry out and say, in chapter 40: *To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?* [. . .] *To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One* (Isaiah 40:18, 25). And the Creator, blessed be He, said to Moses: *for there shall no man see me, and live* [Exodus 33:20]. And the seal of prophecy [that is, the last prophet, Malachi] says: *Will a man establish God?* [Malachi 3:8].

[The Rabbanites] say further that the Creator, blessed be He, has been seen sometimes as a young man and sometimes as an old man. And they say that [there are] angels appointed over each limb of God. And they say that Meṭaṭron is Enoch, and that he ties *tefillin* on the head of the Creator, blessed be He, and that God enwraps himself in a white *ṭalleth* [long rectangular cloak] and studies Talmud, and then in a red *ṭalleth*, and studies the words of the Prophets, and that He, blessed be He, teaches the souls of dead children.⁷⁰ ^{57} And Enoch, who is Meṭaṭron, has a throne, just as his Master does; and he sits on it, and burns the souls of the righteous on the heavenly altar.

And in Tractate 'Avoda Zara, they say about the souls that do not study Talmud that Meṭaṭron and Michael the Great Prince burn them in fire, and offer them as a sweet savor. And they say that God cries every day, and sheds three tears, and says: "Woe unto me, for I have destroyed My House and exiled My children." And he places His right hand behind Him [so that He cannot use it to redeem His people], and bewails the long exile of His people, and His angels cry with Him, because of His sorrow that He is unable to rescue

69 There is a whole section of this tractate devoted to theological traditions and discussions, on folios 11b–16a.

70 Cf. traditions in the Babylonian Talmud, 'Avoda Zara 3b.

וְהָלֹא יִשְׁעִיהוּ הַנָּבִיא בְּסֹדֶר נ"ט (פסוקים א-ב) צֹחַ וְאוֹמֵר: "הֵן לֹא קָצְרָה יָד ה' מִהוֹשִׁיעַ, וְלֹא כָבְדָה אֶזְנוֹ מִשְׁמוֹעַ. כִּי אִם עֲוֹנֹתֵיכֶם הָיוּ מִבְדָּלִים בֵּינֵכֶם לְבֵין אֱלֹהֵיכֶם", וְכָל הַפֶּרֶק הַהוּא. הָאִסִּי הוּא יִתְבָּרֵךְ חֹסֵר לְכָל דְּבַר מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהַחֲרִיב אֶת בֵּיתוֹ, אוֹ אִם בָּא לוֹ שׁוֹם שְׁנוֹי מִזֶּה, חֲלִילָה, עַד שִׁיתֶּאֱבֵל וַיִּבְכֶּה וַיִּצְטַעַר?! וְכֵן, הָאִם הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ נִבְרָא מֵאַחֲרִים, עַד שֶׁיִּצְטַרֵּךְ שִׁיְהִיו מִמֵּנִים עַל אֵיבָרָיו?! וְכֵן, הָאִם יֵשׁ עֲלִיוֹן מִמֶּנּוּ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ, שִׁיְצִיָּה לוֹ לְשִׁמּוֹר מִצּוֹתָיו, וְשֶׁלֹּא יִנְיַח מִצּוֹתָיו יִנְיַח תְּפִלִּין בְּרֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּלְבֹּשׁ טְלִית בְּעִיצִית?! הֲלֹא הֵשֵׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ צֹהֵא אֵלָיו הַמִּצּוֹת לְאִנְשִׁים, כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁכַּחוּ מִצּוֹתָיו, שֶׁהֵם חִיבִים לַעֲשׂוֹת מִצּוֹת קוֹנֵיהֶם, אֲבָל הוּא יִתְבָּרֵךְ אֵין עָלָיו עֲלִיוֹן שִׁיְצִיָּה לוֹ מִצּוֹת, וַיִּצְטַרֵּךְ כְּדֵי לְשַׁמְרֵם בְּזִכְרוֹנוֹ לְהַנִּיחַ תְּפִלִּין וְלִלְבֹּשׁ טְלִית! אֵין זֶה אֱלֹא נִשְׁאָר^ט בְּיָדָם מִהַבְּלִי נִבְיָאִי הַשֶּׁקֶר הַמַּהֲבִילִים אֶת הָעָם בְּשִׁקְרֵיהֶם וּבְפַחֲזוּתָם אֲשֶׁר בַּעֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶם חָרַב בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ שֶׁהוּא בֵּית קֹדֶשְׁנוֹ וְתַפְאֲרָתָנוּ. כֵּן בַּעֲוֹנוֹת הַזֵּיווֹתֵיהֶם שֶׁל אֱלֹו מִתְאַדְכֶּת גְּלוּתָנוּ, וְכֵן הִיָּה גַם בְּזִמְנִים קִדְמוֹנִים, בְּמַלְכוּת אֲפָרַיִם אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְרוֹן, כְּדִכְתִּיב, מַלְכִּים ב' יז (פסוק ט): "וַיַּחֲפְאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּבָרִים^{יח} אֲשֶׁר לֹא כֵן עַל ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם" וגו', וּכְתִיב אַחֲרָיו (פסוק יח): "וַיִּתְאַנֶּף ה' מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּסְרֵם מֵעַל פָּנָיו", וּכְתִיב אַחֲרָיו (פסוק כ): "וַיִּמָּאֵס ה' בְּכָל זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲנֵם וַיִּתְּנֵם בְּיַד שָׂסִים עַד אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁלִיכֶם מִפָּנָיו."

His people.⁷¹ [This is what the Rabbanites say; but] doesn't Isaiah the prophet cry out, in chapter 59: *Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God* [Isaiah 59:1–2] – and that whole chapter. But is He lacking anything, because He has destroyed His House, and has any change occurred to Him from this – heaven forbid [that we should believe such a thing]! – such that He would mourn and cry and feel sorry?! And has the Creator been created by others, such that He would need [angels] appointed over His limbs?! And is there anyone above Him, who would command Him to keep their commandments, and to wear *tefillin* on his head, and wear a *talleth* with *zizith*, in order to remember [the commandments]?! Did not God command these commandments to men, so that they would not forget His commandments, for they are obligated to keep the commandments of their Maker? But He has no one above Him to command Him, such that He would need to keep the commandments in His memory by wearing *tefillin* and a *talleth*. All this is like the other [claims] in the hands [of the Rabbanites], from the nonsense of the false prophets, who wantonly lie to cause the people to hold nonsensical [beliefs] and due to their sins, the Temple was destroyed, which had been our holy, glorious house. And it is on account of these sinful hallucinations of these people that our exile is prolonged. This happened also in olden times, in the Kingdom of Ephraim, which was [based] in Samaria, as written in 11 Kings 17: *And the children of Israel invented things about the Lord their God, which were not true* [11 Kings 17:9]; and afterwards, it says: *Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight* [11 Kings 17:17]; and after that it says: *And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight* [11 Kings 17:20].

71 This tradition is found in the Babylonian Talmud, Berakhoth 3a.

עוד אמונתנו היא כי הבורא יתברך לבדו ברא כל העולם, ולא עזר לו שום דבר לברוא כלו או קצתו, וכך אין שום בריה יכולה לברוא דבר זולתו יתברך. והם אמרו: אין הקדוש ברוך הוא עושה דבר אלא נמלך בפמליא של מעלה. ואמרו כי בחכמה נמלך השם יתברך, על פן פתיב: (משלי ג: יט) "ה' בחכמה יסד ארץ" וגו'. וכן אמרו במסכת סנהדרין שאם היו החכמים רוצים, היו בוראים עולם. וכן אמרו שרבא ברא אדם אחד ושלחו לפני רבי זירא, והיה רבי זירא שואל ממנו שאלות, ולא השיב לו. אמר לו רבי זירא: "אחד מן חבורי חבד ברא אותך. שוב לעפרך!" וכן רבי הושעיה ורבי ^{נח} חנינא יושבים בכל ערב שבת, והיו עוסקין בהלכות של יצירה והיו בוראים עגלה בת שלש שנים, והיו אוכלים אותה. והנביא ישעיה בסימן מ' (פסוקים יג-יד) צוה: "מי תפן את רוח ה', ואיש עצתו יודיענו? את מי נועץ ויבינהו וילמדהו בארח משפט וילמדהו דעת ודרך תבונות יודיענו." וכן בסימן מ"ד (פסוק כד) הוא אומר: "אנכי ה' עשה כל נטה שמים לבדי רקע הארץ מאתי." ובסדר מ"ג (פסוק י) פתיב: "למען תדעו ותאמינו לי ותבינו פי אני הוא, לפני לא נוצר אל ואחרי לא יהיה" - שפרשו: לפני אין נוצר של שום אל, ואחרי בראי העולם לא יהיה בורא אחר. וכן בסימן מ"ד (פסוק ח) פתיב: "היש אלוה מבלעדי ואין עוד בל

Another [article of] our faith is that the Creator created the whole universe on His own, and nothing helped Him create either all or part of it; and that no other creature can create anything, other than He. But [the Rabbanites] say that God does not do anything without consulting with the heavenly council [*pamalya shel ma'la*]; and they say that God consulted with Wisdom, and that this is why Scripture says: *The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth* [Proverbs 3:19]. And they say in Tractate Sanhedrin that, if the [Rabbanite] sages wanted, they could create a universe. And they say that Rava created a man, and sent him to R. Zera, and R. Zera asked [the created man] questions, but he did not respond; so R. Zera said to him: "One of the charm-workers created you! Go back to your dust!" And that R. Hosha'ya and R. ^{58} Ḥanina used to sit every Friday afternoon and study "the laws of creation" [*hilkhoth yezira*]; and they would create a three-year-old calf, and eat it.⁷² Yet, Isaiah the Prophet cries out in chapter 40: *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?* (Isaiah 40:13–14). And in chapter 44, he says: *Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by Myself* [Isaiah 44:24]. And in chapter 43: *that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after Me* [Isaiah 43:10]; this means that "before Me, there was nothing formed by any god; and now that I have created the universe, there will be no other creator." And in chapter 44, it is written: *Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any* [Isaiah 44:8]; this

⁷² Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 65b.

יִדְעָתִי" - רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר: אֵין שׁוֹם בּוֹרָא וּמִמְצִיא שְׁלֵא אִדְעָהוּ וְשִׁיחִיהָ יָכוֹל לְהִמְצִיא שׁוֹם בְּרִיהָ.

עוֹד אֲמוֹנָתָנוּ בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם שֶׁהִיא מִכַּת הַמַּלְאָכִים; וּכְשֶׁתִּנְהַג כְּפִיט הַכְּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה בַּעֲוֹדָה בְּגוֹפָה, תִּשׁוּב לְמִקּוֹמָהּ לְאוֹר בְּאוֹר חַיִּים; וְאִם תִּתְחַטֵּא, תִּנְזוֹף מִמִּקּוֹמָהּ וְלֹא תוּכַל לְהִגִּיעַ אֵלָיו עַד שֶׁיִּתְכַּפְּרוּ עֲוֹנוֹתֶיהָ, וְהִנְזוֹף הֵהוּא יֵאָדָךְ לֵה כְּפִי רֹב וְגָדֹל עֲוֹנוֹתֶיהָ. וְהִנְזוֹף הֵהוּא נִקְרָא בְּכִי הַחֲכָמִים גִּיהֲנוּם.^פ כִּי הִנְזוֹף לְדַבֵּר רוּחָנִי יוֹתֵר צָעַר גָּדוֹל מִכָּל הָעֲנוּיִם שֶׁיִּסְבֵּל הַגּוֹף. וְנֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם יִשְׁנֶה קֹדֶם בְּרִיאַת הַגּוֹף, וְנִשְׁאַרְתָּ אַחֲרֵי מוֹת הַגּוֹף, אִם לְעֹנֵג אִם לְצָעַר, וְאֵין מִטְבְּעָה לְהִפְסֵד לְגִמְרִי. אֲבָל נֶפֶשׁ הַבְּעִלִּי-חַיִּים אֲלֵמִים הִיא נִבְרָאת בְּהִבְרָא הַגּוֹף, וְגַם נִפְסַדְתָּ בְּהִפְסֵד הַגּוֹף, וְאֵין לְנֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם שׁוֹם הַתִּיחָסוֹת עִם נֶפֶשׁ הַבְּעִלִּי-חַיִּים אֲלֵמִים, כִּי הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ הוּא חָכֵם וְיוֹדֵעַ כָּל דָּבָר לְמָה הוּא רָאוּי, וְלֹא יִתֵּן דָּבָר שְׂאִינוֹ רָאוּי לְדַבֵּר שְׂאִינוֹ רָאוּי. עַל כֵּן נֶפֶשׁ הַבְּהִמּוֹת נִתֵּן לָגוֹף מְכַעַר וְגַם בְּהִרְכָּבָתוֹ, אֲבָל גּוֹף הָאָדָם מְרַכֵּב מִהַחֲמֹד הַיּוֹתֵר זָךְ וְהַיּוֹתֵר מְשַׁבֵּחַ, עַל כֵּן הַשֶּׁכִּין בְּתוֹכוֹ נֶפֶשׁ רוּחָנִית קְדוּשָׁה. וְעַל כֵּן אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה (קֹהֶלֶת ג:כא): "מִי יוֹדֵעַ רוּחַ בְּנֵי הָאָדָם" הָעֵלָה הִיא לְמַעְלָה, וְרוּחַ הַבְּהִמָּה הַיּוֹרֶדֶת הִיא לְמַטָּה. "אֲבָל הַתְּלִמוּדִים מְאֵמְרִים כִּי נֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם אַחֲרֵי מוֹתוֹ תִּתְגַּלְגַּל לְבְּהִמּוֹת וּלְחַיּוֹת וּלְעוֹפוֹת, אוֹ לְאִישׁ אֶחָד מִהָאֲנָשִׁים, וְכֵכָה תִּתְגַּלְגַּל עַד כְּמָה פְּעָמִים, עַד שֶׁיִּתְכַּפְּרוּ עֲוֹנוֹתָיו. וְאִפְלוֹ אוֹמְרִים שֶׁנִּפְשׁוֹת הַצְּדִיקִים מִתְגַּלְגְּלִים לְצְדִיקִים אֲחֵרִים לְלִמְדָם תּוֹרָה וְחֻכָּמָה, וְאוֹמְרִים כִּי אִפְלוֹ נֶפֶשׁ מֹשֶׁה רִבִּינוֹ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם הִיָּתָה מִתְגַּלְגֶּלֶת לְרַבֵּינֵיהֶם הַקְּדֻמוֹנִים, וְהִיא הִיָּתָה הַמְּלֻמֶּדֶת אֹתָם הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁבַעֲלָ פָּה. וְכֵן אוֹמְרִים שֶׁנִּפְשׁ הַצְּדִיק שִׁישׁ לוֹ

means that there is no other creator or inventor for me not to know, who could invent any creations.

Another [article of] our faith is that the human soul is a colleague of the angels, and that when it behaves in accordance with what is written in the Torah, while it is still [alive] in its body, then [after death] it will return to its place, to be illuminated by the light of life; but if it sins, it will be rebuffed from its place, and unable to reach it until its sins are expiated, and the length of this rebuffment will be in accordance with the severity and amount of the sins – and our sages call this rebuffment “Gehinnom.” For being rebuffed from a spiritual matter is greater distress than any pain that the body can suffer. And the human soul is present before the creation of the body and survives after the body’s death, whether to [experience] pleasure or pain; it is not in its nature to die entirely. On the other hand, the soul of dumb animals is created along with the body and dies when the body dies. The human soul has no relationship to the soul of dumb animals, for the Creator, blessed be He, is wise, and knows what is proper for everything, and He will not place something in something that is inappropriate for it. Therefore, He gave the animal soul to the body that is ugly also in its composition; but the human body is composed of purer and better matter, and, therefore, he placed the holy spiritual soul in it. Therefore, Solomon says: *Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?* [Ecclesiastes 3:21]. But the Talmudites believe that the human soul, after death, is reincarnated into wild and domestic mammals and birds, or into another person, and, thus, it is reincarnated several times, until its sins are expiated. They even say that the souls of the righteous are reincarnated into other righteous people, to teach them Torah and wisdom. They say that even Moses’s soul was reincarnated into their early teachers, and that it told them the Oral Torah. They also say that the soul of a righteous person that

מַעַט עֲוֹנוֹת תִּפְּנֹס בִּבְהֻמוֹת הַטְּהוֹרוֹת וּמִזְדֻּמְנוֹת לְהַשְׁחִיט עַל יְדֵי בִרְכָּה בַּיַּד יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאִזּוּ יוֹתֵר לֹא תִתְגַּלְגַּל, כִּי יֵצֵאֶה עַל יְדֵי בִרְכָּה. וְהִרְבּוּ לְהַשְׁרִישׁ אֱמוּנָה כּוֹזֶבֶת זוּ בִּינֵיהֶם עַד שֶׁפָּעַס אֶחָד בְּקִהְלָה אַחַת הָיָה כָּלֵב אֶחָד ^(נט) שׁוֹקֵד; כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהָיוּ הַקֹּהֵל בְּבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת הָיָה הַכָּלֵב שׁוֹכֵב בְּאַסְקֶפֶת בֵּית הַכְּנֶסֶת, וְאָמְרוּ שֵׁשׁ בַּכָּלֵב הָהוּא גִלְגּוּל נֶפֶשׁ מֵאִיזָה רַב, עַל כֵּן כִּשְׁנַפְגֵּר הַכָּלֵב קִבְּרוּהוּ בְּקִבְרוֹתָם.

עוֹד אוֹמְרִים כִּי עֲתִיד הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לַעֲשׂוֹת סְעוּדָה לַצַּדִּיקִים בְּגֵן עֵדֶן, וַיְבִיא שׁוֹר הַכֹּהֵן הַרְעָה אֶלֶף הָרִים בְּיוֹם אֶחָד, וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּהוּ; וַיְבִיא לוֹיִתָּן מֶלֶךְ כָּל הַדְּגִים וַיְכַיְנֶהוּ לָהֶם לֶאֱכִילָהּ, וַיִּשְׁאָר עוֹפּוֹת וּבִהֻמוֹת, וַיַּעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם מַחּוּל, וַיִּלְךְ עֲצָמוֹ הַבוּרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ לְרִקֵּד, וַעֲצָמוֹ יַעֲשֶׂה בִרְכַּת הַפֹּס וּבִרְכַּת הַמוֹצִיא, וְכָל הַצַּדִּיקִים יַעֲנוּ "אָמֵן", וְאַחֵר יַעֲנוּ הַרְשָׁעִים "אָמֵן", וּבִזְכוּת זֶה יִנְצְלוּ מִגִּיהֶנוֹם.^{סב}

עוֹד אוֹמְרִים כִּי הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּשָׁמַיִם, וּמִשְׁנֵי צַדִּיּוֹ יוֹשְׁבִים חֲכָמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלוֹמְדִים תַּלְמוּד, אֲבָל הַמְּלָאכִים עֹמְדִים לִפְנָיו. וּפָעַם אַחַת הָיְתָה פִּלְגָּתָא בְּשָׁמַיִם בְּעֵינֵי הַצַּרְעַת בְּבִהְרַת לְבָנָהּ, וְהַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אוֹמֵר טָמֵא, וְהֵם אוֹמְרִים טָהוֹר. וְלֹא הָיוּ מְקַבְּלִים נֶפְשׁוֹת הַצַּדִּיקִים אֶת דַּעְתּוֹ שֶׁל הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מִפְּנֵי כִּי הֵם הָיוּ רַבִּים וְהוּא יִתְבָּרֵךְ יַחִיד. כִּי הֵם חִקְקוּ חֹק לַעֲצָמָם, "יַחִיד וְרַבִּים הִלְכָה כְּרַבִּים", כִּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתַבְנוּ לְעִיל בְּסִפְּר

has a few sins will enter kosher animals, and thus be ready to be slaughtered, with a [liturgical] blessing, by a Jew, after which point it will undergo no more reincarnation, for it has exited with a blessing. They inculcate this false belief very much, to the extent that there was once an incident in one community, in which a dog ^{59} constantly lay in the foyer of the synagogue whenever the congregation was there, and they said that the dog had been reincarnated from some rabbi or other; when the dog died, they buried it in their cemetery.

Another [belief that] they state: At the end of days, God will make a feast for the righteous in Paradise, and He will bring the Wild Ox, which pastures on a thousand mountains in a single day, and He will slaughter [this ox]; and He will bring Leviathan, the king of all fish, and prepare it for their meal; and also other birds and beasts.⁷³ And He will make a dance for them, in which He – the Creator Himself – will participate.⁷⁴ And He Himself will recite the blessing over the wine, and the *Ha-mozi* blessing [over the bread], and all the righteous will respond “Amen.” And then all the wicked, [too,] will respond “Amen,” and through this they will merit to be spared from Gehinnom.

Another [belief that] they state: God sits in heaven, and on either side of Him are Jewish scholars, studying Talmud, while the angels stand in front of Him. One time,⁷⁵ there was a debate in heaven regarding skin-afflictions, [specifically the matter of] a clear white spot. God said that this was impure, but [the scholars in heaven] said that it was pure. These souls of the righteous did not want to accept God’s opinion, for they were the majority and He was an individual. For they have the established rule for themselves: when the majority [argue] with an individual,

73 Babylonian Talmud, Bava Bathra 75a.

74 Babylonian Talmud, Ta’anith 31a.

75 This whole story is from the Babylonian Talmud, Bava Mezi’a 86a.

שְׁנֵי בְּמִצְוַה תְּשִׁיעִית. עַל כֵּן צִוָּה הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ לְאַחַד מִמְּלָאכָיו
 לִירֹד לְעוֹלָם הַשָּׁפֵל לְקַחַת נַפְשׁוֹ שֶׁל רַבָּא בַּר נַחֲמָנִי, שְׂעֵדִין
 הָיָה חַי בְּגוֹפוֹ. בָּא הַמְּלָאךְ וְלֹא יָכַל לְקַחַת נִשְׁמָתוֹ מִפְּנֵי כִּי הָיָה
 יוֹשֵׁב וְלוֹמֵד. בָּא הַמְּלָאךְ וְאָמַר: "אֵינִי יָכֹל לְקַחַת נִשְׁמָתוֹ." אָמַר
 לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: "תַּעֲדִים עֲרֻמָּנוֹת וְהִקֵּם סַעֲרָה בְּרֹאשִׁי
 אֵילָנוֹת שְׂסָבִיב מוֹשְׁבִי שֶׁל רַבָּא בַּר נַחֲמָנִי, וְהוּא יִשְׁתַּפֵּל בְּסַעֲרָה
 וְיִשְׁתַּק מִלְּמוּדוֹ, וּבַעֲתָה הִיא תִּקַּח נִשְׁמָתוֹ." וַעֲשֵׂה הַמְּלָאךְ כֵּן,
 וְלִקַּח הַנִּשְׁמָה, וְהָיָה מוֹלִיכָה לְמָרוֹם. וּכְשֶׁהֲרִיגִישָׁה הַנִּשְׁמָה בְּדָבָר
 עַל מָה מַעֲלִין אֶתָּה לְמָרוֹם, הַתְּחִילָה לְזַעֵק, וְאָמַרְתָּ: "טְהוֹר,
 טְהוֹר!", כִּדִּי לַעֲזֹר לַחֲבֵרָיו. וְאֵז שֶׁחָק וְחִיךְ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ, וְאָמַר:
 "נִצְחוֹנִי בָנִי!" חָס הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ עַל גּוֹפוֹ שֶׁל רַבָּא בַּר נַחֲמָנִי
 שֶׁלֹּא יֵאכְלוּהוּ כָּלָבִים. כָּתַב אֲגָרַת וְהִפִּיל מִשְׁמַיִם אֶרֶץ, לְעִיר
 נְהַרְדְּעָא, כְּתוּב בְּתוֹכָהּ: "רַבָּא בַּר נַחֲמָנִי נִתְבַּקֵּשׁ לִישִׁיבָה
 אֲשֶׁר בְּשָׁמַיִם, לְהוֹכִיחַ בֵּין הַבּוֹרָא וְהַחֲכָמִים." מִיָּד צָמוּ אַנְשֵׁי
 נְהַרְדְּעָא וַחֲפָשׂוּ בְּגָאִיּוֹת וּבִהָרִים, וּמִצְאוּ גּוֹיָתוֹ, שֶׁהָיָה עוֹפּוֹת
 מְעוֹפְפוֹת וּמִגְנוֹת עָלָיו. יָשְׁבוּ אֵצֶל שְׂבַעַת יָמִים לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ
 כְּבוֹד. בִּקְשׁוּ לְהַפְרִיד מִמֶּנּוּ; נִפְלָה אֲגָרַת שְׁנִית, כְּתוּב בָּהּ: "כָּל
 מִי שִׁיפְרִיד מִכָּאן יִהְיֶה בְּשִׁמְתָא." יָשְׁבוּ עוֹד שְׁבַעַת יָמִים; נִפְלָה
 אֲגָרַת שְׁלִישִׁית, כְּתוּב בְּתוֹכָהּ: "עָלוּ לְשָׁלוֹם וּלְכוּ לֶכֶם." רָצָה
 הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ לְהַעֲלוֹת גּוֹיָתוֹ בְּסַעֲרָה הַשְּׁמִימָה לְהַגִּיד לְרַבִּים
 מַעֲלָתוֹ, וְהִקִּים רוּחַ סַעֲרָה לְשֹׂאת הַגּוֹיָה. וּכְשֶׁנִּסְעָרָה הַסַּעֲרָה,
 נִשְׁאַה {ס} לַעֲרָבִי אֶחָד שֶׁהָיָה גִּמְלָן עִם גִּמְלָן שְׁלוֹ וְהַעֲבִירוּ מֵעֵבֶר
 אֶחָד שֶׁל נְהַר פָּפָא לַעֲבֹרוֹ הַשְּׁנִי. שָׂאֵל הָעֲרָבִי הַגִּמְלָן לְשָׁבִים

the law follows the majority, as we have explained above, in the ninth commandment in the second book [Exodus]. Therefore, God instructed one of His angels to descend to the lower world, to take the soul of Rabba bar Nahmani, who was still alive in his body. The angel came, but was unable to take his soul because he was sitting and [engrossed in] study. The angel came [back to God], and said: "I am unable to take his soul." God told him: "Make a trick: cause a storm in the treetops that are around him, so he will pause from his study. At that moment, take his soul." So the angel did so, and took his soul, and brought it to heaven. When the soul realized what was happening [and] why they were bringing it to heaven, it began to scream and said "Pure, pure!" in order to support his colleagues [in the heavenly study-house]. Then God laughed and smiled, and said: "My children have defeated me!" God took concern that Rabba bar Nahmani's body not get eaten by dogs, so He wrote a letter, and threw it down from heaven to earth, to the city of Neharde'a; in it was written: RABBA BAR NAḤMANI HAS BEEN SUMMONED TO THE HEAVENLY STUDY-HOUSE IN ORDER TO RESOLVE [A DISPUTE] BETWEEN THE CREATOR AND THE SAGES. At once, the men of Neharde'a fasted, and they searched the valleys and mountains, and found his body, which was being protected by birds, which were hovering over it. [The men of Neharde'a] stayed there for seven days, in order to show honor [to the body of Rabba bar Nahmani]. When they wanted to take their leave, a second letter fell [from heaven], which said: ANYONE THAT LEAVES HERE WILL BE UNDER THE BAN. So they stayed there another seven days. Then a third letter fell [from heaven], which said: GET UP IN PEACE, AND HEAD ON YOUR WAYS. God wanted to bring his body up to heaven in a whirlwind, in order to tell people how great he was. So He produced a powerful whirlwind to bring the body up, and this powerful storm blew ^{60} a certain Arab, who was a camel driver, along with his camel; it blew them from one side of the River Pappa to the other

שם, ואמר: "מה זאת?" אמרו כי סערה זאת באה לקחת גויתו של רבא בר נחמני. צעק הגמל ואמר: אהי' ה' אלהים, אתה בראת רבא בר נחמני ואתה לקחתו, ולמה תחריב ארצך?" מיד שקטה הסערה.

כל זה כתוב בבבא בתרא. מי חכם לא ישחק לזה, שהברואים נעשו חכמים מבוראם!

עוד אמרו כי השמש והירח שניהם היו שוים בגדלתם בהבראם. הלכה הלבנה וקטגה לחמה לאמר: "שני מלכים איך ישמשו בכתר אחד?" אמר לה הקדוש ברוך הוא: "לכי והמעיטי את עצמך!" הלכה ונמעטה, ונעשתה מאור קטן. והקדוש ברוך הוא צוה לישראל להביא חטאת ראש חדש לכפר בעד עצמו, שהקטין הלבנה.

עוד אמרו: כשהיו ישראל בין רגעי הים, נתגאו המים, והיו רוצים לעלות השמימה להתישב לפני ה'. קרץ להם השם יתברך בעינו, ואמר: "מה לכם ולישראל?" פסו לפרעה ולחילו, ואז פסום במצולה. אחר כך אמר להם: "הקיא את המצררים לחרבה, שיראום ישראל!" אמר הים: "אינך שומר אמונת דבריך - מתנה נתת לי, ועתה רוצה לקחתה?" אמר לו האלהים: "אל תירא, כי עוד יותר אתן לך משלל אויבי. ואם אינך מאמין, הנה נחל קישון יהיה עורב בעבורי, שלא אשנה תנאי." וכן פתיב (שופטים ה:כא): "נחל קישון גרפם." הקיא הים למצררים ליבשה. עמדה היבשה ואמרה: "רבנו של עולם,

side. The Arab camel-driver asked the passersby: "What is happening?" They said that this storm had come to take the body of Rabba bar Nahmani. The camel-driver cried: "Oh Lord God, you created Rabba bar Nahmani, and you took him away. Why should you destroy your world?" Immediately, the storm quieted down.

All this is written in [Tractate] Bava Bathra [in the Babylonian Talmud]. What wise person will not laugh at this [story], where the creations are made wiser than their Creator?

Another [story that] they tell: When the sun and moon were created, they were equal in size. The moon went and prosecuted the sun, saying: "How can two kings both serve with a single crown?" God said to her: "Then go and make yourself smaller." She went and made herself smaller, and thus became the *smaller luminary* [see Genesis 1:16]. God then commanded Israel to bring a sin-offering on the New Moon, in order to atone for His own act of making the moon small.⁷⁶

Another [story that] they tell: When the Israelites were [crossing through] the middle of the Sea, [which had been] settled down, the waters became haughty, and they wanted to ascend to heaven to settle in front of God. God winked at them with His eye, and said: "What business do you have [against] the Israelites? Go cover Pharaoh and his soldiers!" So [the waters] covered them in the depths. Then He told them: "Vomit out the Egyptians onto dry land, so that the Israelites will see them." The Sea said: "Do You not keep the promise of Your words? You gave me a gift, and now You want to take it from me?" God said to [the Sea]: "Fear not, for I will give you more of the plunder of My foes. And if you do not believe Me, the River Kishon will be My guarantor, [to assure] that I will not change the conditions." As it is written: *The river of Kishon swept them away* (Judges 5:21). So, the Sea vomited out the Egyptians onto the Dry Land. The Dry Land stood up and said:

⁷⁶ Babylonian Talmud, Hullin 60b.

אינך נהג בצדק? לא נתת לי שאהרג המצריים, ועתה למה תשליכם אלי?" קמה היבשה והיתה משלכת אתם לים, והים היה משליך ליבשה, והקדוש ברוך הוא ראה. מה עשה הקדוש ברוך הוא? נשבע לארץ ואמר: "קבלי, ארצי, שעה קלה את זה, למען יראו עמי פלאי." אמרה הארץ: "איך אקבל מה שלא הרגתי?" אז הקדוש ברוך הוא הפה לארץ בימינו, והכריחה לקבל, דכתיב בשירת משה (שמות טו:יב): "נטית ימינך, תבלעמו ארץ." כל אלו הבדויות בסדר ערובין. והפתוב צוח (תהלים עז:ז): "ראוך מים יחילו, אף ירגזו תהמות." (שופטים ה:ד-ה) "ארץ רעשה גם שמים נטפו, גם עבים נטפו מים. הרים נזלו מפני ה'" - ואם כן איך אפשר שהברואים יסתברו לבוראם יתברך?!

בפסירת משה רבנו עליו השלום הרבו הבליים. אמרו: שלח השם יתברך מלאך לטל נשמתו. בא המלאך ואמר לו: "תן לי נשמתך, כי לךך שלחני אדונינו." אמר לו משה: "מי אתה שתדבר אלי בדברים האלו? אני יושב וכותב תורת ה'!" שלח משה ידו בקלמוסו, ועור עינו של המלאך. הלך המלאך במדירות נפשו, ואמר: "רבנו של עולם, גער בי משה!" עוד שלחו הבורא. {סא} בא המלאך וראה גבורתו של משה, והכריח

“Master of the Universe, You are not behaving justly! You did not allow me to kill the Egyptians, so now why are You throwing them on me.” The Dry Land arose, and [started] hurling them to the Sea, and the Sea would hurl them back to the Dry Land. God saw this, and what did He do? He said: “O My Land, accept this for a brief while, so that My people may see my miracle.” The Land said: “How can I accept what I did not kill?” Then God smote the Land with His right hand, and she was forced to accept it, as is written in the Song of Moses: *Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them* [Exodus 15:12]. All these made-up [stories] are in the order [*i.e.*, Tractate] ‘Eruvin.⁷⁷ Yet Scripture states: *The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook* [Psalms 77:16–18]. So how could it be possible for the creations to refuse [the commands of] their Creator?!

Regarding the death of Moses, [the Rabbanites] have made many follies.⁷⁸ They said that God sent an angel to take his soul. The angel came and said to him: “Give me your soul, for my Master sent me for this.” Moses replied: “Who are you, that you speak such words to me? I am sitting [occupied in] writing God’s Torah!” Moses stretched out his hand, with the pen in it, and blinded the eyes of the angel. The angel went back, bitterly, and said: “Master of the Universe, Moses rebuked me!” God sent him again.^{61} The angel came and saw Moses’s strength, and was

⁷⁷ This is found not in Tractate ‘Eruvin, but rather in the Babylonian Talmud, Pesaḥim 108b.

⁷⁸ There are many rabbinic texts that tell stories of Moses’s death; it would be worthwhile to conduct a detailed study of the relationship between the account in *Levush Malkhuth* with the various versions. The casual reader would do well to compare the story in *Levush Malkhuth* to the standard printed editions of Deuteronomy Rabbah, *Ve-zoth Ha-berakha* §10.

לְהִתְחַנֵּן לוֹ שְׂיִיתֵן נִשְׁמָתוֹ, וְלֹא נָתַן. שָׁב הַשְּׁלִיחַ לְשׁוּלְחוֹ, וְסִפֵּר.
 אִי נִתְּוַּכַּח הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ עִם מֹשֶׁה, וְאָמַר: "לָמָּה אֶתָּה מִסְתַּרֵּב?
 לֹא טוֹב אֶתָּה מֵאָדָם הָרֹאשׁוֹן, שֶׁלֹּא תָמוּת כְּמֹהוּ?" עֲנָהוּ מֹשֶׁה:
 "אֲנִי טוֹב מֵאָדָם מֵאָדָם וּמִנָּח וּמִשְׁלֹשֶׁת הָאָבוֹת, שֶׁכֻּלָּם חֲטָאוּ
 לְפָנֶיךָ, וְאֲנִי לֹא חֲטָאתִי." עֲנָהוּ: "אֵף אֶתָּה חֲטָאתָ, בְּהִרְגֹךְ הַמִּצְרִי
 וּבְמַנְתָּהוּ בַּחוּל." סָפַק מֹשֶׁה כִּף אֶל כִּף וְאָמַר: "יֵאָה שָׁמַיִם,
 אֶתָּה הִרְגָתָ אֶלֶף אֲלָפִים מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְלֹא תַחֲשַׁב לַעֲצֹמֶךָ - וְלִי
 תַחֲשַׁב נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת?!" עוֹד שָׁלַח הַבּוֹרָא מֵלֶאךָ לְטוֹל נִשְׁמָתוֹ,
 וּבִקְשׁוֹ וְלֹא מֵצָאוּ בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ. הֵלֵךְ אֶל הַיָּם, וְאָמַר: "הֲרֵאִיתָ
 אֶת מֹשֶׁה?" עֲנָהוּ הַיָּם: "מִיֹּס שֶׁהַעֲבִיר בְּתוֹכִי אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא
 רָאִיתִיו עַד הַנֶּה." הֵלֵךְ לַמַּדְבָּר וּשְׁאֵל; עֲנָהוּ: "מִיֹּס שֶׁהוֹלִיךְ בִּי
 אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא רָאִיתִיו יוֹתֵר." הֵלֵךְ לַמִּשְׁכָּן וּשְׁאֵל; עֲנָהוּ: "מִיֹּס
 שֶׁתִּקַּן אֹתִי לֹא רָאִיתִיו יוֹתֵר." עַד שֶׁיָּרַד הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עֲצֹמוֹ
 וּמֵצָאוּ וַחֲבָקוּ וּנְשָׁקוּ וּבָכָה עַל פְּרִידָתוֹ, וְאָמַר לוֹ: "הֵן קָרְבוּ
 יָמֶיךָ לָמוּת." אָמַר מֹשֶׁה: "מִפְּנֵי מָה אֲנִי קָרוֹב לָמוּת?" אָמַר לוֹ:
 "מִפְּנֵי מִזְלִי שֶׁל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ שֶׁעָלָה לְהַשְׁתַּדֵּר." אָמַר מֹשֶׁה: "יִכְנִס
 יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לַשְּׂרָרָה, וְאֲנִי אֵצֶא. רַק לֹא אָמוּת!" אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ
 בְּרוּךְ הוּא: "אִם כֵּן, שִׁמֵּשׁ לוֹ בְּשִׁשְׁמִשׁ לָךְ." אָמַר: "הֵן." וְעָמַד
 מֹשֶׁה וְשִׁמֵּשׁ לַיהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּכָל צְרָכָיו, וְהִלְבִּישׁוֹ אֲרָגְמָן וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹ
 עַל פֶּסֶא זֶהָב. שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁשָׁה יָמִים שִׁמֵּשׁ בֵּין מֹשֶׁה לְתַלְמִידוֹ,
 כְּתַלְמִיד לְדָבוּ. אָמַר מֹשֶׁה לַהַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: "יִכְנִס יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
 לַאֲרֶץ כְּרֵב, וְאֲנִי אֵצֶלוֹ כְּתַלְמִיד." הֵשִׁיב לוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ: "נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי

forced to plead with [Moses] to give him his soul – but [Moses] refused. The emissary went back to the One that had sent him, and told [what had happened]. Then God argued with Moses, and said: “Why are you refusing? Are you better than Adam, that you should not die, as he did?” Moses responded: “Yes, I am much better than Adam and than Noah and than the three patriarchs, for they all sinned before You, but I did not sin.” He replied: “But you, too, sinned, when you killed the Egyptian, and buried him in the sand!” Moses clapped his hands together, and said: “Oh, God, You killed thousands of thousands of Egyptians, and You don’t consider this [a sin] on Your part, but You consider the killing of a single soul to be [a sin] on my part!” God sent another angel to take his soul; [the angel] looked for him, but did not find him anywhere on the land. So he went to the Sea, and asked: “Have you seen Moses?” The Sea replied: “Since the day when he led Israel through me, I have not seen him.” [The angel] went to the Wilderness, and asked [about Moses]. [The Wilderness] replied: “Since the day when he led Israel through me, I have not seen him anymore.” [The angel] went to the *Mishkan* [wilderness tabernacle], and asked [about Moses]. [The *Mishkan*] replied: “Since the day when he built me, I have not seen him anymore.” Finally, God Himself came down, and found [Moses], and embraced him, and kissed him, and wept about his passing. [God] said to him: “Behold, your days are drawing near to death.” Moses said: “Why I am near to death?” [God] said: “Because of Joshua’s fortune, for his time has come to rule.” Moses said: “Let Joshua enter the position of authority, and I will leave – as long I don’t die.” God said to him: “If so, serve him, just as he has served you.” Moses said: “All right.” So Moses got up and served Joshua for all his needs; he clothed him in purple and placed him on a golden throne. For thirty-six days, Moses served his disciple, as a disciple [typically] serves the master. Moses said to God: “Let Joshua enter the Land as the master, and may I be with him as a disciple.” God replied:

שְׁלֹא תִפְנֹם. "אָמַר לוֹ: "אֵהְיָה כְּעוֹף שָׁיְעוֹף בְּשָׁמַיִם, וְרוֹאֶה כָּל מֵה שֶׁבַת־חַתָּיו; אוֹ אֵהְיָה כְּדָג פּוֹדֵשׁ בַּיָּמִים וּבִנְחָלִים בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל; אוֹ אֶדְכָּב עַל גְּבִי עֲנָנִים. וְאִם לֹא תִנְיַחְנִי לַעֲבֹד הַיִּרְדֵּן, חַתִּכֵּנִי אֲבָרִים אֲבָרִים וְהַשְׁלִיכֵנִי לַעֲבֹד הַיִּרְדֵּן, וּמִיכָאֵל יִכְנֹם אֲבָרֵי וַיַּחֲנֵנִי, וְאַרְאֶה אֶת הָאָרֶץ." וְלֹא הִסָּפִים הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ.

אָמַר מֹשֶׁה עוֹד: "אֲשִׁב עִם בְּנֵי גֹד וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן בַּעֲבֹד הַיִּרְדֵּן, וּבִזָּה אֵין שׁוֹם קִשְׁיָה עַל שְׁבוּעָתְךָ. "אָמַר לוֹ, יִתְבָּרֵךְ: "אֵי מֹשֶׁה, אַתָּה רוֹצֶה לַעֲשׂוֹת פְּלִסְתֵּר בֵּי? כְּשִׁיבּוֹא זְמַן שָׁלֹשׁ רְגָלִים, לֹא יַעֲלוּ בְנֵי גֹד וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן לְמָקוֹם הַנִּבְחָר בַּעֲבוּדְךָ. "אָמַר לְמֹשֶׁה: "אַל תִּצְרֹס¹ הַרְבֵּה, כִּי לֹא נִשְׁאַר לָךְ לַחֲיוֹת רַק שְׁתֵּי שָׁעוֹת. "אִזְ סַמָּאֵל רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁטָנִים הָיָה מְצַפֶּה לְטַל נִשְׁמָתוֹ, וְהָיָה שׁוֹחֵק. רָאִהוּ מִיכָאֵל הַשֵּׁר הַגָּדוֹל וְגִעֵר עָלָיו, וְאָמַר: "אֵי רָשָׁע, אֲנִי בּוֹכָה וְאַתָּה שׁוֹחֵק?!" בְּשִׂרְאָה מֹשֶׁה זֶה, הִתְחַנֵּן לִשְׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ שִׁיְהִיָּה כְּעוֹף אֲשֶׁר מְעוֹפֵף וּמִתְלַקֵּט בְּעוֹלָם, אוֹ כַחֲתִּית הַשָּׂדֶה שֶׁאֵכֶלֶת {סב} עֲשָׂבוֹת הָרִים וְשׁוֹתָה מִיָּם, רַק יַחֲיָה וַיַּעֲבֹד לָאָרֶץ. וְלֹא קִבֵּל הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ. עוֹד בִּקֵּשׁ מֹשֶׁה וְאָמַר: "כְּשֶׁאֲשַׁכֵּב בְּקִבְרִי, עֵינֵי הָאֲחֵת תִּהְיֶה לִּי נִשְׁאָרֶת וְרוֹאֶה דֶּרֶךְ הַחֹר שֶׁתִּשְׁאִיר בְּקִבְרִי, וּמִמֶּנּוּ אֶרְאֶה הִלִּיכֵת שְׁלֹשׁ רְגָלִים בַּשָּׁנָה. "וְלֹא קִבֵּל הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ. הֵלֵךְ מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָאָרֶץ וּבִכָּה וְהִתְחַנֵּן, וְאָמַר: "אֵי אֶרֶץ, בִּקְשִׁי עָלִי רַחֲמִים!" עָנְתָה לוֹ הָאָרֶץ: "אֵינִי יְכוּלָה לְבַטֵּל מֵה שֶׁנִּגְזַר עָלַי (יִשְׁעִיָּה נ"א) [פסוק 1]: 'וְהָאָרֶץ בְּפָגַד תִּבְלָה' - וְלֹךְ אוֹעִיל?!" הֵלֵךְ אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאָמַר: "בִּקְשׁוּ עָלִי רַחֲמִים!" אָמְרוּ לוֹ

"I have sworn that you may not enter." [Moses] said to him: "Let me be like a bird, flying through the heavens and seeing all that is below; or let me be like a fish, swimming through the seas and rivers of the Land of Israel; or let me ride the clouds. If You do not let me cross the Jordan, cut me up into pieces and hurl me across the Jordan, and [then the angel] Michael may bring my limbs together and resurrect me, so that I may see the Land." But God did not agree.

Moses said further: "Let me live among the tribes of Gad and Reuben, on the [east] side of the Jordan. This way, there will be no problem with Your oath [to not let me into the Land proper]." God replied: "Moses, do you want to make a fraud out of Me? When the time comes for the three pilgrimage festivals [each year], the Gadites and Reubenites will refrain from going up to the chosen place [of the Temple, out of sensitivity] to you, [since you will be forbidden to enter]." [God] continued: "Moses, don't implore me too much, for you have only two hours left to live." Then Samael, chief of the accusers, was waiting to take [Moses's] soul, and laughing. Michael, the great prince, saw him and rebuked him. He said: "Woe, O wicked one! I cry, but you laugh?!" When Moses saw this, he begged God to let him be like a bird, which flies and gathers [food] in the world, or like a wild beast, which eats ^{62} grass from the mountains and drinks water – as long as he may get to live!" But God did not agree to this. Moses asked further: "When I am lying in my grave, let me have one eye still [alive], which will look through a hole, which you can leave in my grave; through it, I will see [the Israelites] walk [to Jerusalem] on the three pilgrimage feasts each year." But God did not agree to this. Moses went to the Earth and begged, in tears: "O Earth, beg mercy for me!" The Earth responded to him: "I cannot annul what has been decreed upon me: *The earth shall wax old like a garment* [Isaiah 51:6]. Yet [you think that] I could help you [annul what has been decreed upon you]?!" He went to the Heavens, and said:

הַשָּׁמַיִם: "עָלִי כְּתִיב [שם ל"ד] (פסוק ד): 'וְנִגְלוּ כִסְפֵּי הַשָּׁמַיִם', ס"ה
וַאֲיֵנִי יָכֹל מַה לַּעֲשׂוֹת - וְעָלֶיךָ אֶתְחַנֵּן?! הֲלֹךְ אֶל הַפּוֹכְבִּים,
וְאָמַר: "בִּקְשׁוּ עָלַי רַחֲמִים!" אָמְרוּ לוֹ: "עָלֵינוּ כְּתִיב [יחזקאל
ל"ב] (פסוק ח): 'כָּל מְאוּרֵי אוֹר בַּשָּׁמַיִם אֶקְדִּירֶם' - וַאֲיֵךְ נֹעִיל
לָךְ?!" הֲלֹךְ לַחֲמָה וּלְבָנָה; אָמְרוּ לוֹ: "עָלֵינוּ כְּתִיב [ישעיה כ"ד]
(פסוק ג): 'וַחֲפָרָה הַלְבָנָה וּבֹשָׁה הַחֲמָה' - וְלָךְ נֹעִיל?!" הֲלֹךְ
לוֹ לַהֲרֹס סִינֵי וּלְכָל הָהָרִים. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: "עָלֵינוּ כְּתִיב [ישעיהו נ"ד]
(פסוק י): 'כִּי הִהָדִים יִמּוּשׁוּ' וְגו', וְכֵן כְּתִיב [שם מ'] (פסוק ד): 'וְכָל
הָר וּגְבָעָה יִשְׁפָּלוּ' - וְלָךְ נֹעִיל?!" הֲלֹךְ לוֹ אֶל הַיָּם וְאֶל כָּל
הַנְּהָרוֹת וְהָאֲגָמִים; אָמְרוּ לוֹ: עָלֵינוּ כְּתִיב [ישעיהו מ"ג] (פסוק
טז): 'הִנֵּיתִן בַּיָּם דְּרֹךְ', וְשֵׁם [יא] (פסוק טו): 'וְהַחֲרִים ה' אֶת לְשׁוֹן
יָם מִצִּירִים' - וְלָךְ מַה נֹּעִיל?"

כְּשֶׁרָאָה מִשָּׁה שָׁלָא עֲזָרוּהוּ אֵלָיו, הֲלֹךְ לוֹ לִיהוֹשֻׁעַ וַחֲבֵק אֶת
רַגְלָיו. בָּכָה וְהִתְחַנֵּן לוֹ וְאָמַר: "זְכוּר אֶת אֲשֶׁר לַמִּדְּתֶיךָ מִשְׁנָה
וְתַלְמוּד, וְאֶל הַגְּדֻלָּה הַזֹּאת הִבִּיאֹתֶיךָ. בִּקְשׁ עָלַי רַחֲמִים שְׁנֵכֶנֶס
שְׁנֵינוּ לְאֶרֶץ!" בִּקְשׁ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ רַחֲמִים. בָּא סַמְאֵל וְסָגַר אֶת פִּיו,
וְאָמַר לוֹ: "גִּזֹּר דִּין הוּא מַה, וְאַתָּה רוֹצֵה לְבָטֵל הַגְּזֵרָה?!" הֲלֹךְ
וְנָפַל לְרַגְלֵי אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן, וְאָמַר: "אֲנִי כְּמָה תְּפִלוֹת הַתְּפִלָּה לְתִי
בַּעֲדְכֶם בַּעֲוֹן הָעֵגֶל; עֲתָה בִקְשׁ עָלַי רַחֲמִים!" הִתְחִיל לְבִקֵּשׁ;
בָּא סַמְאֵל וְקָפֵץ פִּיו. הֲלֹךְ לְכָלֵב וּלְשִׁבְעִים זָקֵנִים; הִתְחִילוּ
לְבִקֵּשׁ רַחֲמִים. בָּאוּ מֵאָה וּשְׁמוֹנִים וְאַרְבַּעַת רְבּוּא מְלָאכִים,
וְהָיוּ חֲטָפִים דְּבִרְיָהֶם, שָׁלָא יִשְׁמְעוּ לַפְּנֵי הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ. שְׁנֵי

“Beg mercy for me!” The Heavens said to him: “It is written about me: *the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll* [Isaiah 34:4], and there is nothing that I can do about that – but [you think that] I could plead for you?!” He went to the stars and said: “Beg mercy for me!” They said to him: “It is written about us: *All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark* [Ezekiel 32:8]. So how could we help you?!” He went to the Sun and the Moon, and they said to him: “It is written about us: *Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed* [Isaiah 24:23]. So how could we help you?!” He went to Mt. Sinai and to all the mountains; they said to him: “About us it is written: *For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed* [Isaiah 54:10], and: *Every mountain and hill shall be made low* [Isaiah 40:4]. So how could we help you?” He went to the Sea, and all the rivers and lakes. They said to him: “About us it is written: *He maketh a way in the sea* [Isaiah 43:16], and *The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea* [Isaiah 11:15]. So how could we help you?”

When Moses saw that they had not helped him, he went to Joshua and embraced his feet. He tearfully implored him: “Remember that I have taught you the Mishna and the Talmud, and that I have brought you to this [position of] greatness. Plead for me, so that we may both enter the Land.” Joshua pleaded [to God] on his behalf. Sammael came and closed his mouth, and said: “This is a decree from God, and you want to annul the decree?!” [Moses] went and fell at the feet of Eleazar the priest, and said: “I prayed so many prayers on behalf of you [Israelites], after the sin of the [Golden] Calf. Now, please plead for me.” [Eleazar] began to plead, and Sammael came and closed his mouth. [Moses] went to Caleb and the seventy elders, and they began to plead [for him]. But 1,840,000 angels came, and grabbed the words of [Caleb and the elders], so that they would not be heard by God. There were two chiefs over the angels: one was named Zaqun, and the other was named Lahash. Zaqun would push off

רֹאשִׁים הָיוּ עַל הַמְּלָאכִים, אֶחָד שָׁמוּ צֶקֶן וְשֵׁנִי שָׁמוּ לַחֵשׁ. צֶקֶן הָיָה מִנֵּעַ תְּפִלָּתָם, וְלַחֵשׁ הָיָה מַחְזִירָה שֶׁתִּשְׁמַע לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים. בָּא סַמָּאֵל וְאָסְרוּ בִשְׁלָאוֹת שֶׁל בְּרָזֶל, וְהִבִּיאוּהוּ לִפְנֵי הַבּוֹרָא, וְהִכּוּהוּ בִשְׁשִׁים שְׁלָלוֹת שֶׁל בְּרָזֶל בְּעֵד בָּאֵשׁ, וְהִשְׁלִיכוּהוּ מִלִּפְנֵי הַבּוֹרָא. וְעַל זֶה אָמַר יִשְׁעִיָּה (כו:טז): "צֶקֶן לַחֵשׁ מוֹסְרֶךָ לָמוּ."

רָאָה מֹשֶׁה שְׂלֵא עֲזָרוּהוּ, בָּכָה וְקָרַע חִלְקוֹ^ס וְתָלַשׁ אֶת זָקְנוֹ וּפָלַשׁ אֶת רֹאשׁוֹ בָּאָפֶר, וְאָמַר: "אֹי לִי שְׂלֵא זָכִיתִי לִרְאוֹת הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה וְלֵאכֹל מִפְּרוֹתֶיהָ וְלִהְשָׁתַעֲשֹׂעַ בִּשְׂשׁוּעֶיהָ!" אִזְ נִשְׁאַר לַמֶּשֶׁה מַחֲיוּ לְבַד חֲצִי שָׁעָה. אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְגַבְרִיָּאל: "צֵא וְהִבֵּא נִשְׁמָתוֹ!" אָמַר גַּבְרִיָּאל: "מִי שֶׁהוּא שָׁקוּל כְּנֶגֶד שְׁשִׁים רְבּוּא, אֵיךְ אֶהְיָ חֲצוּף לִפְנָיו?!" ^{סג} אֵינִי יָכֹל לִרְאוֹת בְּמֹתוֹ. "אָמַר לְמִיכָאֵל: "צֵא וְהִבֵּא נִשְׁמָתוֹ!" בָּכָה מִיכָאֵל וְהִשִּׁיב כְּדַבְּרֵי גַבְרִיָּאל. אָמַר לְזַגְנוּגָאֵל רְבּוּ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה: "צֵא אֶתָּה וְהִבֵּא לִי נִשְׁמָתוֹ!" בָּכָה וְאָמַר לוֹ: "אֵיךְ אוּכַל, וְהִלֵּא הוּא תִלְמִידִי?" אָמַר לְסַמָּאֵל רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁטָנִים: "צֵא אֶתָּה וְהִבֵּא^ס לִי נִשְׁמָתוֹ!" שָׂמַח לְהֵלֶךְ, וְחָגַר חֲדָבוֹ וְלָבַשׁ אֲכֻזָּיוֹת. בָּא לִפְנָיו וְנִסְתַּפֵּל בְּדַמּוֹתוֹ - וְהִנֵּה זָקִי אֵשׁ יוֹצֵאִין מִפִּיו, וְזֹהָר דְּמוּתוֹ בַּחֲמָה בְּזִרְיַחַת! נִבְהַל מִלִּפְנָיו, וְאָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ: "בְּטוֹב אָמְרוּ הַמְּלָאכִים שָׂאִין אָנוּ יְכוּלִים לְטַל נִשְׁמָתוֹ!" נִשְׂאָ מֹשֶׁה עֵינָיו, וְרָאָהוּ בְּמִרְאִית עֵינָיו. יִרְאָה וְרָעַד וְאִימָה אֶחָזְתָּהוּ לְסַמָּאֵל, וְחִשְׁכוּ שְׁתֵּי עֵינָיו מִזִּרְיַחַת אוֹר פָּנָיו. וְאָמַר לוֹ מֹשֶׁה: "אֵין שְׁלוֹם

their prayer, but Laḥash would bring it back, so that it could be heard by God. Sammael came and chained up [Laḥash] in iron shackles, and brought him in front of the Creator, and they smote him with sixty red-hot iron shackles, and they hurled out, away from the Creator's presence. About this, Isaiah says: *They poured out [zaqun] a prayer [laḥash] when thy chastening was upon them* [Isaiah 26:16].

Moses saw that they had not helped him; he wept and tore his robe,⁷⁹ and plucked out his beard, and put ashes on his head, and said: "Woe unto me, for I have not merited to see the Good Land and to eat of its fruit and to take pleasure in its delights." At this point, Moses had no more than half an hour left to live. God said to [the angel] Gabriel: "Go and bring his soul." Gabriel said: "He is equivalent [in merit] to 600,000 [Israelites]; how could I be impudent in front of him?!^{63} I cannot see his death." [God] said to Michael: "Go and bring his soul." Michael wept, and responded as Gabriel had done. [God] said to Zeganzag'el, Moses's teacher: "You go and bring me his soul." He wept and said to Him: "How can I? Is he not my student?" [God] said to Sammael, the chief of accusers: "You go and bring me his soul." He was happy to go; he girded his sword and clothed himself in cruelty. He went to [Moses] and looked at his appearance, and lo, sparks of fire were shooting from his mouth, and the brightness of his appearance was like the shining of the sun! [Sammael] was intimidated by him, and said in his heart: "No wonder the angels said that they couldn't take his soul!" Moses raised his eyes, and saw [Sammael] in his line of vision. Sammael was grabbed by fear and trembling and dread, and his two eyes went dark from the light shining from [Moses's] face. Moses said to him: *"There is no peace, saith the Lord,*

79 All MSS and Ed. Neubauer read *ḥallono*, "his window," but this seems to be an error for *ḥaluqo*, "his cloak," a difference of only a single letter in Hebrew.

אָמַר ה' לְרָשָׁעִים! (ישעיה מח:כב) - מַה לָּךְ פֹּה, אִי רָשָׁע? אָמַר לוֹ: "שְׁלַחְנִי שׁוֹלַח, כִּי סוֹף כָּל הַנְּשָׁמוֹת הֵן בְּיָדִי, שָׁגַם אֶתְּהָ תִתֶּן נִשְׁמָתְךָ לוֹ." אָמַר לוֹ: "מִי שְׁלַחְךָ?" אָמַר לוֹ: "הַבּוֹרָא." אָמַר לוֹ: "אֵינִי מִסֵּר נִשְׁמָתִי בְיָדְךָ, כִּי עַדִּיף אֲנִי מִכָּל בָּאֵי הָעוֹלָם! אֲנִי עֲשִׂיתִי נִסִּים וְנִפְלְאוֹת בְּמִצְרִים וְעַל הַיָּם וּבְסִינִי וּבַמִּדְבָּר. הָאֲכַלְתִּי מִן לִישְׁרָאֵל, וְהִבֵּאתִי לָהֶם תּוֹרָה. וְאַתָּה, רָשָׁע, רָצָה לְנַצְחֵנִי? לָךְ מִמֶּנִּי, פֶּן אֲמַתְךָ!" הִלַּךְ וּבִרַח מִלִּפְנֵי, וּבָא לִפְנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, וְאָמַר: "אֵינִי יָכֹל לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ מְאוֹמָה. שְׁלַחְנִי לְהַפֵּךְ גִּיהֲנוֹם, ס" וְאֶהְפֶּךְ - אֲבָל זֶה לֹא אוֹכֵל לַעֲשׂוֹת!" כָּעֵס עָלָיו הַבּוֹרָא, וְאָמַר: "מֵאִשׁ שֶׁל גִּיהֲנוֹם נִבְרָאת וּלְאִשׁ שֶׁל גִּיהֲנוֹם אַתָּה שָׁב! בְּתַחֲלָה בְּשִׁמְחָה יֵצְאת מִלִּפְנֵי לְטוֹל נִשְׁמָתוֹ, וְעַכְשָׁו בְּבוֹשָׁה שִׁבֵּת פְּעָמִים. לָךְ וְהִבֵּא נִשְׁמָתוֹ!" כָּא לִפְנֵי בִבְקָשָׁה וְאָמַר: "מֹשֶׁה מֹשֶׁה, גָּזֹר לִי בּוֹרָאךָ לְהִבִּיא נִשְׁמָתְךָ." אִזּוּ לָקַח מֹשֶׁה מִטָּה הָאֱלֹהִים וְרָדַף אַחֲרָיו, וְהִדְבִּיקוּ, וְהִכְהוּ בְּרָאשׁוֹ, וַעֲזַר אֶת עֵינָיו.

יֵצְתָה בֵּת קוֹל וְאָמְרָה לְמֹשֶׁה: "מֹשֶׁה, לָמָּה תִצָּטְעֵר? הֲגִיעַ רָגַע מִיִּתְתֶּךָ!" עָמַד מֹשֶׁה לְהִתְפַּלֵּל, וְאָמַר: "זִכֹּר ה' אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי לִפְנֶיךָ לְכָל אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחְתָּנִי, אֶל תַּמְסִרְנִי בְיָד מְלֶאכֶת הַמּוֹת!" אִזּוּ קִבֵּל הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ אֶת תְּפִלָּתוֹ, וְאָמַר: "עֲצָמִי אֲנִי מְטַפֵּל בְּךָ וְקוֹבֵרְךָ." אִזּוּ יָרַד הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ עִם מְלֶאכֶיו הַשְּׁלֵשָׁה, גְּבִרְיָאֵל מִיכָאֵל וְזַגְנוּגְאֵל. ס" גְּבִרְיָאֵל הִצִּיעַ מָטָתוֹ, מִיכָאֵל הִנִּיחַ פֶּסֶת מִילְתִּין בְּמַרְאֲשׁוֹתָיו, עָמַד הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּרָאשׁוֹ, וְזַגְנוּגְאֵל בְּרַגְלָיו,

to the wicked⁸⁰ – so what are you doing here, O wicked one?” He replied: “The Sender has sent me, for the end of all souls is in my hands, and you, too, will give your soul to Him.” [Moses] asked: “Who sent you?” He replied: “The Creator.” [Moses] said to him: “I will not give my soul into your hand, for I am greater than all that have passed through the world. I performed miracles and wonders in Egypt, and at the Sea, and in the wilderness. I sustained Israel with manna, and I brought them the Torah. And you, O wicked one, want to defeat me?! Go away from me, lest I kill you!” [Sammael] went and fled from him, and came to God, and said: “I cannot do anything to him. Send me to overturn hell, and I will do it; but I cannot do this!” God became enraged at him, and said: “You were created from hell-fire, and you will return to hell-fire! At first you were so happy when you went forth from me to take his soul; but now you have returned in shame, twice. Go and bring his soul!” He came before [Moses] and pleaded with him: “Moses, Moses, your Creator has decreed upon me that I bring your soul.” Then Moses took the Staff of God and chased him, and overtook him, and smote him over the head, and blinded his eye.

Then, a heavenly voice (*bath qol*) went forth and said: “Moses, Moses! Why should you be upset? The moment of your death has come.” Moses stood up to pray and said: “Remember, O Lord, that I have walked before You in for all that you have sent me [to do]. Do not hand me over to the Angel of Death!” Then, God accepted his prayer and said: “I myself will take care of you and bury you.” So God descended with his three angels, Gabriel, Michael, and Zagnazge’el.⁸¹ Gabriel spread out a bed for him, and Michael placed a pillow of fine wool at the spot for his head. God stood at [Moses’s] head, and Zagnazge’el at his feet, and Michael and Gabriel at his two sides. God commanded [Moses] to straighten

⁸⁰ Isaiah 57:21.

⁸¹ Apparently the same as Gazanzag’el; in fact, MS A reads “Gazanzag’el” here.

מִיכָאֵל וְגַבְרִיאֵל בְּשָׁנֵי צַדִּיקוֹ. גָּזַר לוֹ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ לְתַקֵּן אֲבָרָיו
וּלְכַסּוֹת עַפְעָפָיו וְלִסְתֵּם פִּיו. קָרָא לְנִשְׁמָתוֹ מְתוּךְ גּוֹפּוֹ, וְאָמַר:
"צֵא בְּתִי!" וְאָז הִתְחִילָה הַנִּשְׁמָה לְהִתְבַּקֵּשׁ, לֵאמֹר: "אֱלֹהֵי
הַרוּחוֹת לְכָל בָּשָׂר, אֵל תִּקְחֵנִי מִהַגּוֹף הַזֶּה, כִּי הוּא זָךְ וְנָקִי מִכָּל
הַגּוֹפִים שְׁבָעוּלִים! הוּא עָשָׂה כָּל כֶּךָ צְדָקוֹת בְּעוֹלָם, הוּא עָשָׂה
כָּל כֶּךָ נְסִים וְנִפְלְאוֹת בְּעוֹלָם!" אָזִי בִשְׁמֵעוֹ, יִתְבָּרַךְ, דִּבְרִיָּה,
הִטָּפַל בְּעֵצְמוֹ - חִבְּקוֹ וְנִשְׁקוֹ, וּבִרְחֻמִּים נָטַל נִשְׁמָתוֹ בְּנִשְׁיָקָה.
אַחֵר כֶּךָ בָּכָה עָלָיו הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עֵצְמוֹ, וּבָכּוּ מַלְאָכָיו וְכָל
סְדְרֵי בְּרָאשִׁית, הַשָּׁמַיִם {סד} וְכָל צְבָאָם, הָאָרֶץ וְכָל הַבְּרוּאִים
עָלֶיהָ. וַיהוֹשֻׁעַ תַּלְמִידוֹ בָּכָה וַצֵּעַק וַחֲפִישׁ, וְלֹא מָצָא לְדַבֵּר, עָשָׂה
עָלָיו הַסִּפָּרִים גְּדוּלִים.

וְסִפְרוּ הַבָּלִים בְּלִתֵּי מוֹעִילִים, מִי יוּכַל לְכַתֵּבם וּלְסַפָּרם? וְכָל
זֶה בְּסִפְרֵי רַבֵּי תַנְחוּמָא, וּבִקְרוֹבוֹת שְׁמוֹזְמָרִים בְּסִפּוֹת.
עוֹד כָּתְבוּ הַבָּלִים בְּמִיתַת רַבֵּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לִוִּי. כְּשֶׁעָלָה זְמַן
מִיתָתוֹ, שָׁלַח הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְסַמְאֵל לְטַל נִשְׁמָתוֹ. בָּא לִפְנֵי
וְאָמַר: "גָּזַר הַבּוֹרָא שְׁתִּיתֵן לִי נִשְׁמָתְךָ." אָמַר לוֹ: "מִי אֶתָּה?" לֵךְ
מִמֶּנִּי! אֵין אֲנִי מֵת כְּשֶׁאֶר בְּנֵי אָנָּשָׁא. "פָּתַח הַמַּלְאָךְ, וּבִרְחַם מִפְּנֵיו,
וְשָׁב אֶל שׁוּלְחָו. אָמַר לוֹ: "אֵינִי יָכֹל לְמַחוֹת בִּידוֹ לְטַל נִשְׁמָתוֹ."
צוּה לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: "לֵךְ בְּהִכְרַח - לְקַח נִשְׁמָתוֹ וְהִבִּיאה

his limbs, and close his eyes and close his mouth. [God] called for his soul [to come out] from his body, saying: "Come out, my daughter!" Then the soul began to plead: "O God of souls of all flesh, do not take me out of this body, for it is purer than all bodies in the world, and it performed – so much righteousness in the world, and it performed so many miracles and wonders in the world." When God heard her words, He Himself took care of [Moses's death]; He embraced him, and kissed him, and with compassion, He removed his soul with a kiss. Then God Himself wept over him, and [with Him] wept the angels and all aspects of the universe: the heavens ⁶⁴ and all the hosts [of angels and planets] in them, and the earth and all the creations in it. And Joshua, his disciple, wept and cried; he searched for his master, and could not find him, so he made many laments over him.

And [the Rabbanites] have told many follies, which are useless; who could write them and tell them? All this is in the book of R. Tanḥuma, and in the *qerovoth* [liturgical poetry] that they sing on Sukkoth.⁸²

They have also written follies about the death of R. Joshua ben Levi.⁸³ When the time came for him to die, God sent Sammael to take his soul. He came before him and said: "God has decreed that you give me your soul." [R. Joshua ben Levi] replied: "Who are you? Leave me. I shall not die like other people." The angel was afraid and fled from him, and returned to the One that had sent him. [The angel] said to Him: "I am unable to force him [to let me] take his soul." God commanded him: "Go and take his soul

82 This is a reference to liturgical poems that were formerly recited in some Rabbanite communities on Simḥath Tora (observed on the second day of Shemini 'Azereth, and thus at the end of the Festival of Sukkoth). For an example of one such composition, "Omen She-lo Qam Kemotho," attributed to the seventh-century poet R. Eleazar b. Qillir, see Chaim Brody, *Qoveṣ 'Al Yad* N.S. 1 (11), 1936, pp. 8 ff.

83 This story is found in the Babylonian Talmud, Kethubboth 77b.

לי! הַלֵךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהִתְחַנֵּן לְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ. כְּשִׁמְעַ רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ שֶׁהִגִּיעָה גְזֵרָתוֹ, נֹעֵץ בְּחִכְמָתוֹ, וְאָמַר: "אִם בֶּן שְׂאֵלָה קִטְנָה אֲנִי שׂוֹאֵל מִמֶּךָ, אֵל תִּמְנַע מִמֶּנִּי בְּטָרֶם אָמוּת. הֲרֹאֲנִי נָא אֶת גֶּן עֵדֶן וְאֶתְעֵדֶן בּוֹ, וְאַחֵר כֵּךְ תַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלִיחוּתְךָ." הַבּוֹרָא קִבֵּל תַּחֲנָתוֹ, וְאָמַר לַמֶּלֶךְ: "עֲשֵׂה שְׂאֵלָתוֹ!" הוֹלִיכֵהוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ לְגֶן עֵדֶן, וְעִמְדוֹ שְׁנִיָּהם בִּפְתָחוֹ. חָפֵץ לְהִסְתַּפֵּל בְּכָל הַגֶּן, וְלֹא יִכַּל. אָמַר לַמֶּלֶךְ: "בְּבִקְשָׁה מִמֶּךָ, תֵּן לִי חֶרֶבֶךָ וְאֲשַׁעַן עָלֶיהָ", כִּדִּי שְׂאֵת־נִשְׂא לְמַעַלָּה מֵעַל הַחוּמָה וְאַרְאֶה כָּל־נֶתֶן לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ חֶרְבוֹ, וְנִשְׁעַן עָלָיו וְקַפֵּץ וְדִלֵּג לַתּוֹךְ גֶּן עֵדֶן. בֵּינָן שֶׁנִּפְּל לַתּוֹךְ גֶּן עֵדֶן, נִשְׁבַּע וְאָמַר: "בְּחֵי הָעוֹלָם שְׂלֹא אֵיצֵא מִכָּאן!" כְּשִׁמְעַ הַמֶּלֶךְ, הֵלֵךְ בְּעֵצְבוֹן לְשׁוּלְחוֹ, וְאָמַר: "יִלּוּד אִשָּׁה רַמְנִי." אָמַר הַבּוֹרָא לַמֶּלֶךְ: "לֵךְ וּשְׂאֵל לְאַנְשֵׁי מְקוֹמוֹ וְלִכָּל יוֹדְעֵיו - אִם מִיָּמָיו חִלַּל שְׁבוּעָתוֹ, תּוֹכֵל לְהַפִּיר לוֹ שְׁבוּעָתוֹ; וְאִם לֹא, לֹא נֹכַח, וְאִם חִלַּל שְׁבוּעָתוֹ בְּעַל כְּרָחוּ יֵצֵא וְיָמוּת." הֵלֵךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ וּשְׂאֵל לְכָל בָּאֵי עוֹלָם, וְלֹא נִמְצָא מִי שֶׁיֵּאמֹר שְׂרַפִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ חִלַּל שְׁבוּעָתוֹ. שָׁב לוֹ לְשׁוּלְחוֹ, אָמַר: "לֹא מִצָּאתִי לוֹ פֶשַׁע." אָמַר לוֹ הַבּוֹרָא: "מַעַתָּה הוּא יִהְיֶה חַי לְעוֹלָם, בְּחִנּוּךְ וְאַלְיָהוּ. עַתָּה שׁוּב קַח חֶרֶבְךָ מִיָּדוֹ." בָּא לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאָמַר: "כִּבְרָ אֶתָּה גְּנוּז בְּחַיִּי גֶן עֵדֶן לְעוֹלָמִים. הָשִׁיב לִי חֶרֶבִּי." אָמַר לוֹ: "לֹא אֲשִׁיבְךָ, כִּי אִם תִּשְׁבַּע לִי שְׂלֹא תִשְׁלַף חֶרֶבְךָ זֶה עַל עַמִּי וְעַל עֲדָתִי לְהַרְגַּ מִהֶם אֲשִׁיבְךָ, וְאִם לֹא לֹא אֲשִׁיב." נִשְׁבַּע לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְהָשִׁיב לוֹ

by force, and bring it to me.” The angel went and pleaded with R. Joshua. When R. Joshua heard that his decreed [time] had come, he came up with a plan, using his wisdom. He said: “If so, I have a small request; do not withhold it from me before I die. Please show me the Garden of Eden, so I may take pleasure in it, and then do your assigned task [of taking my soul].” God accepted his request and said to the angel: “Do what he asked.” The angel walked him to the Garden of Eden, and the two of them stood at its entrance. He wanted to look at the whole garden, but he could not [see it all]. He said to the angel: “I beseech you, give me your sword, and I will lean on it, so that I may be high above the wall to see everything.” The angel gave him the sword, and he leaned on it, and bolted over into the Garden of Eden. When he had fallen into the Garden of Eden, he swore by the Eternally Living One that he would not leave. When the angel heard, he returned sadly to the One that had sent him, and said: “The one born of woman has tricked me.” God said to the angel: “Go and ask the people of his town, and all that know him, if he has ever violated an oath. [If so,] you may annul [this] oath, but if not, we cannot [annul it]. And if he has violated his oath unwillingly, he should come out and die.” The angel went and asked all the inhabitants of the universe, but nobody could be found who would say that R. Joshua had ever violated an oath. [The angel] went back to the One that had sent him and said: “I have found that he has no sin.” God said: “From now on, he will live forever, like Enoch and Elijah. Now go and take your sword from his hand.” The angel came to him and said: “Now that you are protected in your eternal life in the Garden of Eden, give me back my sword.” He responded: “I will not give it back to you unless you swear to me that you will not pull out this sword to use against my people, my congregation, to kill any of them. [If so,] I will give it back to you; but if not, I will not give it back.” The angel swore to him, and he gave him the sword, and he remains in the Garden of Eden, eternally alive.

חֲרָבוּ, וְהוּא נִשְׁאָר בְּגֵן עֵדֶן בְּחַי עוֹלָם. כִּךְ רָמוּ אֶפְלוּ לַמִּלְאָכִים,
וְנִצְחוּ לְבוֹרָא עוֹלָם! מִי פָתִי יָסוּר הֵנָּה וַיֵּאֱמִין לַהֲזוּזִיתֵיהֶם?!

עוֹד חֲפָאוּ דְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא כֵן עַל נְבִיאֵי ה' וְעַל צַדִּיקֵי עוֹלָם.
עַל אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן אָמְרוּ שֶׁבָּרָאוּ הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ גָּדוֹל כָּל כִּךְ עַד
שֶׁהָיָה רִאשׁוֹ מִגִּיעַ עַד הִרְקִיעַ, וַיִּקְנְאוּ בּוֹ מַלְאֲכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת עַד
שֶׁמַּעֲטוֹ בְּאַלְף {סה} אֲמָה. וְאָמְרוּ עָלָיו שֶׁהָיָה מוֹשֵׁךְ בְּעַדְלָה,
רוֹצֵה לְוַמֵּר שׁוֹפֵךְ זֶרַע לְבִטְלָה, וְשִׁמְזָה הוֹלִיד שִׂדִּים וְשִׁדּוֹת
בְּעוֹלָם. עַל נֹחַ הַצַּדִּיק אָמְרוּ שֶׁרָּבְעוּ חָם בָּנוּ בְּרֹאוֹתוֹ עֲרוֹתָיו.
בְּאַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ אָמְרוּ שֶׁהָיָה חוֹזֶה בַּכֶּכֶּבִּים, וְעַל יַצְחָק אָבִינוּ
אָמְרוּ שֶׁהָיָה אֹהֵב אֶת בְּנוֹ הָרָשָׁע, וְהָיָה אֹכֵל טְרֵפוֹת, שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ
עֵשׂוֹ מִבֵּיא גֹרֵי כְלָבִים וּמִבִּשָּׁל וּמֵאֲכִיל לְאָבִיו. בִּיעֲקֹב אָמְרוּ
כִּי גִנֵּב הָיָה וְרֵמָאִי, שֶׁדָּמָה אֶת לָבֵן בַּמִּקְלוֹת שִׁשָּׁם לִפְנֵי הַצֹּאן,
וְגִזַּל אֶת צֹאנוֹ וְנִתְעַשֵּׂר. בְּיוֹסֵף הַצַּדִּיק אָמְרוּ כִּי בִקֵּשׁ לַעֲשׂוֹת
זִמָּה עִם אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲדוֹנָיו, וּבָעִתָּה הָיָה רֹאֵה דִּיקְנוּעֵי שָׁל אָבִיו
עַל הַכֶּתֶל, וְאִזּוֹ נָפַל מֵעַלְיָהּ וְנָעַץ יָדָיו בְּקִרְקַע, וְנִפְזַר זֶרַעוֹ בֵּין
צִפְרָנֵי יָדָיו. וְעַל בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָמְרוּ שֶׁהָיוּ אֹכְלִים אֶבֶר מִן הַחֵי, וְעַל

So [the Rabbanites] have even tricked angels and defeated the Creator of the World? What fool will turn here and believe their hallucinations?!

They have also invented falsehoods about God's prophets and the righteous ones of long ago. They say about Adam that God created him so large that his head reached the sky, and the ministering angels were jealous of him, so [God] decreased his height by a thousand ^{65} cubits. And they say that he pulled out his foreskin – God forbid! – that is, that he spilled his seed in vain,⁸⁴ and that thereby he sired male and female demons in the world. They say about Noah the righteous that his son Ham sodomized him when he saw his nakedness.⁸⁵ About Abraham, they say that he was a stargazer [*i.e.*, astrologer];⁸⁶ and that Isaac loved his evil son [Esau], and that he would eat non-kosher food, for Esau would bring puppies and cook them and feed them to his father.⁸⁷ They say about Jacob that he was a thief and a trickster, for he tricked Laban with the sticks that he placed in front of the sheep, and that he stole [Laban's] sheep and became rich.⁸⁸ About Joseph the righteous, they say that he wanted to fornicate with his master's wife, but at that moment he saw his father's image on the wall, so he pulled himself from her and stuck his hands into the ground, and his semen spread out between his fingernails.⁸⁹ About Jacob's sons, they say that they would eat limbs from

84 The standard rabbinic meaning of “to pull out one's foreskin” is not masturbation, but undergoing an operation to undo the effects of one's circumcision. Adam is said to have done so in the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 38a.

85 Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 70a.

86 In the Babylonian Talmud, Shabbath 156a, it says that Abraham saw foretold in the stars that he would never be able to sire children, and God told him to leave his astrology.

87 See Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Genesis 27:31.

88 This is a strange allegation against Rabbanite statements, for Scripture itself says that Jacob did this (Genesis 30:37 ff.).

89 Babylonian Talmud, Soṭa 36b.

מִשֶּׁה רָבֵנוּ עָלָיו הַשָּׁלוֹם אָמְרוּ שְׁחַשְׁדוּהוּ בְּאִשֶּׁת אִישׁ וּבְכֶסֶף
 שֶׁל תְּרוּמַת הַמִּשְׁכָּן. וְשִׁנְתָּגָאָה מִשֶּׁה בְּאִמְרוֹ (דברים א:יז) "אֵת
 הַדָּבָר הַקָּשֶׁה תִּקְרִיבוֹן אֵלַי וְשִׁמְעֵתִיו", וְעַל כֵּן נִעְלְמוּ מִמֶּנּוּ
 כַּמָּה הִלְכוֹת. וּבַחֲלוֹתָיו אֵת פָּנָיו ה' בַּעֲוֹן הָעֵגֶל אָמַר לוֹ הַשֵּׁם
 יִתְבָּרֵךְ (שמות לב:י) "וְעֵתָה הַנִּיחָה לִּי" - אָמְרוּ: מִזֶּה יִדְעֻנוּ שֶׁתִּפְּשׁ
 מִשֶּׁה בְּכַנֵּף בְּגָדוֹ שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא. וְעַל אֲהָרֹן אָמְרוּ כִּי
 בְּעַל שֵׁם הָיָה, וְעָשָׂה צוּרוֹת: הַשְּׁלִיךְ צוּרָה אַחַת לִיאֹד, וְלֹא
 עָלָה אֲרוֹנוֹ שֶׁל יוֹסֵף הַצַּדִּיק; צוּרָה שְׁנִיית, וְלֹא עָלָה; הַשְּׁלִיךְ
 צוּרָה שְׁלִישִׁית, שֶׁהִיא צוּרַת שׂוֹר - מִיַּד צֶפֶר הָאֲדוֹן, וְגַם הַצוּרָה
 צִפָּה, וְאִשָּׁה אַחַת חֲטָפָה הַצוּרָה. וּבִשְׁהִיּוֹ תַּחַת הַר סִינַי וְדָאוּ כִּי
 בִישׁ מִשֶּׁה בָּהֶר, אָמְרוּ (שמות לב:א): "קוֹם, עֲשֵׂה לָנוּ אֱלֹהִים",
 וְאָמַר לָהֶם (שם פסוק ב): "פָּרְקוּ נִזְמֵי הַזָּהָב", כִּשְׁהַשְּׁלִיךְ הַזָּהָב
 לֹאִשׁ הָרִאשֹׁנָה הָאִשָּׁה הַלּוֹחַ כְּנֶגֶד הָאִשׁ, וַיֵּצֵא הָעֵגֶל שָׁבוּ צוּרַת
 הַשׂוֹר. עַל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ תַּלְמִידוֹ שֶׁל מִשֶּׁה אָמְרוּ כִּי חִלַּל שַׁבַּת בִּירִיחוֹ,
 וְלֹא הִקְרִיב קָרְבָּן תָּמִיד, וּבִטֵּל לְמוֹד תּוֹרָה. וְעַל פִּינְחָס הַכֹּהֵן

living animals.⁹⁰ About Moses, they said that he was suspected of adultery⁹¹ and of appropriating the money that had been contributed to the *Mishkan* [wilderness Tabernacle];⁹² and that Moses acted haughtily in saying *the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it* [Deuteronomy 1:17], and therefore [he received divine punishment] of forgetting many laws.⁹³ And when he pleaded to God after the sin of the [Golden] Calf, and God said to him: *Now therefore, let me alone* [Exodus 32:10], they say that from this, we know that Moses grabbed the corner of God's cloak.⁹⁴ About Aaron, they say that he was a [sorcerer who] used [divine or magical] names, and that he would make [magical] forms. He threw one form into the [Nile] River, but the coffin of Joseph the righteous did not ascend; [he threw] a second one, but it did not ascend; then he threw a third one, which was the form of an ox, and the coffin floated, as did the form [of the ox]. Then a certain woman stole the form. When [the people] were at the foot of Mt. Sinai, and they saw that Moses was tarrying on the mountain, they said: "Up, make us gods," and he told them: "Tear off the golden earrings;" he threw the gold into the fire, and the woman placed the form to face the fire, and out came the calf, which was in the form of an ox.⁹⁵ About Joshua, Moses's disciple, they say that he violated the Sabbath in Jericho, and that he did not offer the daily sacrifice, and that he neglected Torah study.⁹⁶

90 Genesis Rabbah 84:7.

91 See Babylonian Talmud, Mo'ed Qaṭan 18b.

92 See Tanḥuma ed. Buber, Parashath Pequdê, §4.

93 Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 8a.

94 Babylonian Talmud, Berakhoth 32a.

95 Cf. Rashi on Exodus 32:4.

96 Babylonian Talmud, Megilla 3a. This source mentions only the failure to offer the daily sacrifice and the neglect of Torah study. The claim in *Levush Malkhuth* that the Rabbanites say that Joshua violated the Sabbath in Jericho seems to be based on the statement in the Palestinian Talmud, Shabbath 1:8, that Joshua's conquest of Jericho was on the Sabbath. (However, the passage in

אָמְרוּ שְׁטֵמָא וְחָלַל בְּהִנָּתוֹ, שְׂפִשְׁהֲרֵג לְזִמְרֵי עֵם כְּזָבִי הָרִימָם
עַל הָרִמָּח לְמַעַלָּה, וַיִּזְנוּ נִצָּחִים עַל בְּגָדָיו. עַל בְּעִזֵּי הַצִּדִּיק נִשְׂיָא
וְשׁוֹפֵט יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמְרוּ כִּי כִמָּה בְּעִילוֹת בָּעַל בָּרוֹת כְּשִׁשְׁכָּבָה
בְּמַרְגְּלוֹתָיו. בִּיעַל אִשְׁתּוֹ חֵבֶר הַקִּינִי אָמְרוּ כִּי סִיסְרָא בָּעַל
אֶתָּה כִּמָּה בְּעִילוֹת, כִּי כִמָּה פְּעָמִים כָּתִיב (שׁוֹפְטִים ה:כז): "בֵּין
רַגְלָיָה נָפַל כָּרַע." בְּחִנָּה הַנְּבִיאָה אָמְרוּ שֶׁחֲצִיפָה פָּעַם נָגַד
הַשֵּׁם, וְאָמְרָה: "אִם תִּתֵּן לִי בֶן, הָרִי טוֹב; וְאִם לֹא - הָרִינִי
נִסְתַּרְתָּ בְּאִישׁ זָר, כִּדִּי שִׁוְלִיכְנִי בְּעָלִי לְבֹדֵק בְּמִי שׁוֹטָה, וְאִז
שְׁלֹא בְּרָצוֹנְךָ תִּתֵּן לִי בֶן." בְּשִׁמוּאֵל אָמְרוּ" כִּי בְּהִתְנַצֵּלוֹ לִפְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמֵאמֶר "אֶת שׁוֹר מִי לְקַחְתִּי וְאֶת חֲמוֹר מִי לְקַחְתִּי"
לָמָּה לֹא הִזְכִּיר יוֹתֵר? מִפְּאֵן שֶׁדְּבָרִים אֲחֵרִים הָיָה לְקַח שְׁחָד
וְגִזֵּל. עַל דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלְיוֹ הַשְׁלוֹם אָמְרוּ כִּי בְּשֵׁשֶׁת חֳדָשִׁים
שֶׁמֶלֶךְ בַּחֲבֵרוֹן נִצְטָרַע. וְכֵן אָמְרוּ כִּי בְּבָרְחוֹ בִּפְנֵי אֲבִשְׁלוֹם
רָצָה לַעֲבֹד עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, דְּכָתִיב (שְׁמוּאֵל ב טו:לב): "וַיְהִי הוּא אֵד"

About Phineas the priest, they say that he profaned his priestly status, for when he slew Zimri with Cozbi, he lifted them up on the spear, up high, and their lifeblood dripped on his clothes.⁹⁷ About Boaz the righteous, a chieftain and judge of Israel, they say that he had sex with Ruth several times while she was lying at his feet.⁹⁸ About Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite, they say that Sisera had sex with her several times, for Scripture says several times: *Between her legs, he fell, he bowed* [Judges 5:27].⁹⁹ About Hannah the prophetess, they say that she once spoke insolently to God, and said: "If you give me a child, this is good; and if not, I will hide away with another man, so that my husband will lead me to drink the waters of the *soṭa* [woman suspected of adultery], and then You must give me a child against Your will."¹⁰⁰ About Samuel, they say that when he defended himself before Israel and said: *whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken?* [1 Samuel 2:3], he did not mention anything else, for he had, indeed, taken other items as bribes and through thievery.¹⁰¹ About King David, they say that, for six months while he was reigning in Hebron, he suffered from skin afflictions.¹⁰² Moreover, they say that, when

the Palestinian Talmud says that this was not a sin at all; rather, it is permitted to continue a siege on the Sabbath, if one has begun it before the Sabbath.)

97 This is based on a statement in the Babylonian Talmud, where it states that Phineas managed to stab the two sinners through their genitalia, and that the two remained skewered on the spear. However, it seems that Phineas was not yet a priest, for he is granted priesthood only several verses later, in Numbers 25:13. In a tradition parallel to that of the Babylonian Talmud, in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Numbers 25:8, it is stated that Phineas was already a priest, but that Zimri and Cozbi remained alive until he put down the spear, so he did not contract corpse-impurity.

98 This claim is not known from any source other than *Levush Malkhuth*. In fact, the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 19b, says just the opposite.

99 Babylonian Talmud, Yevamoth 103a.

100 Babylonian Talmud, Berakhoth 31b.

101 This claim is not known from any source other than *Levush Malkhuth*.

102 Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 22b.

בא עד הראש אשר ישתחוה שם - אמרו: אין ראש אלא
עבודה זרה, פכתוב (דניאל ב:לב): "צלמא ראשה די דהב טב."
באיוב הצדיק אמרו שהיה כפר בעקר, דכתיב (איוב ב:י): "בכל
זאת לא חטא איוב בשפתיו" - אמרו: בשפתיו לא חטא, אבל
בלבו היה כפר. על שלמה הנחפס אמרו כי הכרובים שעשה
במקדש עשאם דמות זכרים ונקבות, והציגם זה לקראת זה
הבעלים. כיון שראו האויבים, חרפו וגדפו לאמת^ע ישראל;
ועל זה כתיב בקיעות: "כל מכבדיה הזילוה כי ראו ערותה."
על ירמיה הנביא אמרו כי הרהר והפיל זרעו במרחק; באה
בתו וישבה במקום ההוא, ונגנס הזרע לרחמה והרתה, ונולד
מזה בר סירא. ובעת שהקריבה ללדת, עמד הילד בפתחי
הרחם והתחיל לדבר, ואמר: "הגידו לי שמי, מה תקראו לי?"
ואמרו לו הריבה שמות ולא הסכים, עד שהודיע בעצמו ואמר:
"קראו לי בר סירא, כי בן ירמיהו אני." ועל יחזקאל כהן וגביא

he was fleeing from his Absalom, he wanted to perform idolatry, as it is written: ¹⁰³ *And it came to pass, that when he was come to the head, where he would prostrate himself before them* [II Samuel 15:32]; they say that the word “head” refers to idolatry, as it is written: *the image’s head was of fine gold* [Daniel 2:32].¹⁰³ About Job the righteous, they say that he was in denial of the fundamental [God], as it is written: *In all this did not Job sin with his lips* [Job 2:10]; they say that it was only “with his lips” that he did not sin, but in his heart he was in denial.¹⁰⁴ About Solomon the wise, they say that the cherubim that he made in the Temple were in the forms of a male and a female, and that he made them one facing the other, in the act of intercourse. When the enemies saw [this, at the time of the destruction of the Temple], they blasphemed the truth of Israel; and [the Rabbanites claim that] it is about this that Scripture says in Lamentations [1:8]: *all that honored her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness*.¹⁰⁵ About Jeremiah the prophet, they say that he had a seminal emission in a bathtub, and that his daughter then came along and sat in that [tub], and the semen entered her womb, and she became pregnant, and the child born was Ben Sira.¹⁰⁶ And when she was about to give birth, the child stood up at the opening of her womb, and began to speak, and said: “Tell me my name. What will you call me?” They told him several names, but he did not agree [to any of them], until he himself made it known, saying: “Call me Ben Sira, for I am the son of Jeremiah.”¹⁰⁷ About Ezekiel,

103 Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 107a.

104 Babylonian Talmud, Bava Bathra 16a.

105 Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 44b.

106 Hebrew reads “Bar Sira,” but our translation follows the English (and usual Hebrew) convention.

107 This story does not appear in any rabbinic text, but in *The Alphabet of Ben Sira*, a medieval Jewish text that is hardly any more Rabbanite than it is Karaite. The text is printed in Judah D. Eisenstein’s anthology, *Ozar Ha-midrashim*, New York, 1915, pp. 35–50; the relevant story is on p. 43.

ה' אָמְרוּ כִּי הִיא לֹא גָבִיעַ שֶׁל עֶצֶם, מִרְאֵשׁוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם, וְהִיא שׁוֹתָה בּוֹ. כִּיּוֹן שֶׁהִגִּיעַ נְבוֹאָת תַּחֲתֵית הַמֵּתִים אֲשֶׁר בִּבְקָעָה, פָּתָּח: "וְתִקְרְבוּ עֲצָמוֹת אַחַת אֶל אַחַת" (הַשּׁוֹי יַחְזָקָא לִזְיָי, קִפְץ הַגִּבִּיעַ וְהִפְּהוּ לִנְבִיא בְּפָנָיו בְּשֵׁנֵי סִנְטְרוֹתָיו, וְהִלֵּךְ וְנִדְבַק אֶל עֲצָמוֹתָיו. וְכֵן עַל מִדְּכֵי אָמְרוּ כִּי מֶה שֶׁפָּתִיב בְּאַסְתֵּר (ב:ב) "לְקַחְהָ מִדְּכֵי לֹא לְבַת" - לֹא לְבַת לְקַחְהָ, אֲלֵא לְאִשָּׁה, וּבְחִיקוֹ הִיתָה שֹׁכֶבֶת; וְאַפְּלוּ בְּהִיּוֹתָהּ בְּבֵית אַחֲשׁוּרוּשׁ הִיתָה שֹׁכֶבֶת בְּחִיקוֹ שֶׁל אַחֲשׁוּרוּשׁ, וְחִזְרָת וְטַבֵּלָת וְשֹׁכֶבֶת בְּחִיקוֹ שֶׁל מִדְּכֵי; זֶהוּ שֶׁפָּתָח (אַסְתֵּר ב:ב): "וְאֵת מֵאֵמֶר מִדְּכֵי אֶסְתֵּר עָשָׂה כְּאֲשֶׁר הִיתָה בְּאִמְנָה אֶתָּו."

וְכֵאֵלָּה רַבּוֹת הַיּוֹת וְהַיּוֹת, מִי יוֹכֵל לְסַפֵּר? אֱלֹהֵי הָיָה כָּל הָרָקִיעַ נִיָּדִים וְכָל הַיָּם דִּיּוֹ וְכָל הָאֵילָנוֹת קְלָמוֹסִים וְכָל הַמְּבִינִים כּוֹתְבִים, יֵלְאוּ לְכַתֵּב וְלִמְנוֹת כָּל הַבְּלִיָּהִם, אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל אֱלֹהֵי הַכְּתוּבִים לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ הַקְּרָאִים - וְגַם בְּהִרְבֵּה מִמֶּה שֶׁלֹּא יִכְלְנוּ לְכַתֵּב מִפְּנֵי הָאֲרִיכוּת.

עַד כֵּאֵן הִגִּיעַ מֶה שֶׁקִּוִּיתִי וְאוֹתִי לְמִלֵּאת רִצּוֹן הָאֲדוֹן הַנּוֹכַח בְּתַחֲלֵת הַמֵּאֲמָר, וְרִצּוֹן חֲכָמִיו, יְרוֹם הוֹדוֹ...

the priest and prophet of God, they say that he had a bone goblet made out of a human skull, and he would drink out of it. When he had the prophecy of resurrection of the bones in the valley, as it is written: *and the bones came together, bone to his bone* (Ezekiel 37:7),¹⁰⁸ the goblet jumped up and hit the prophet in his face, at the two sides of his chin, and then went and joined up with the other bones.¹⁰⁹ About Mordecai, they say that, when it says of Esther that *Mordecai took her for his own daughter* (Esther 2:7), it was not as a daughter that he took her, but as a wife, and that she would lie in his bosom; and even when she was living in the house of Ahasuerus, she would sleep in Ahasuerus's bosom, and then go and immerse herself [in water], and sleep in Mordecai's bosom. And [they say] that this is what Scripture [means when it says]: *for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him* (Esther 2:20).¹¹⁰

And they say many, many stories like these. Who could tell them all? Even if all the heaven were paper, and all the sea were ink, and all the trees were pens, and all that understand would write, they would be unable to write and count all the follies that are in all these books, which the Karaites do not believe. And there are many more [follies], which we have not been able to write, for they are too long.

Here, I finish what I [have written], hoping and desiring to completely satisfy the will of the prince who has been mentioned at the beginning of this work, and the will of his scholars. May his glory be great . . .

* * *

108 Ed. Neubauer here reads "Ezekiel 33" (which is incorrect). MS A gives some reference to Ezekiel, in the margin, but the chapter number is unclear. MSS B and C have no reference here. In any event, in all sources, the verse (37:7) is quoted somewhat inexactly, probably from memory.

109 In fact, Rabbanite sources say this about Nebuchadnezzar, not about Ezekiel; our author has gotten somewhat confused. See Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 92b, and Rashi's commentary thereon, s.v. **ובאו עצמות**.

110 Babylonian Talmud, Megilla 13b.

* * *

נִגְמְדָה בְּמִשְׁךְ שִׁשָּׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה, כְּהִיּוֹם עָרֵב שַׁבַּת קֹדֶשׁ וְהַלֵּל
הַגָּדוֹל, י"א לְרֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן, שְׁנַת תּוֹר"ח הַשָּׁמֶשׁ לַפְּרֹט קָטָן,
פֶּה בְּקָהֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ טְרוֹק, יִשְׁמְרֶה עֲלֵיוֹן אָמֵן, בַּעֲדַת בְּנֵי
מִקְרָא, יְרוֹם הוֹדֶם, עַל יָדֵי, אֲנִי הָעָנִי קָרָא וְה'
שָׁמַע, לְמַתְאֵבֶק בְּאֵבֶק רְגְלֵי תַלְמִידֵי חֲכָמִים
וְהַיּוֹצֵק מִיָּס עַל יְדֵיהֶם, הַצֵּעִיר חֲנֻנְיָה
הַמְתַּלְמֵד וְחֻזֵּן מִשְׁנָה, בֵּין לְאֲדוֹנָי
אָבִי כְבוֹד מַעֲלַת דָּוִד,
זַע"ל, אֲבִקוּיָן.

This has been completed over the course of the six workdays of a week. Today is the eve of the holy Sabbath and the Great Hallel;¹¹¹ the eleventh day after the New Moon of Nisan, in the year “Tizraḥ Hashemesh.”¹¹² Here, in the holy congregation of Trok, may God protect it, Amen, in the community of the Karaites, by me, the poor man who calls out and God listens, who rolls in the dust of the feet of the scholars, and pours water on their hands, the young Hananiah, who studies and is an assistant *ḥazzan*, son of my father David Abkovitz, of blessed saintly memory.¹¹³

111 “The Great Hallel” (הלל הגדול) is the Karaite name for the Sabbath before Passover. Rabbanites use a similar name for this Sabbath: “The Great Sabbath” (שבת הגדול).

112 These words, which mean “the sun shines”, are a chronogram, indicating [5]615, that is, 1855 CE.

113 This concluding section is the colophon of the manuscript that Neubauer used. It is not by the author, but by the copyist. MSS A and C have different colophons; MS B has no colophon.

Endnotes

i. The idea that the Second Temple stood 420 years is from the Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 9a. In fact, modern scholarship tells us that it stood for over 585 years, for its construction was completed in the sixth year of Darius I (Ezra 6:14), which we now know to be 516 BCE, and it was destroyed in 70 CE.

If the date of the destruction of the Second Temple is assumed to be 70 CE (in accordance with pre-modern and modern calculations), then *Levush Malkhuth*, along with rabbinic literature, places the year of its building 420 years earlier, in 350 BCE, as opposed to 518 BCE. This discrepancy is not surprising, for pre-modern Jewish knowledge of Second Temple chronology was inaccurate. From this date, we can calculate the Common Era equivalents of the other dates that *Levush Malkhuth* calculates for Second Temple events.

Note that rabbinic calculations date the destruction of the Second Temple to 68 BCE. Because *Levush Malkhuth* is essentially following rabbinic chronology, he may also date the destruction to this date. If so, all subsequent dates that we note in the footnotes should have two years subtracted from them. Nonetheless, we have used the date 70, currently accepted by historians, because it is a more round number, and a difference of two years is hardly significant.

ii. Mishna Shabbath 19:6:

מל ולא פרע את המילה, כאילו לא מל.

If one has performed a circumcision, but not exposed the circumcision, it is as if one has not performed the circumcision at all.

iii. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi*: The author explains that the laws for setting the month were passed down through oral tradition “from the instruction of our master Moses.” This “instruction” is not to be confused with an oral law, which the Rabbanites believe

God gave Moses. According to the classical Karaite framework, there are many laws – such as the setting of the month – that were only transmitted orally. Unlike the Rabbanite Oral Law, however, these laws did not originate with the revelation to Moses, and, in fact, they pre-dated the revelation at Sinai. The Karaite sages viewed these laws as reflecting the historical context in which the Torah was given. In the case of the start of the month, the Israelites already had been setting their calendar through lunar observation, and the Torah incorporated this practice without further elaboration. In a similar fashion, one might expect a modern American work to reference July 4, 1776, without explaining the meaning of the word “July” or how the start of the month was computed.

The following texts reflect the Karaite view that some practices pre-dated Sinai:

Ḥakham Aaron Ben Joseph, *Sefer Ha-mivḥar*, Bo El Par'o, p. 13b:

עכשיו אם זו המצוה לא נתבארה כמנהג רבי התורות להזכיר 'דבר אל בני ישראל ויעשה כך וכך', לא נאמר שאינה מסורה לכל איש ואיש אלא לבית דין הגדול; כי הכתוב לא פרט בדברים שהיו האבות נוהגים בהם, כגון השחיטה, שסמך מצוה התורות על סבל היורשים.

Now, this commandment [of setting the month] is not elaborated upon [in the written Torah] as is the custom for most of the commandments, [for which] it [generally] states: *Speak to the Israelites, that they should do such and such*. [Nonetheless,] it should not be said [as the Rabbanites do] that this is because [this commandment] is not given to every person, but exclusively [the duty of] the High Court; for Scripture does not give details regarding matters that the patriarchs [already] practiced, such as [kosher] slaughter, for the commandments to act according to these teachings rely on the burden of those that have ‘inherited the tradition’ [a Karaite term referring to traditions that contain legal information].

Ḥakham Aaron Ben Elijah, *Gan 'Eden*, 'Inyan Qiddush Ha-ḥodesh, chapter 9, p. 10a, col. 1:

אמנם דרכי החלוקה שיש בינינו ובין הרבנים בענין ראיית הירח בעבור שהלבנה לא תראה שוה לכל העולם מפני שתשתנה קשת הראייה לפי המקומות [...] ולכן חכמי הרבנים אומרים כי קביעת החדשים לא תהיה כי אם לפי מקום ירושלים, ואומרים כי הרחוקים מירושלים שאין השלוחין מגיעים אליהן מפני הספק היו עושים שני ימים מפני שלא היו יודעים איזה יום קבעו בירושלים. וחכמי הקראים, עליהם השלום, אומרים: הואיל וקדוש החדש תלוי על פי ראיית הירח בכל מקום שתהיה ראיית הירח, ראוי לקבוע כפי המקום ההוא. והנה תראה הלבנה לאנשי מערב קודם אנשי ארץ ישראל, ואיך אפשר שלא לקבוע החדש בו ביום זה, דבר שאי אפשר? ואין להקשות בזה שמהם יהיו עושים היום ומהם עושים למחר, שהמצות נתנו לפי היכולת, וכל אחד יהיה עושה כפי שיראה לו. הלא אין קדוש החדש בראיית הירח מצוה מחודשת, אלא מנהג קדום היה, כפי שהעיר במאמר 'זהו לאותות ולמועדים'. ונותן התורה העמידנו בו ע"פ אותו המנהג, שלא היה בהסגל מקום.

Indeed, the ways that the Rabbanites are different from us regarding the sighting of the moon are a result of [the fact that] the moon is not seen equally to the whole earth because the arc of sight is different in different places. [...] Therefore, the Rabbanite sages say that the establishment of the months must be based only on [the appearance of the moon in] Jerusalem; they say that the people far from Jerusalem, whom emissaries [from Jerusalem] did not reach, would observe two days [of the festivals], because they did not know which day had been established [as the first of the month] in Jerusalem. But the Karaite sages, peace be upon them, say: Because the establishment of the month is dependent on the sighting of the moon, therefore, wherever the moon be seen, it is appropriate to establish [the calendar] in accordance with that place. For it is impossible [that everyone would see the moon simultaneously]. And one should not challenge

this by noting that this would mean that some people would observe the festival on one day, and some people the next day; for the commandments were given [to be observed] in accordance with one's ability, so each person should act in accordance with what is visible to him. Is not the sanctification of the month by sighting the moon not a new commandment, but rather an ancient practice, as [the Torah] notes in the verse: *And they [the heavenly luminaries] shall be as signs for the appointed times* (Genesis 1:14)? The Giver of the Torah enjoined us to follow that practice, which was not limited to any specific place.

Finally, Ḥakham Elijah Bašyachi (fifteenth century) writes in *Addereth Eliyyahu*, 'Inyan Qiddush Ha-ḥodesh, chapter 10, p. 8a:

ועוד שלא מצאנו בכתוב שיסגיל זאת המצוה בארץ ישראל, אמנם זאת המצוה היתה מימים קדומים, מזמן נח ואברהם אבינו עליהם השלום, בקדוש הירח לפי מקום ומקום.

Furthermore, we do not find in Scripture that this commandment is limited to the Land of Israel. Rather, this commandment is from earlier times, from the times of Noah and Abraham, peace be upon them, who sanctified the month according to [the appearance of the moon in] whatever place [they were].

iv. Presumably, the author attributes this change to Rabban Gamliel because of a passage in the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Rosh Ha-shana (25a): the Mishna states that Rabban Gamliel would show the witnesses various images, to ask if they saw “like this” or “like this.” If they said that they saw the shape that could not possibly be the new moon, he rejected their testimony. This already shows that he did not just accept anyone who claimed to have seen the new moon. The Babylonian Talmud comments on this Mishnaic passage by citing the following report:

תניא אמר להם ר"ג לחכמים כך מקובלני מבית אבי אבא פעמים שבא

בארוכה ופעמים שבא בקצרה [...] ת"ר פעם אחת נתקשרו שמים בעבים ונראית דמות לבנה בעשרים ותשעה לחדש כסבורים העם לומר ר"ח ובקשו ב"ד לקדשו אמר להם ר"ג כך מקובלני מבית אבי אבא אין חדושה של לבנה פחותה מעשרים ותשעה יום ומחצה ושני שלישי שעה וע"ג חלקים [...].

It is taught: Rabban Gamliel said to the sages: I have received a tradition from my grandfather's house that sometimes [the new month] comes in after a longer period, and sometimes after a shorter. [...] The rabbis taught: One time, the sky was full of clouds, and a white form was seen on the twenty-ninth of the month. The people thought that it was the New Moon, and the court wanted to sanctify [the day as the first day of the new month]. But Rabban Gamliel told them: I have received a tradition from my grandfather's house that the new moon cannot appear before 29 days and a half [day] and two-thirds of an hour and 73 *halaqim* (1 *heleq* = $\frac{1}{1080}$ of an hour, so this is $\frac{73}{1080}$ of an hour) [...].

This shows that Rabban Gamliel had a calculation. Nonetheless, it is clear that he still relied on witnesses to sight the moon, but he rejected witnesses if they claimed that they sighted it at a time when his astronomical calculations showed that this would be impossible.

In fact, the determination of the new month by witnesses of the moon continued among the Rabbanites long after the time of Rabban Gamliel. It is unclear when, why, and how the change to the fixed, calculated calendar took place, and the process seems to have occurred over time. (See Sacha Stern, *Calendar and Community: A history of the Jewish calendar, second century BCE–tenth century CE*, Oxford University Press, 2001.)

Rabbanites today, and for the past several hundred years, say that the change occurred at the time of Hillel II (mid-fourth century CE); this claim first appears in the twelfth century, in a work

by Abraham bar Ḥiyya (*Sefer Ha-‘ibbur*, ed. Phillipowsky, London, 1851 ma’amar 3, sha’ar 7), but there is no evidence to support it.

v. These rules do not appear explicitly in the Talmud, though some vague references to a primitive form of some of them occur in the Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Ha-shana 20a. The formulation that *Levush Malkhuth* cites is in the law codes *Ṭur* and *Shulḥan ‘Arukh* (both in section *Orah Ḥayyim* §428, for the two codes use the same organization system). Though the *Ṭur* was written in the fourteenth century and the *Shulḥan ‘Arukh* in the sixteenth, these rules predate the *Ṭur* by several hundred years, though they are later than the Talmud.

Shulḥan ‘Arukh §428:

אלו הימים שאין ראויין לקבוע בהן המועדים לא אד"ו ראש השנה, ולא גא"ו צום כפור, ולא זב"ד פורים, ולא בד"ו פסח, ולא גה"ז עצרת והושענא רבה, לא ג' חנוכה, ולא אג"ו צום אסתר, ולא בד"ו צום תמוז ואב.

These are the days when it is not right to establish the festivals. Rosh Ha-shana must not be on Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday; the fast of Kippur must not be on Tuesday, Sunday, or Friday; Purim must not be on Saturday, Monday, or Wednesday; Pesah must not be on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday; ‘Azereth [=Shavu’oth] and Hosha’na Rabba [=the seventh day of Sukkoth] must not be on Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday; Ḥanukka must not be on Tuesday; the fast of Esther must not be on Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday; and the fasts of Tammuz and Av must not be on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday.

vi. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi*: As the author explains, Karaite Jews historically sanctified the month according to the testimonies of witnesses who saw the new moons. Unlike the Rabbanites, who relied only on sightings of the moon from Jerusalem and later on a pre-calculated calendar, each Karaite community began the month according to the appearance of the new moon in the area where that community resided – just as the day begins at nightfall

according to the time zone of wherever one resides. The reason for this is simple. As explained above (endnote *iii*), the practice of sanctifying the month according to the moon predates the giving of the Torah at Sinai and the entry of the Israelites into the land of Israel. Thus, according to the classical Karaite sages, the calendar does not give special relevance to Jerusalem or the land of Israel with regards to setting the month.

vii. Cf. Ḥakham Judah Hadassi (twelfth century, Constantinople), *Eshkol Ha-kofer*, Eupatoria Crimea, 1836 Edition, folio 96b, alphabet §188, letters dalet and he:

אבל הרחוקין] מראיית עדות בשולו מארץ קדושתו דינס לחקור
ולשאול לבאים שם, אולי ישמעו ויתבררו מן שוכניה ראייה בעדותו.
[...] וע"כ אין אנחנו יודעים אי זו שנה י"ב חדש ואי זו י"ג לערכה אלא
מעיון העד, ושמע ארץ הקדושה בגלותנו זו אשר בחטאתינו ובעונות
אבותינו עלינו ארכה.

But those who are far from eyewitness testimony about the ripening [of the *aviv*] in its Holy Land – the law is that they must examine and interrogate the people who travel there [to the Holy Land and back], for perhaps they have heard and clarified from its inhabitants [about] eyewitness testimony. [...] Therefore, we know which years are of twelve months and which number thirteen only from investigating the witness, who has heard from the Holy Land, [and can tell us] in our exile, which has lasted so long due to our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors.

Cf. also Ḥakham Israel Ha-ma'aravi (Egypt, 1313), cited in Sh. Asaf and L.E. Meyer, *Sefer Ha-yishuv*, volume 2, Jerusalem, 1944, p. 107:

הודו משכילי רוב ישראל כי טוב ללכת על דרך חשבון עבור של מחזור,
כי דרך קרוב הוא על האביב הנמצא בארץ ישראל. אבל ישראל
הקראים בעלי מקרא היושבים קרוב לארץ ישראל, הקהל של מצרים

ושל אסכנדריא, הוא נא אמון, והקהל של דמשק ושל חלפ, שהם ארס צובא וארס נהרים, אלו הקהלות בכל שנה ושנה שולחים שליחים אנשים נאמנים לארץ ישראל, ומבקשים ודורשים וחוקרים ומחפשים אותו בכל המקומות הידועים בקבלה כי יש שם ימצא קודם מכל המקומות. ואם ימצא אחד כי נתבשל לוקחים כמו שני עמרים מן שבלי השעורים ומביאים להם עדות האביב ומראים להם האביב ועושים פסח, ועד עשרה בניסן מגיעים אלו השלוחים לכל אלו הקהלות.

The scholars of the majority of the Jewish people are in consensus that it is good to follow a calculation for the intercalation of the calendar, for this is close to the *aviv* that is found in the Land of Israel. However, the Karaite Jews, who follow Scripture, who live close to the Land of Israel – the community in Egypt, and in Alexandria [known also as] No-Amon, and the community in Damascus and in Aleppo [known also as] Aram-Zova and Aram-Naharayim – these communities send emissaries, reliable men, each year, to the Land of Israel, and they ask and seek and search and investigate each of the places where they know from tradition that [the *aviv*] is [typically] found there before [it appears in] other places. If one of them finds that it has ripened, they take two sheaves from the stalks of barley, and they bring them as evidence of the *aviv*; they show the *aviv* to [their communities], and establish Pesah [in the appropriate month]. These emissaries come to all these communities by the tenth of Nisan.

viii. This is an adaptation of Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 11a:

תנו רבנן: אין מעברין את השנה אלא אם כן היתה צריכה מפני הדרכים ומפני הגשרים ומפני תנורי פסחים ומפני גליות ישראל שנעקרו ממקומן ועדיין לא הגיעו אבל לא מפני השלג ולא מפני הצינה ולא מפני גליות ישראל שלא עקרו ממקומן.

תנו רבנן: אין מעברין את השנה לא מפני הגדיים ולא מפני הטלאים ולא מפני הגוזלות שלא פירחו אבל עושין אותן סעד לשנה כיצד רבי ינאי אומר משום רבן שמעון בן גמליאל מהודעין אנחנו לכן גזוליא רכיכי

ואימריא דערקין <צריך לומר: דערקין, וכן הוא בכל כתבי היד> וזימנא
דאביבא לא מטא ושפרת מילתא באנפאי ואוסיפית על שתא דא תלתין
יומין.

Our sages taught: We may not declare a leap year unless it is necessary for the roads; or for the bridges; or for the ovens for the Pesah sacrifice; or for the exiles of Israel who have been displaced from their homes and not arrived yet. But not on account of the snow, or the cold, or the exiles of Israel who have not been displaced from their homes.

Our sages taught: We may not declare a leap year on account of the kids, or the lambs, or the baby birds that have not yet flown; but we may use those as auxiliary reason to make a [leap] year [if we already have a legitimate reason]. How so? Ribbi Yannai said in the name of Rabban Simeon ben Gamliel: “We inform you that the baby birds are still young, and the sheep are still small, and the time of spring has not yet come.” And this is correct in my opinion, and I have added thirty days to this year.

Rashi (French commentator on the Bible and Talmud, 1040–1105) explains that the words, “auxiliary reason to make a [leap] year,” mean that we may not use these causes on their own as a reason to make a leap year, but they may be used in conjunction with any of the main three causes, mentioned on Sanhedrin 11b, the next page: The *aviv*, the (new spring) fruits of trees, and the equinox. If any two out of the main three are relevant – that is, if the *aviv*, the new fruit, or the equinox have not yet arrived – then a leap year may be declared; but if only one out of the main three is relevant, then the kids, lambs, or baby birds may be used as the second cause, and the leap year may be declared.

ix. Talmudic Rabbanite law requires Jews to destroy all their leavened matter before Pesah. Any leaven that they sell before the designated time does not belong to them any longer, so they

are not obligated to destroy it; for this is a permanent sale, and the Jew will never again possess this leaven.

In a case where it is impossible for the Jew to destroy their leaven, for the Jew is on a ship in the middle of the sea, the Tosefta (a Talmudic-era rabbinic source) allows a Jew to sell or gift their leaven to a non-Jewish co-traveler, and then, if the non-Jew is willing to sell it back after Pesah, the Jew may buy it back. This is an extreme situation, where the Jew may have nothing else to eat if they cannot buy back their leaven, and yet even here, the Jew must sell or gift the leaven as a true, complete sale, and it is up to the non-Jew to sell it back, if they so choose.

Tosefta Pesahim 1:24 (ed. Zuckerman):

ישראל וגוי שהיו באין בספינה והיה חמץ ביד ישראל הרי זה מוכרו לנכרי ונותנו במתנה וחוזר ולוקח הימנו אחר הפסח ובלבד שיתנו לו במתנה גמורה.

If a Jew and a non-Jew were together in a ship, and the Jew had leaven in their possession, they may sell it or gift it to the non-Jew, and then get it back after Pesah, as long as they gave it as a true gift.

In the late Middle Ages, we see in the halakhic work *Terumath Ha-deshen* of R. Israel Isserlein (1390–1460) that he permits selling or gifting leaven even if there is no expectation that the non-Jew wants it at all, and the non-Jew will not consume any of it, but will give it back to the Jew:

שאלה: מי שיש בידו ענייני חמץ סמוך לפסח, וקשה עליו לבערם ורוצה לתתם לנכרי חוץ לבית במתנה גמורה. ואותו נכרי הישראל מכירו ויודע בו שלא יגע בהן כלל, אלא ישמדם לו עד לאחר הפסח ויחזור ויתנה לו. שרי כהאי גוונא או לא? תשובה: יראה דשרי, רק שיתנם לו במתנה גמורה בלי שום תנאי, או שימכרם לו מכירה גמורה בדבר מועט.

A question: If one has leavened matter in one's house shortly before Pesah, and is displeased with the idea of destroying it, but wants to give it to a non-Jew out of the house as a true gift.

But the Jew knows the non-Jew, and knows that he will not touch [the leavened matter] at all, but will keep it for [the Jew] until after Pesah, and give it back to him – is this permitted, or not? Answer: It seems that it is permitted, as long as one gives it as a complete gift, without any conditions attached, or one sells it as a complete sale for a small amount [of money] (*Terumath Ha-deshen* §120).

Later still, this activity became a routine practice for many Rabbanite Jews before Pesah. This was because many Jews owned stores of liquor made from fermented grain, and they would lose their whole livelihood if they would destroy it all. Today, it is standard for rabbis of Rabbanite communities to fill out forms enabling the sale of all their congregants' leaven to a non-Jew for a week, even though it is understood that the non-Jew will not eat any of it and will return the sale at the end of the week.

Nonetheless, this practice is hardly universal; many punctilious Rabbanites refrain from it completely, and indeed destroy their leaven. Famously, R. Elijah, the Gaon of Vilna (1720–1797), opposed such sale of leaven. (See Elijah of Vilna, *Be'ur Ha-Gra* [Commentary on *Shulḥan 'Arukh*], *Orah Hayyim* §448, comment 10; Issachar Baer, *Ma'asé Rav*, §180.)

x. The author of *Levush Malkhuth* is claiming that Abraham ibn 'Ezra accepts the Karaite understanding of the expression “*ben ha'arbayim*.” This is only partly true. In fact, though ibn 'Ezra admits that the expression “*ben ha'arbayim*” can allow either meaning, he says that, because “those that transmit the law” (the Rabbanite sages) explain it as meaning the time between noon and sunset, this must be the meaning that it has in the relevant passages in the Torah.

Abraham ibn 'Ezra, *Short Commentary on Exodus*, 12:6 (printed in *Torath Hayyim*, Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1993, Exodus, vol. 1, pp. 126 f.):

ודע, כי 'בין הערבים' הוא על שני דרכים: האחד - מעת שתחשך השמש עד עת סוד האור הנראה בעבים, וזאת העת - שעה ושליש שעה [...] והדרך השני - להיות פירוש 'בין הערבים' בפסח - מעת שתבוא השמש אל תחלת פאת מערב. ומעתיקי התורה אמרו, שהלכה למשה, ש'בין הערבים' בפסח הוא הדרך השני, והוא האמת ואין בו ספק.

Know that "*ben ha'arbayim*" can be [understood] in two ways: the first [possible meaning] is the time from when the sun sets until no more light can be seen in the clouds, a period of an hour and a third; [...] and the second way is that "*ben ha'arbayim*" on Pesah is the time from when the sun starts to go down until it reaches the edge of the west. Those that transmit the law have said that the *halakha* has been transmitted since Moses that "*ben ha'arbayim*" on Pesah is [in accordance with] the second way, and this is the truth, without a doubt.

xi. *Note by Tomer Mangoubi*: Not all the Karaite sages believed in an absolute prohibition on carrying. Ḥakham Levi ben Yefeth (eleventh century) argued that while one should strive to be as prepared as possible before the Sabbath to avoid carrying on the Sabbath, one is permitted to carry items outside of one's house.

Levi ben Yefeth, *Sefer Miẓvoth*, p. 248:

וכבר זכרנו באשר נקדם כי אמר 'ולא תוציאו משא מבתיכם' לא יורה על זה, וכי יהיה זה כן יעבור לנשוא מאכל וספרי חמשים והכלים אשר יעשה בהם ב[ש]בת מן חצר אל חצר. [...] והטוב להשתמר בו.

And we have already mentioned above that when Scripture says *Do not carry forth a burden out of your houses* (Jeremiah 17:22), it is not referring to [an absolute prohibition on carrying from domain to domain on the Sabbath], and because this is so, it is permissible to carry food, or copies of the five books [of the Torah], or utensils that are used on the Sabbath from one courtyard to another. [...] but it is best to be careful about this.

(Ḥakham Levi's work was originally written in Judeo-Arabic.

Students of rabbinic literature might understand the word יעבור to mean *it is forbidden*; but the word יעבור is the translation of the Judeo-Arabic word יגוז, which means *it is permissible*. The root of the Arabic word means *to pass*, which is also the root of the Hebrew word יעבור. This explains why the word יעבור was chosen for the translation.)

Moreover, Ḥakham 'Anan Ben David held it permissible to carry anything that is not so heavy as to require being carried on one's shoulders (see Nemoy, L., *Karaite Anthology: Excerpts from the Early Literature*, Yale Judaica Series, 1952, p. 17).

xii. The author of *Levush Malkhuth* is alluding here to a passage in the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 72a, about the case of “one who comes in stealth” (*ha-ba ba-maḥtereth*, from Exodus 22:1). The claim in *Levush Malkhuth* that rabbinic halakha simply allows a thief to keep the item he stole is not correct when understood in context.

אמר רב: הבא במחתרת ונטל כלים ויצא - פטור. מאי טעמא? בדמים קננהו. אמר רבא: מסתברא מילתיה דרב בששיבך, דליתנהו; אבל נטל - לא. והאלהים, אמר רב אפילו נטל! [...] ולא היא [...].

Rav said: “If one came in stealth [to rob one's neighbor's house], and took items, and left – one is exempt [from paying for the items].” Why? For he has acquired it with his blood. Rava said: “It seems that Rav's words refer only to a case where [the thief] broke [the items], such that they are no longer in existence; but if [the thief] took them along – then [Rav's words do] not [refer to such a case].” But by God, Rav said even “one took [items]”! [...] Nonetheless, this is not [the actual halakha] [...]

These passages relate to the rabbinic concept of *qim leh bi-derabba minneh* (קים ליה בדרבה מיניה) – if one commits an act that bears both a lenient and a stringent penalty, the stringent penalty is sufficient, and one does not have to incur the lighter penalty.

Thus, if one commits an action where one is sentenced to both the death penalty and lashes, one does not need to undergo the lashes, just the execution.

In the case of the thief who comes stealthily, the “stringent penalty” is getting killed by the homeowner (“with his blood”), and the “lenient penalty” is having to pay restitution for the stolen property. Rav says that even though the thief did not actually get killed, a court cannot impose the lesser penalty, because one never incurs two penalties at once.

Rava then interprets Rav’s words as referring only to a case where the property has been destroyed, so paying restitution to the homeowner would actually be “a penalty,” a more lenient one than getting killed. But in a case where the whole item still survives, of course the thief would need to give it back – giving it back is not a “penalty” at all, but merely returning what the homeowner owns.

The anonymous editorial layer of the Talmud (the “*sethama di-gemara*”) then says: no, Rav would mean even in a case where the property has not been destroyed – but nonetheless, it concludes, the halakha does not follow Rav.

In any event, Rav’s statement, “[the thief] has acquired it with his blood,” does not simply mean that because one has put oneself in danger to commit the robbery, one somehow deserves the property. Rather, it is a highly complicated application of the principle that two penalties cannot be incurred in one act. An unfair application, to be sure, but sometimes legal systems are such that, in certain circumstances, courts are unable to mete out a certain penalty – in this case, to force the thief to return the stolen object. (As another example of where a court simply cannot mete out a fair penalty, consider a case where there is only one witness to a crime, a very reliable, trusted witness; in such a case, the court simply cannot punish the crime, for the Torah insists on two witnesses.)

Finally, as noted above, the conclusion of the anonymous editors of the Talmud goes against their interpretation of Rav's statement – indeed, the thief would need to return the item if it is still in existence. And because this is the conclusion of the passage, normative rabbinic halakha follows this; only in a case where the item has been destroyed, the court cannot force the thief to pay restitution (Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Geneva* 9:13).

xiii. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi*: Ḥakham Aaron ben Elijah, in *Gan 'Eden*, understands “intentional” cases to include two separate scenarios. First, the obvious case in which one intends to maim his fellow and succeeds in doing so. Second, cases in which one engages in risky behavior such that he knows it is very likely for him to maim his fellow.

Importantly, Ḥakham Aaron ben Elijah does not apply the punishment of “a life for a life” in cases in which a man intends to strike his fellow but without the intention to kill, and in a way not likely to kill him:

Gan 'Eden, Diné Mumin, p. 179b, column 1:

אמר הכתוב על ההורג רעהו בשגגה, הוא מי שכיוון להכות את רעהו ומתוך מכתו מת, אם היה הדבר שהכה בו אין ראוי לההרג בו אדם, ונהרג, זה יקרא 'מכה נפש בשגגה'. ועל כן חבר ואמר: 'ואם בכלי ברזל הכהו וימות', וכו'; כי הואיל שהכהו בדבר שימות בו אדם, העלה עליו הכתוב שהוא רוצח מזיד.

Scripture says that one who kills his fellow *accidentally* includes one who intended to strike his fellow, and because of the strike, [his fellow] dies, for if he hits him with something that is not [usually] liable to cause death, and he is killed – this is what is called *one who kills a man accidentally* [Numbers 35:11]. For this reason, Scripture continues and says: *And if with a metal tool he hits him and he dies, [he is a murderer]* [Numbers 35:16]; for [Scripture] informs us that if one hits another with a tool that is liable to kill a man, then he is an intentional murderer.

Ḥakham Aaron ben Joseph, in *Sefer Ha-mivḥar*, holds the same way; see *Sefer Ha-mivḥar*, Parashath Mishpaṭim, p. 43a, on Exodus 22:21–27:

אבל אם נתכוון לעשות בו פגם, עין תחת עין. וכי מה נפש אם הרגו בשגגה
גולה ממקומו, אם כן במומים שאין מכוון יתן כפר.

If he intends to give him a blemish, [the ruling is] *an eye for an eye*. However, regarding injuries without intent, he gives monetary compensation (*kofer*).

xiv. A number of rabbinic sources present this reading of Exodus 32:2 as a principle to follow the majority in legal debates. See the sources assembled by M.M. Kasher in *Tora Shelema*, vol. 18, pp. 161 ff. Here let us suffice with one source,

Palestinian Talmud, Sanhedrin 4:2:

א"ר ינאי אילו ניתנה התורה חתוכה לא היתה לרגל עמידה. מה טעם וידבר
ה' אל משה אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם הודיעני היאך היא ההלכה אמר לו
אחרי רבים להטות רבו המזכין וכו' רבו המחייבין חייבו כדי שתהא התורה
נדרשת מ"ט פנים טמא ומ"ט פנים טהור מיניין ודגל'ו.

R. Yannai says: If the Torah had been given in a clear-cut manner, there would be no room for the foot to stand. Why so? The Lord spoke to Moses, and [Moses] said to Him: "O Master of the Universe, please tell me what the *halakha* is." He replied: "*Decline after many* – if there are more [opinions] that say exempt, then it is exempt; if there are more [opinions] that say it is liable, say liable." Thus, the Torah is expounded in forty-nine ways to declare [a given case] impure and forty-nine ways to declare [the given case] pure, in accordance with the numerical value of the word *ve-diglo* [= "and his banner," Song of Songs 2:4].

xv. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi*: To the best of my knowledge, none of the classical Karaite sages held that Jews are to separate pots in which a mother's milk is boiled from pots in which the offspring's meat is boiled. With few exceptions (unrelated to milk

and meat), Karaite jurists were generally concerned with the ritual purity of utensils (see Leviticus 11:32), not with whether utensils came into contact with ritually pure items that were nevertheless forbidden from consumption.

xvi. Babylonian Talmud, Karethoth 6a:

ת"ר פיטום הקטרת הצרי והציפורן והחלבנה והלבונה משקל שבעי של שבעים מנה מור וקציעה שיבולת נרד וכרכום משקל ששה עשר של ששה עשר מנה הקושט שנים עשר קילופה שלשה וקנמון תשעה בורית ברשינה תשעה קבין יין קפריסין סאין תלתא קבין תלתא אם אין לו יין קפריסין מביא חמר חיריין עתיק מלח סדומית רובע מעלה עשן כל שהוא ר' נתן אומר אף כיפת הירדן כל שהוא ואם נתן בה דבש פסלה חיסר אחת מכל סממניה חייב מיתה.

The sages taught [in a *baraita*]: The recipe for the incense is: balsam, onycha, galbanum, frankincense, each of seventy *mané*-measures; myrrh, cassia, sweet spikenard, saffron, each of sixteen *mane*-measurements; costus, twelve [*mané*-measures]; cinnamon, nine; Carshina lye, nine *qav*-measures; Cypriot wine, three *se'a*-measures and three *qav*-measures; and if one has no Cypriot wine, one brings aged white wine; Sodom salt, a quarter [of a *qav*]; and a small bit of *ma'alé 'ashan* [an herb that causes the smoke to rise]. R. Nathan says: Even a small amount of resin from [the banks of] the Jordan. And if one adds honey to it, this renders it invalid. And if one leaves out any of its spices, one incurs the death penalty.

Because the incense may be made and burned only in the Temple, the debate about its recipe is not actually a matter of practical import for Karaites or Rabbanites. Nonetheless, most Rabbanite groups have traditionally included this Talmudic passage about the incense in their daily or weekly liturgy, which gives it a certain prominence in their lives. (See, for example, Philip Birnbaum, ed., *Daily Prayer Book: Ha-Siddur HaShalem*, Hebrew

Publishing Company, 1949, p. 407.) This may be why the author of *Levush Malkhuth* has chosen to include it in his book.

xvii. The eighteen *terefoth* are listed in Mishna Ḥullin 3:1. (They are very technical, and there is no reason to list them here.) The author of *Levush Malkhuth* says that a *sirkha* and a *terefa* are synonymous terms for the Rabbanites, but this is actually not so. In fact, a *terefa* is an invalidating condition (as *Levush Malkhuth* accurately states), whereas a *sirkha* is a kind of string on the outside of the lungs (as *Levush Malkhuth* states earlier), which is not itself a *terefa*; in some cases, this presents no problem, but in many technical cases, rabbinic *halakha* is concerned that the *sirkha* might be concealing a *terefa* underneath it. See Maimonides, *Mishné Tora, Hilkhoth Sheḥiṭa* 11:4 ff.

xviii. As the author explicitly notes here, the source for this idea is in the Babylonian Talmud, Ḥullin 59a:

ואמר רב חסדא היה מהלך במדבר ומצא בהמה שפיה גמס ופרסותיה
חתוכות בודק בבשרה אם מהלך שתי וערב בידוע שהיא טהורה ואם לאו
בידוע שהיא טמאה ובלבד שיכיר עדוד לאו אמרת איכא עדוד איכא נמי
מינא אחרנא דדמיא לעדוד גמירי דליכא והיכא בודק אמר אביי ואיתימא
רב חסדא בכנפי העוקץ.

And Rav Ḥisda said: If one is walking in the wild and finds an animal whose mouth and hooves are injured [such that one cannot check for cud-chewing or split hooves], one should check its flesh: if it runs crosswise, then it is definitely kosher; and if not, then it is definitely not kosher – as long as one is familiar with [the appearance of] the ‘*arod* [wild ass]. But [the Talmud challenges this]: Once you say that the ‘*arod* [is an exception], maybe there are other exceptions, similar to the ‘*arod*? No [the Talmud resolves this challenge], we have a tradition that there are no others. And where does one check [the flesh]? Abbayyé, and some say Rav Ḥisda, said: In the edges of the tail.

xix. This is referring to the Rabbinic principle of *biṭṭul* (nullification of small amounts).

Babylonian Talmud, Ḥullin 98a:

אמר ר' חייא בר אבא אמר ר' יהושע בן לוי משום בר קפרא: כל איסורין שבתורה בששים. אמר לפניו ר' שמואל בר רב יצחק: רבי, אתה אומר כן? הכי אמר רב אסי אמר ר' יהושע בן לוי משום בר קפרא: כל איסורין שבתורה במאה. ושניהם לא למדוה אלא מזרוע בשלה, דכתיב: ולקח הכהן את הזרוע בשלה וגו' (במדבר ו, יט). ותניא: בשלה [...] - ר' שמעון בן יוחאי אומר אין בשלה אלא שנתבשלה עם האיל. [...] מאן דאמר בששים סבר בשר ועצמות בהדי בשר ועצמות משערין, והוה ליה בששים; מאן דאמר במאה סבר בשר בהדי בשר משערין, והוה ליה במאה.

R. Ḥiyya bar Abba says in the name of R. Joshua ben Levi in the name of Bar Qappara: "All prohibited foods in the Torah are [nullified] in sixty." But R. Samuel bar Rav Isaac said to him: "My master, do you teach thus? [But] Thus said Rav Assi in the name of R. Joshua ben Levi in the name of Bar Qappara: All prohibited foods in the Torah are [nullified] in one hundred." The two opinions are each derived from the "cooked leg" [of the ram offered by a Nazirite], as it is written: *The priest shall take the cooked leg* [Numbers 6:19]. And it is taught [in a *baraita*]: "Cooked [...] – R. Simeon b. Yoḥai says that it is cooked together with the ram." [...] The opinion that says sixty says that we measure the flesh and bones [of the leg] against the flesh and bones [of the entire ram], whereas the opinion that says one hundred says that we measure just the flesh [of the leg] against the flesh [of the ram].

That is, the leg of the ram is to be eaten by the priests, and is forbidden to ordinary Jews. However, the rest of the ram is eaten by the ordinary Jews. If the leg is cooked together with the rest of the ram, then there will be a transfer of fat and fluids between them, such that some of the essence of the leg will be present in

the rest of the ram. Thus, when some small amount of forbidden food is mixed into permitted food, the mixture is permitted. The two sides in the Talmudic debate differ on how exactly to calculate this amount, but they agree on the principle.

xx. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi:* Perhaps the author misspoke in his haste to complete his work. To the best of my knowledge, all other Karaite sages held that, when one touches an object upon which a menstruant has sat or lain, one becomes impure. Their view is in accordance with the plain meaning of the biblical text (Leviticus 15:22–23). However, the author states without justification that, even if one touches what a menstruant has touched, without her having sat or lain on the object, one becomes impure.

xxi. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi:* Like our author, *Addereth Eliyyahu* and *Gan 'Eden* hold that a priest must declare whether one is impure with afflictions. Unlike *Levush Malkhuth*, however, both works insist that only a priest with a definitive pedigree may accomplish this task.

Addereth Eliyyahu, 'Inyan Ṭum'a Ve-ṭohora, chapter 14, p. 75a:

בנגעי צרעת, להיות שטומאת מצורע וטהרתו תלויות לכהן, ועתה בגלות
אין לנו כהנים מיוחסים בכתב...

With regard to the *zara'ath*-afflictions: the impurity and purification of the afflicted one are dependent on a priest, and here in our exile, we have no priests whose lineage can be demonstrated with [family] documents. . . .

Gan 'Eden, 'Inyan Ṭum'a Ve-ṭohora, Diné Nig'é Zāra'ath, p. 119a:

ועתה בגלות, כיון שאין כהן ידוע שהוא מבני אהרן, שהרי בזמן בית שני
כשהיו כהנים כשבקשו כתבם המתחוס ולא נמצא ויגואלו מן הכהונה; וזה
היה בזמן שבית המקדש קיים, כל שכן עתה בגלותנו. אך לפי הנראה אם
יהיה כהן מיוחס עתה יש לו לטמא ולטהר.

But today, in the exile, there is no priest that is known [for certain] to be from the descendants of Aaron. For behold, in the time of the Second Temple, they would investigate the

documents of priestly lineage; and when they could not find them, [the relevant priests] were expelled from the priesthood. This was at the time when the temple stood; all the more so today in our exile [when we are more distant from the time of Aaron]. But it seems that if, [theoretically,] there should [happen to] be a priest with a pedigree even today, he would be able to declare impure, and purify [people with *zara'ath*-afflictions].

Thus, either the author of *Levush Malkhuth* had access to priests with pedigrees in his community, or he did not believe that a pedigree was necessary for priests in order to adjudicate matters of impurity due to *zara'ath*-afflictions.

xxii. Note from Tomer Mangoubi: Most Karaite sages held that a man who sleeps with a menstruant on the first day of her blood flow is impure for seven days, whereas one who sleeps with a menstruant on latter days is impure only for one. This is because they believed the blood on the first day (*dam rishon*) to be more impure than the blood on latter days.

Addereth Eliyyahu, 'Inyan Tūm'a Ve-ṭohora, chapter 9, p. 73b:

ובעלי התלמוד לא הבדילו בין דם ראשון לדם שאר הימים, היות מוסיפים
שבעה ימים נקיים. אמנם בעלי מקרא, בהיותם אינם מוסיפים שבעה נקיים,
הוכרחו להבדיל בין דם ראשון לדם שאר הימים, כי אמרו שטומאת שבעת
ימי נידה אינם כי אם בעבור הדם הראשון, ולא בעבור דם שאר הימים;
כי אפילו שלא תראה דם שני היא טמאה טומאת שבעה, וזה הוא בעבור
הדם הראשון.

The Talmudites do not differentiate between the blood of the first day and the blood of the rest of the days, since they add seven purification days [after any time a woman sees vaginal bleeding]. However, the Karaites, because they do not add seven purification days, must differentiate between blood of the first day and blood of the rest of the days; for they said that the impurity of the seven days of menstruation are due to the blood

of the first day, not the blood of the rest of the days. For even if she does not see blood of the second day, she is nonetheless impure seven days; this is because of the blood of the first day.

xxiii. Originally, the Rabbanites distinguished between the menstruant and the *zava*, just as the Karaites do. However, because of concern of not being expert in identifying what flow counts as menstruation and what as that of a *zava*, the Rabbanites became progressively more strict in applying the stringencies of both kinds of flow on every flow – not because they interpret the biblical verses thus, but as a stringency to be extra careful.

This is explained in the Babylonian Talmud, Nidda 66a:

אמר רב יוסף אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: התקין רבי בשדות: ראתה יום אחד - תשב ששה והוא. שנים - תשב ששה והן. שלשה - תשב שבעה נקיים. אמר ר' זירא: בנות ישראל החמירו על עצמן, שאפילו רואות טפת דם כחרדל - יושבות עליה שבעה נקיים.

Rav Yosef said in the name of Rav Yehuda, who said it in the name of Rav: Ribbi [*i.e.*, Judah Ha-nasi, around the year 200 CE] instituted in the fields: If a woman sees [blood] for a single day – she must sit [=remain impure] for that day, and six more [following the biblical rule for a menstruant]. [If she sees blood] for two days – she must sit for those days, and six more [for a total of eight – seven in case she is a menstruant, but counting these seven only starting the second day, in case the first day she was a *zava*, not a menstruant]. [If she sees blood] for three days – she must sit seven clean days [following the biblical rule for a *zava*, thus adding up to a total of ten days]. R. Zera [around the year 300] said: The daughters of Israel have taken a stringency upon themselves, such that even if they see only a single drop of blood, like [the size of] a mustard-seed – they sit seven clean days after it.

xxiv. The word here is *mamzerim*, a word that first appears in Deuteronomy 23:3, which rabbinic tradition understands as “children

born as the result of illicit sexual relationships,” and the author of *Levush Malkhuth* seems to agree with this rabbinic understanding.

According to the Karaite sage Jacob ben Reuben (eleventh century), there were at least seven definitions of *mamzer* known in his day, some of which also correspond to the Rabbanite understanding. His yet unpublished commentary (*Sefer Ha-’osher*) on Deuteronomy 23:3 is cited from manuscript in Zvi Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium: The Formative Years, 970-1100*, (Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 72, n. 40, and lists the following interpretations of the word:

והם: (1) גוים כופרים ונתיהדו. (2) ד[בר] א[חר]... הוא הידוע מאמו ולא ידוע מאביו... (3) וכל מי שנולד מן ער[ו]ת אסורות גם הוא יקרא ממזר. אבל ישראל נקרא ממזר מפני שנתגרשו מנחלת אברהם, שנ[אמר]: “וישב ממזר באשדוד”. (4) ד[בר] א[חר] והנולד מן הנדה... (5) ד[בר] א[חר] היא משפחה מהגוים קרואה ממזר... (6) ד[בר] א[חר] הם כל הגוים המתיהדים, ולא כן הוא. (7) ד[בר] א[חר] הם שאינם מזרע אברהם (1) Gentiles, who reject [God], but [nonetheless] become Jewish; (2) another interpretation: [...] one whose mother is known, but whose father is unknown; [...] (3) anyone who is the offspring of forbidden sexual relations; but a Jew is called *mamzer* on account of being banished from Abraham’s inheritance, as it is written: *and the mamzer will dwell in Ashdod* [Zechariah 9:6]; (4) another interpretation: one who is conceived by a menstruant woman; (5) the name of a specific gentile clan is *mamzer*; (6) all gentiles that become Jewish – but this is not correct; and (7) anyone who is not of the seed of Abraham.

xxv. Mishna Hullin 4:5:

השוחט את הבהמה, ומצא בה בן שמונה חי או מת, או בן תשעה מת - קודעו, ומוציא את דמו. מצא בה בן תשעה חי - טעון שחיטה, וחייב משום “אותו ואת בנו”. דברי רבי מאיר; וחכמים אומרים, שחיטת אימו מטהרתו. If one has slaughtered an animal, and finds in it a not-quite-fully-formed fetus [literally, “an eight-month-old,” because a

human fetus would be of that level of readiness after eight months of gestation], whether alive or dead, or a fully-formed fetus [literally, “a nine-month-old”] that is dead – one may tear it out, and remove its blood [and then it will be kosher to eat]. If one finds a fully-formed fetus, and it is alive – it needs to undergo [kosher] slaughter, and [if one slaughters it that day], one violates [the law against slaughtering] it and its young [both in one day]. These are the words of R. Meir; but the sages say: the slaughter of its mother makes it fit [for consumption by Jews].

Rabbanite law follows the opinion of R. Meir; see, for example, Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Ma'akhaloth Asuroth* 5:13.

xxvi. See Babylonian Talmud, *Menaḥoth* 65a–b:

שהיו ביתוסין אומרים עצרת אחר השבת. ניטפל להם רבן יוחנן בן זכאי, ואמר להם: שוטים, מנין לכם? ולא היה אדם אחד שהיה משיבו, חוץ מזקן אחד שהיה מפטפט כנגדו ואמר: משה רבינו אוהב ישראל היה, ויודע שעצרת יום אחד הוא; עמד ותקנה אחר שבת כדי שיהו ישראל מתענגין שני ימים. קרא עליו מקרא זה: 'אחד עשר יום מחורב דרך הר שעיר' - ואם משה רבינו אוהב ישראל היה, למה איחרן במדבר ארבעים שנה?! אמר לו: רבי, בכך אתה פוטרני?! אמר לו: שוטה, ולא תהא תורה שלמה שלנו כשיחה בטילה שלכם? כתוב אחד אומר 'תספרו חמשים יום', וכתוב אחד אומר 'שבע שבתות תמימות תהיינה'. הא כיצד? כאן ביום טוב שחל להיות בשבת, כאן ביום טוב שחל להיות באמצע שבת.

For the Boethusians said: 'Azereth [a name for Shavu'oth, standard in Talmudic literature] is after the Sabbath [*i.e.*, on Sunday]. Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai went to deal with them, and said to them: “Fools, what is your reasoning?” None of them responded to him, except one old man who started babbling at him, saying: “Moses our teacher loved the Jewish people, and knew that 'Azereth was only a single day; so he instituted it after the Sabbath, so that the Jews could have a two-day period of enjoyment.” [Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai]

cited the following verse with regard to this: *It is an eleven-day journal from Horeb, by way of Mt. Se'ir [until Qadesh-Barnea']* (Deuteronomy 1:2) – “If Moses our teacher loved the Jews, why did he delay them in the wilderness for forty years [rather than bringing them over the short way of eleven days]?!” [The Boethusian man] responded: “My teacher, do you dismiss with [such a flimsy response]?!” [Rabban Yoḥanan ben Zakkai] said: “You fool, is our complete Torah like your idle chatter? One verse says: *Ye shall count fifty days* [Leviticus 23:16], and another verse says: *they will be seven complete weeks* [Leviticus 23:15]. How does this work? One verse [*complete weeks*] speaks of [a year when] the festival [the first day of the Festival of Mazzoth] falls on the Sabbath; whereas the other verse refers to [a year when] the festival falls during the week.

xxvii. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi:* To the best of my knowledge, among the classical Karaite sages, only Ḥakham Daniel al-Qumisi (tenth century) advocated blowing the shofar on Yom Teru'a. Although he did not assert that blowing the shofar was *required*, Ḥakham Daniel believed the shofar would inspire Israelites to repent in advance of Yom Kippur.

As adapted from the text of Qumisi's commentary on Leviticus 23:24 in the Maagarim database of the Academy of the Hebrew Language:

ומן דעתי ביום תרועה חוץ מן תקיעת קרבנות הריעו בכל עיר למען להכריז עליהם ולהזכיר אתם: שובו מדרכיכם ותטהרו את מעשיכם כי בא יום כפרים. כי כל צום בלא תשובה אין בו יתרון [...] על כן אשרי איש אשר בשמעו קול שופר תרועה ידע כי עליו להכין את מעשיו. ככתוב “אשרי העם יודעי תרועה”. ויוליכם ה' באור פניו. ככתוב: “ה' באור פניך יהלכון”.
And it is my opinion that on Yom Teru'a, aside from the sounding [of the trumpets] [accompanying the Temple] sacrifices, they would sound in every city in order to proclaim to them and to remind them: “Return from your ways and purify your

deeds because Yom Ha-kippurim is coming.” For every fast without repentance has no benefit. [. . .] Therefore, happy is the man who, when he hears the voice of the sounding shofar, knows that it is upon him to prepare his deeds, as it is written, “happy is the nation who knows the sounding,” and the Lord will make them walk in the light of his countenance, as it is written, “O Lord, in the light of your countenance they walk” (Psalms 89:16).

(The text, as found in the Maagarim database, has the actual Tetragrammaton, which is unusual for this time period.)

xxviii. This claim is very strange; presumably, he means that Rabbanites go through countries where it is impossible to observe the Sabbath or obtain kosher food, just to obtain these species. However, in fact no Rabbanite rabbis would approve of such behavior. Rabbanite halakha does not permit even carrying the species to the synagogue on the Sabbath (see Babylonian Talmud, Sukka 43a), let alone eating non-kosher food in order to obtain them. See also *Tosfot Yom Tov*, commentary on the Mishna by Yom Tov Lipmann Heller (Prague, 1579–1654), on Mishna Rosh Ha-shana 4:8; the Mishna there states that one may not violate the restrictions of the festival in order to obtain a shofar, and Heller notes that the same applies also to obtaining the species of vegetation for Sukkoth.

xxix. See Babylonian Talmud, Menaḥoth 44a:

חלזון זהו גופו דומה לים, וברייתו דומה לדג, ועולה אחד לשבעים שנה,
ובדמו צובעין תכלת; לפיכך דמיו יקרים.

The *hillazon* [a kind of snail] – its body is similar to [the color of] the sea, and its form is similar to a fish, and it ascends [from the sea] once every seventy years, and we dye *tekheleth* from its blood; therefore, it is expensive.

In the mid-ninth century, *tekheleth* still existed among Rabbanite Jews, for Rav Naṭronai Gaon, head of the academy of Sura (in Iraq) at the time, speaks about their method of tying the

tekheleth strings among the white strings. (Cited in Abraham ben David, *Critiques of the Ra'avad on the Rambam*, on Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Zizith* 1:7.) However, at some point later in time, the identity of the *hillazon* was lost. In modern times, starting in the nineteenth century, various attempts to identify the *hillazon* were made; the most accepted today is the *Murex trunculus* snail, and indeed many rabbinic Jews since the mid-1980s have been dyeing strings of their *zizith* with dye from this snail. (See the “Tekhelet Timeline” on the website of the institute Ptil Tekhelet: <http://tekhelet.com/tekhelet-timeline/>. For more detail, see Baruch Sterman, *Rarest Blue: The Remarkable Story Of An Ancient Color Lost To History And Rediscovered*, Lyons Press, 2012.)

We have rendered the word *yaroq* as *green* (see p. 89), simply out of convenience. Indeed, many rabbinic sages used the term *yaroq* to refer to the color of fringes. This is because up until recent times, Hebrew, like many languages, did not have a unique word for *blue*. We do not know whether our author intended to convey *green* or *some specific shade of blue* with his usage of *yaroq*.

xxx. *Note from Tomer Mangoubi*: In addition to requiring a blue thread on *zizith*, some Karaite sages also believed that women, and not just men, were required to wear *zizith*. Ḥakham Levi ben Yefeth (eleventh century) was among these sages.

Ḥakham Levi ben Yefeth, *Sefer Mizvoth*, p. 786:

ואשר אמר כי זה הדבור הוא על האנשים מבני ישראל, וכי זה המצוה מוסגלה בהם לבד משניהם אינו תמים, והוא כי אין לו ראייה על זה אלא כאשר אמר הכתוב 'דבר אל בני ישראל'. ואנחנו מצאנו כי יש על הנשים מצוות הרבה, וכבר מצאנו בתורות הרבה כי יבוא הדבור ויאמר 'דבר אל בני ישראל' ויכליל בו אנשים ונשים, הוא אשר אמר: 'דברו אל בני ישראל' לאמר זאת החיה אשר תאכלו, והאכילה לכל. והטומאה הנזכרת בעניין, והוא חובה על הכל, וכן: 'דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם אשה כי תזריע', רוב עניין על הנשים.

One who says that this passage [Numbers 15:37–41] is addressed

only to the men of the Israelites, and that the commandment [of *zizith*] is limited to them – neither of these two [claims] is correct, for there is no evidence for it other than that Scripture says *speak to the Bené Yisra'el* [Israelites, literally “sons of Israel”]. But we find that there are many commandments that apply to women, where Scripture says *speak to the Bené Yisra'el*, which include both men and women. [Thus, for example, in the laws of kosher animals], it says: *Speak to the Bené Yisra'el, saying: This is the animal that ye shall eat* [Leviticus 11:2] – and eating applies to all. And ritual impurity is discussed in a passage, and it is a matter that applies to all, and it begins: *Speak to the Bené Yisra'el, and say to them: when a woman conceives . . .* [Leviticus 12:2] – and most of the matter concerns women.

Ḥakham Ya'aqov Qirqisani (tenth century), too, arrived at the same conclusion (*Kitāb al-Anwār wal-marāqib: Code of Karaite Law*, ed. L. Nemoy, Vol. v, XII 42.4, p. 1260):

وأخبر بأنّ علّة الأمر بلبّسه هي (بמדבר ט"ו, ל"ט) וזכרתם את כל מצוות ה', ועשייתם אותם **فَوَجِبَ** من ذلك ان يلبسه كل أحد من النساء والرجال اذا كان جميعهم يجب ان يذكرون فرائض الله ويعملونها وهذا بخلاف قول مَنْ أوجبه على الرجال دون النساء. I inform that the reason for the command to wear it is [Scripture's statement]: *And remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them* [Numbers 15:39]. So, out of this, it is obligatory to be worn by every one of the women and men, since all of them are obliged to remember God's obligations and do them; and this is different from him who says that it is obligated on men and not women.

Ḥakham Judah Hadassi (twelfth century) likewise held that women were to wear *zizith* (*Eshkol Hakofer*, chapter 13, p. 14b, column 2):

קשירתו כי גם היא בת ישראל מבני ישראל בדומה במצות ציצית.
קול צווי: "דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם ועשו להם ציצית."

קדושת מצותו גם האשה בקיום כל המצות ככתוב: "וראיתם אותו וזכרתם את כל מצות ה' ועשיתם אותם" כצווי צורך.

רמיזתו ככתוב: "הקהל את העם האנשים והנשים והטף וגרך אשר בשעריך".

רפידתו "למען ישמעו ולמען ילמדו ויראו את ה' אלהיכם ושמדו לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת תורתך.

The tying of *zizith* [includes also women], for a daughter of Israel is included in "Bené Yisra'el," equivalent in the commandment of *zizith*.

The words of the commandment are: *Speak to the Bené Yisra'el and say to them that they should make zizith for themselves* [Numbers 15:38].

The holiness of its commandment is also [upon women], for women are [included in] fulfilling all the commandments, as it is written: *And ye shall see it, and remember all the Lord's commandments, and perform them in accordance with your Rock's instruction.*

This is alluded in Scripture's words: *Gather the people, the men and the women and the children, and the sojourners within thy gates* [Deuteronomy 31:12],

And Scripture spreads out [what that means, in the continuation of this verse]: *In order that they may hear, and in order that they may learn, so that they may fear the Lord your God, and diligently observe all the words of this Torah, Your Torah.*

However, the view that women should wear *zizith* appears to have fallen out of favor with latter Karaite sages. Both Ḥakham Aaron ben Elijah (fourteenth century), in *Gan 'Eden*, 'Inyan Tefilla, chapter 6, p. 80b, column 2, and Ḥakham Elijah Bašyachi (late fifteenth century), in *Addereth Eliyyahu*, 'Inyan Tefilla, chapter 7, p. 99b, write that the commandment is limited to men. Ḥakham Bašyachi argues that this based on the instruction to speak to the "Bené Yisra'el":

מצות ציצית חיוב לאנשים הבוגרים, ובפרט לתלמידי חכמים, שחוששים בשכר מצות עשה, ולא לנשים ולקטנים, כי כתוב: 'דבר אל בני ישראל'.

The commandment of *zizith* is an obligation for adult men, especially for disciples of the sages, who are concerned about the reward for [fulfilling] the commandments; and not for women or children, for Scripture says: *Speak to the Bené Yisra'el* [literally: "Sons of Israel"].

Note from Gabriel Wasserman: Similarly, among the Rabbanites, there was an older view that the commandment of *zizith* applied also to women, but later rabbis ruled that it applied only to men. A *baraita* in the Babylonian Talmud, *Menaḥoth* 43a states:

הכל חייבין בציצית - כהנים, לויים, וישראלים, גרים, נשים, ועבדים. רבי שמעון פוטר בנשים, מפני שמצות עשה שהזמן גרמא הוא, וכל מצות עשה שהזמן גרמא נשים.

All are obligated in *zizith* – priests, Levites, Israelites, converts, women, and slaves. R. Shim'on [ben Yoḥai, second century CE] says that women are exempt, for it is a time-bound positive commandment [for, according to Rabbanite understanding, it does not apply during the night time], and women are exempt from all time-bound positive commandments.

The later Rabbinic authorities follow R. Shim'on's exemption of women from *zizith*; see, e.g., Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Zizith* 3:10.

xxxi. Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbath* 129b:

ואמר שמואל: פורסא דדמא - חד בשבתא, ארבעה, ומעלי שבתא; אבל שני וחמישי - לא, דאמר מר: מי שיש לו זכות אבות יקיין דם בשני ובחמישי, שבת דין של מעלה ושל מטה שוין כאחד. בתלתא בשבתא מאי טעמא לא? משום דקיימא ליה מאדים בזווי.

Shemuel said: The times to bloodlet are Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday – but not Monday or Thursday, for a teacher has stated: [Only] one who has ancestral merit may bloodlet on

Monday or Thursday, when the heavenly court and earthly court are synchronized. Why not on Tuesday? Because Mars is then in the corner.

xxxii. Babylonian Talmud, Bava Mezi'a 21b:

המוצא מעות בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשות ובכל מקום שהרבים מצויין שם הרי אלו שלו מפני שהבעלים מתיאשין מהן.

One who finds coins in synagogues or in study-houses, or in any place where many people are found – the [coins] belong to [the finder], for the [original] owner has lost all hope of [recovering] them.

xxxiii. Mishna Giṭṭin 9:10:

בית שמאי אומרים: לא יגרש אדם את אשתו אלא אם כן מצא בה דבר ערוה, שנאמר: 'כי מצא בה עדות דבר'. בית הלל אומרים: אפילו הקדיחה תבשילו, שנאמר 'דבר'. רבי עקיבא אומר: אפילו מצא אחרת נאה ממנה, שנאמר: 'והיה אם לא תמצא חן בעיניו'.

The School of Shammai say: A man must not divorce his wife unless he has found her [guilty of] a sexual indiscretion, as it is said: *for he has found some nakedness in her*. The School of Hillel say: Even if she has burned his food, as it is said: *some* [that is, anything]. R. Aqiva says: Even if he has found a prettier woman, as it is said: *that she find no favor in his eyes*.

The normative Rabbanite halakha follows the opinion of the School of Hillel (see commentary of Obadiah of Bertinoro on that passage, in the standard editions of the Mishna).

xxxiv. Mishna Makkoth 3:10:

כמה מלקין אותו? ארבעים חסר אחת, שנאמר: במספר ארבעים - מניין שהוא סמוך לארבעים. רבי יהודה אומר: ארבעים שלמות.

How many does one lash? Forty minus one [*i.e.*, 39], as it is said *Number forty* [the last word of verse 2 and the first word of verse 3], meaning the number adjacent to forty. R. Judah says: A full forty.

xxxv. See Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 38b:

אמר ההוא מינא לרב אידי: כתוב: ואל משה אמר עלה אל ה' - עלה אלי
מיבעי ליה! אמר ליה: זהו מטטרון ששמו כשם רבו דכתיב: כי שמי בקרבו.
A certain heretic said to Rav Idith: "It is written: *And to Moses, He said: Ascend to the Lord.* [Ex. 24:1] Should He not have said:
'Ascend to me'?" [Rav Idith] responded: "This is Metatron,
whose name is like that of his Master, as it is written: *For my name is in him.*"

For the expressions, "the Great Name" and "the Lesser Name", see the commentary *Hizquni*, by Hezekiah ben Manoah, on Exodus 23:21.

xxxvi. On p. 71, our author writes: "Moreover, [the Rabbanites] stubbornly permit [a man to marry his] father's wife; and a father will marry a woman, and his son marry her daughter." In fact, Rabbanite halakha does not allow marriage between a man and his father's wife. This is prohibited in Leviticus 18:8, and it is clear that Rabbinic halakha views it as a terrible sin; see Mishna Sanhedrin 7:4, which states that the punishment is stoning. In the Babylonian Talmud, on that passage (Sanhedrin 54a), it states that this such marriage is prohibited whether or not the father is still alive.

On the other hand, Rabbanite halakha does permit marriages between a man and his father's wife's daughter, that is, his step-sister. Leviticus 18:11 states: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of the daughter of thy father's wife, moledeth of thy father.* Rabbanite tradition understands "moledeth of thy father" as meaning "born of your father", that is, one's actual sister or half-sister. Because a man's step-sister is not a biological daughter of his father, Rabbanite halakha permits a marriage between the two. (This is assumed throughout Talmudic literature, but the clearest explanation of the exegesis of the verse can be found in Maimonides, *Mishné Tora*, *Hilkhoth Issuré Bi'a* 2:3.)

Nonetheless, in the Palestinian Talmud, Yevamoth 2:4, it states that if two step-siblings have grown up in the same house, they should not marry one another – not because it is inherently forbidden, but because it will look like two siblings have married. In that passage in the Palestinian Talmud, R. Ḥanina bar Abbahu permits such a couple may move to somewhere where nobody knows them, and get married there.

Notes on the Hebrew Text

- א. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has **ואחת**, which makes no syntactical sense.
- ב. This word is missing from the verse in Ezra.
- ג. Following MS C; Ed. Neubauer has **בדכתוב**.
- ד. Following MS B; Ed. Neubauer has **ותלמודיהם**.
- ה. Text follows the manuscripts; Ed. Neubauer has the mistaken reading **הקל**.
- ו. Text follows the manuscripts; Ed. Neubauer has the nonsensical reading **הנהדרגם**.
- ז. Text follows the manuscripts; Ed. Neubauer has the mistaken reading **הפירושם**.
- ח. MS B has this line in the body of the text, not in a note.
- ט. Text follows all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has **שהיא**.
- י. MS A and Ed. Neubauer add: **אלף תתקנ"ג שנים**.
- יא. This word is missing from Ed. Neubauer, but present in MS B and in the verse from Genesis.
- יב. The words "**שבעת ימים**" do not actually appear in this verse; the author is probably citing from memory, and has confused this verse with the verse from Deuteronomy which he cites next.
- יג. Text follows MSS B and C. Ed. Neubauer is missing the words **והם אמרו** **כי בין הערבים הוא מזמן שיטה השמש**; MS A is missing those words, as well as the continuation of the sentence, through the end. (The version in Ed. Neubauer is clearly an accidental omission, due to the fact that the word **שמש** appears multiple times, and the copyist's eye skipped from one to another. The version in MS A is probably a further development of this corrupted version; because the end of the sentence no longer made sense, the copyist of MS A simply left it out.)
- יד. This is the correct number, following all MSS. Ed. Neubauer has **סדר הג'**.
- טו. Following all manuscripts; Ed. Neubauer has **בבים**, a clear misprint.
- טז. Following MSS B and C. Ed. Neubaeur has **מצות**, and MS A is unclear.
- יז. Ed. Neubauer has **ונמנין**, but the initial vav makes no sense. All MSS read **נמנין**, which I am unable to explain. I believe that the original text was probably **נמנין**, and somehow the word got split into two in the copying tradition.

- יח. Following MSS A and B, and the biblical text; MS C and Ed. Neubauer read אנכי.
- יט. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads הוא.
- כ. Following MSS A and C; MS B and Ed. Neubauer read מותרת, which does not make syntactical sense here.
- כא. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads 'ג, which is a clear mistake.
- כב. Following all MSS (הא'); Ed. Neubaer reads הוא.
- כג. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads יהשני, a clear misprint.
- כד. This word does not belong here, but rather only in the second half of the sentence. Nonetheless, it appears in all manuscripts (in both parts of the sentence), and the slip may go back to the original author, not just to a copyist.
- כה. We have printed 6, the proper chapter reference, here; however, Ed. Neubauer and all manuscripts read 7.
- כו. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has שהוא.
- כז. Neubauer and all MSS read כ"ה (25), but this citation is clearly incorrect.
- כח. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads אל, an obvious error.
- כט. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads ק"ה, which is an error.
- ל. The words חדשו דבר שלא follow all MSS; Ed. Neubauer prints חדשלאו דבר, which is nonsense.
- לא. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads בעיצותינו.
- לב. From after the numeral ו through the opening of the second citation is missing from Ed. Neubauer, due to an accident in copying; thus, the first verse from Proverbs is entirely missing, and it seems to say, incorrectly, that the second verse is in chapter six. All manuscripts have the text correct.
- לג. All manuscripts and Ed. Neubauer read יד, but this is not the correct citation.
- לד. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has just ט, which is a mistake.
- לה. The manuscripts and Ed. Neubauer all have the odd abbreviation אלא אין זה אלא, which seems to stand for אלא זה אלא.
- לו. This word is present in all MSS, but missing in Ed. Neubauer.
- לז. Following all MSS (מוטעין), both here and in the occurrence of the word in the next sentence; Ed. Neubauer has מועטין (in both sentences), which seems to be an error.

- לח. Following all MSS, which give the full text of the verse; Ed. Neubauer has only up to the word **ואור**, followed by **וגו'** (=etc.).
- לט. Here, too, all MSS include the text through the end of the verse, while Ed. Neubauer has only up to the word **היין**, followed by **וגו'** (=etc.).
- מ. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has the bizarre spelling **הנביה**.
- מא. Here, too, all MSS include the text through the end of the verse, while Ed. Neubauer has only up to the word **ידעוני**, followed by **וגו'** (=etc.).
- מב. All MSS include the full text of these two verses. Ed. Neubauer has just: **ואתם סרתם מן הדרך הכשלתם רבים בתורה וגו' וגם אני נתתי אתכם נבזים וגו'.**
- מג. This word is equipped with vowel signs in MS A, and we have followed its vocalization. (On the other hand, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, in his massive Hebrew dictionary, *Thesaurus Totius Hebraicitatis et Veteris et Recentioris*, Jerusalem, 1908–1958, volume 6, s.v. **מאדים**, vocalizes the word as **מַאֲדִים**.)
- מד. This is the reading in all MSS and in Ed. Neubauer, but the syntax is problematic, and would be easier if it read **בְּזִית** (which may be what the author in fact wrote).
- מה. The words **כֵּן** and **ובעלתה** are missing in Ed. Neubauer, but present in all MSS.
- מו. The words **אח אמתני למחלון בן אלימלך אלא** are missing from Ed. Neubauer, but present in all MSS.
- מז. Following MSS A and C (**מחלוקתם**); MS B and Ed. Neubauer have **מחלקותם**.
- מח. Following the abbreviation in MSS BC (**הנ"ל**); MS A and Ed. Neubauer have the abbreviation **הנ"נ**, which seems to be a simple mistake.
- מט. We have followed MS B in setting this paragraph in a different font from the rest of the work.
- נ. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer erroneously reads **פרסאות מלין**, instead of **"פרסאות, ופרסאות אלין"**.
- נא. These words appear in all MSS and in Ed. Neubauer, but they seem to be extraneous, so we have set them in parentheses to mark them for deletion.
- נב. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has **אמה**, which is a mistake.
- נג. The initial letter *lamed* appears in all MSS and in Ed. Neubauer, but it seems to be extraneous, so we have set it in parentheses to mark it for deletion.

- נד. Following MSS B and C; Ed. Neubauer and MS A erroneously read ס"ו.
- נה. This is the reading (אלהי) in all MSS and in Ed. Neubauer, but the biblical verse has אלהים.
- נו. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has והם.
- נז. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has כשאר.
- נח. Following MSS B and C, and the biblical verse; MS A and Neubauer have ויחפאו דברים בני ישראל, though in MS A there are dots above the words דברים and ישראל, which seem to indicate reversing the order of the words.
- נט. Following all MSS (though the form of the *kaf* is not 100% clear in MS A); Ed. Neubauer reads בפי.
- ס. The spelling with vav follows the text in all manuscripts and in Neubauer. Though this spelling, with the pronunciation גִּיהֶנוֹם, is common today, it is quite unusual and surprising for the early 18th century, when the usual spelling would have been גִּיהֶנֶם, with the pronunciation גִּיהֶנֶם, with *qamez*. Today's spelling and pronunciation of the word became common only in the later 18th and early 19th century, and even then mainly only in Ashkenazic circles.
- סא. Following all MSS (and the biblical verse); Ed. Neubauer prints אדם, without the initial *hé*.
- סב. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer has מְגִיהֶנֶם, but the spelling with vav is consistent with the earlier appearance of the word in *Levush Malkhuth*.
- סג. Following the vocalization in all MSS (A, C: אֵה; B: אֵי).
- סד. In a number of textual witnesses, the word תֵּצֵר is explained by a gloss: "כְּמוֹ תַּפְצֵר". This gloss appears in parentheses in MS A and Ed. Neubauer, and in the margin in MS C. However, it does not appear at all in MS B, and appears not to be part of the original text of *Levush Malkhuth*, so we have not included it above.
- סה. Following MSS B and C (and the biblical verse); MS A and Ed. Neubauer have "וְנִגְלוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּסֶפֶר", though MS A has dots above the words to indicate that the order should be reversed.
- סו. All textual witnesses read חֲלוּנוֹ, but this yields nonsense; the reading that we have printed, חֲלוּקוֹ, is our own emendation.
- סז. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer reads והביא.
- סח. Following all MSS; Ed. Neubauer (here and in the next sentence) reads גִּיהֶנֶם. See note ס above.

סט. Following MSS B and C; MS A has גונגאל here, and גונגאל in the next sentence; Ed. Neubauer has וגונגאל here, and גונגאל in the next sentence.

ע. Following MSS B and C; Ed. Neubauer and MS A have מיתנה (word division uncertain).

עא. Following MSS B and C. The reading in MS A and Ed. Neubauer is עלך, "[I will lean] on you." Note that עליה (found in MSS B and C) construes the noun חרב as feminine, as it usually is in Hebrew, even though the author uses the masculine, עליו, to refer to it in the next sentence. Such inconsistencies in gender are not uncommon in eighteenth-century Hebrew. (It is unlikely that the word עליו refers to the angel, rather than the sword.)

עב. Following all MSS (דיקנו); Ed. Neubauer reads דקינו.

עג. Following B and C. In MS A, the word is written in abbreviated form: אמר; Ed. Neubauer reads אמר.

עד. Following Ed. Neubauer and all MSS of *Levush Malkhuth*; the biblical text reads: ויהי דוד.

עה. Perhaps this should be vocalized לְאַמַּת; however, none of the texts spell the word with a *vav*, לאומת, which we would expect if that were the intention; and the phrase "אומת ישראל" is not a common name for the Jewish people.

עו. Ed. Neubauer here gives a reference to [יחזק' לג'], which is incorrect. MS A gives some reference to Ezekiel in the margin, but the chapter number is unclear. MSS B and C have no reference here. In any event, in all sources, the verse (37:7) is quoted somewhat inexactly, probably from memory.

Index of Biblical Verses

GENESIS

Gen. 1:14, 164 n. *iii*

Gen. 1:16, 131

Gen. 10:2, 15 n. 10

Gen. 17:11, 33

Gen. 27:31, 149 n. 87

Gen. 30:37, 149 n. 88

Gen. 35, 109

Gen. 50:23, 69

EXODUS

Ex. 3:15, 115

Ex. 6:20, 109 n. 62

Ex. 12:2, 35

Ex. 12:6, 39

Ex. 12:19, 39

Ex. 13, 37, 39, 97

Ex. 13:7, 39, 39 n. 31

Ex. 13:9, 97

Ex. 15:12, 133

Ex. 16, 41

Ex. 16: 29, 45

Ex. 20:12, 45

Ex. 21:24, 45

Ex. 22:1, 173 n. *xii*

Ex. 22:13, 47

Ex. 22:16, 75

Ex. 22:21–27, 176 n. *xiii*

Ex. 22:25, 47

Ex. 23, 37, 41

Ex. 23:2, 47

Ex. 23:19, 49, 53

Ex. 23:21, 192 n. *xxxv*

Ex. 24:1, 191 n. *xxxv*

Ex. 26:3, 73

Ex. 30:34, 51

Ex. 30:8, 41

Ex. 32:2, 176 n. *xiv*

Ex. 32:4, 151 n. 95

Ex. 32:10, 151

Ex. 33:20, 119

Ex. 34, 37, 49

Ex. 35:3, 41, 41 n. 32

Ex. 36:6, 43

LEVITICUS

Lev. 2:14, 53

Lev. 3:6–7, 55

Lev. 7:23, 55

Lev. 7:25, 55

Lev. 9, 71

Lev. 9:19, 55

Lev. 11, 57–63

Lev. 11:2, 55, 188 n. *xxx*

Lev. 11:24, 59

Lev. 11:32, 177 n. *xv*

Lev. 11:42–44, 63

Lev. 12, 63

Lev. 12:2, 188 n. *xxx*

Lev. 13, 65

Lev. 15, 67

Lev. 15:22–23, 180 n. *xx*

Lev. 18, 69

Lev. 18:7–17, 69 n. 45

Lev. 18:9, 71

Lev. 18:11, 69, 192 n. *xxxvi*

Lev. 18:13, 71 n. 47

Lev. 18:16, 109

Lev. 18:17, 71 n. 47
 Lev. 18:18, 69 n. 45, 71
 Lev. 19, 41
 Lev. 19:11, 73
 Lev. 19:20, 75
 Lev. 20:20, 109
 Lev. 21:7, 19 n. 18
 Lev. 22:28, 77
 Lev. 23, 41
 Lev. 23:10, 53
 Lev. 23:11, 77
 Lev. 23:15, 185 n. *xxvi*
 Lev. 23:15–16, 79
 Lev. 23:16, 185 n. *xxvi*
 Lev. 23:24, 81, 185 n. *xxvii*
 Lev. 23:39, 79 n. 49
 Lev. 23:40, 85 n. 53
 Lev. 23:40–42, 85
 Lev. 25, 47
 Lev. 25:14, 73

NUMBERS

Num. 6:19, 179 n. *xix*
 Num. 9:34, 101
 Num. 15, 89
 Num. 15:37–41, 187 n. *xxx*
 Num. 15:38, 189 n. *xxx*
 Num. 15:39, 188 n. *xxx*
 Num. 19:14, 89
 Num. 25:8, 153 n. 97
 Num. 25:13, 153 n. 97
 Num. 28:11, 35
 Num. 30:3, 93
 Num. 35:11, 175 n. *xii*
 Num. 35:16, 175 n. *xii*

DEUTERONOMY

Deut. 1:2, 185 n. *xxvi*
 Deut. 1:17, 151
 Deut. 4:2, 33, 51, 97
 Deut. 4:15, 113
 Deut. 5, 41
 Deut. 6:4, 113
 Deut. 6:6, 99
 Deut. 6:8–9, 97
 Deut. 10:16, 99
 Deut. 11:18, 99
 Deut. 12:13–14, 25
 Deut. 14, 49
 Deut. 16, 37
 Deut. 16:4, 39
 Deut. 17:11, 101
 Deut. 18:10–11, 103
 Deut. 21:11–13, 105
 Deut. 22:3, 107
 Deut. 22:26, 77
 Deut. 22:29, 75
 Deut. 23, 47
 Deut. 23:3, 182 n. *xxiv*
 Deut. 24:1, 107
 Deut. 25, 77
 Deut. 25:2–3, 109
 Deut. 25:5, 109
 Deut. 25:7–10, 111 n. 64
 Deut. 31:12, 189 n. *xxx*
 Deut. 32:8, 43 n. 34
 Deut. 33:11, 3, 3 n. 2

JUDGES

Jud. 5:21, 131
 Jud. 5:27, 153, 153 n. 98

I SAMUEL

I Sam. 2:3, 153

I Sam. 25:29, 5 n. 5

II SAMUEL

II Sam. 6:23, 69

II Sam. 21:8, 69

II KINGS

general, 9

II Kings 15:19, 9 n. 6

II Kings 17:9, 121

II Kings 17:17, 121

II Kings 17:20, 121

II Kings 18:13, 9 n. 6

ISAIAH

Isa. 5:20, 103

Isa. 11:15, 139

Isa. 24:23, 139

Isa. 26:16, 141

Isa. 28:7, 103

Isa. 34:4, 139

Isa. 40:4, 139

Isa. 40:13–14, 123

Isa. 40:18, 119

Isa. 42:8, 115

Isa. 43:10, 123

Isa. 43:16, 139

Isa. 44:8, 123

Isa. 44:24, 123

Isa. 54:10, 139

Isa. 59:1–2, 121

JEREMIAH

general, 9

Jer. 2:28, 103

Jer. 17:22, 43, 172 n. *xi*

EZEKIEL

Eze. 32:8, 139

Eze. 33, 157 n. 108

Eze. 37:7, 157, 157 n. 108

ZECHARIAH

Zech. 9:6, 183 n. *xxiv*

MALACHI

Mal. 2:8–9, 103

Mal. 3:8, 119

Mal. 3:22, 11

PSALMS

Ps. 2:4, 63 n. 41

Ps. 21, 3

Ps. 72, 3

Ps. 77:16–18, 133

Ps. 78:38, 109

Ps. 89:16, 186 n. *xxvii*

Ps. 95:1, 81

Ps. 100:1, 81

Ps. 119:47, 99

PROVERBS

Prov. 3:19, 123

Prov. 6:21, 99

Prov. 7:3, 99

Prov. 16:13, 3

JOB

Job 2:10, 155

SONG OF SONGS

Song 2:4, 176 n. *xiv*

LAMENTATIONS

Lam. 1:8, 155

ECCLESIASTES

Ecc. 3:21, 125

ESTHER

Esth. 2:7, 157

Esth. 2:20, 156

DANIEL

Dan. 2:32, 155

Dan. 5, 11

EZRA

general, 11 n. 7

Ezra 6:14, 161 n. *i*

Ezra 7:6, 11

Ezra 7:10, 11

NEHEMIAH

Neh. 8:15, 85, 85 n. 53

General Index

A

Aaron, 17, 41, 151, 180 n. *xxi*
 Aaron ben Elijah, see Elijah,
 Aaron ben
 Aaron ben Joseph, see Joseph,
 Aaron ben
 Abkovitz, David, 159
 Abraham, 7, 149, 149 n. 86, 164 n.
 v, 183 n. *xxiv*
 Abraham bar Ḥiyya, 166 n. *iv*
Addereth Eliyyahu
 ‘Inyan Qiddush Haḥodesh,
 164 n. *iii*
 ‘Inyan Tefilla, chapter 7, p.
 99b, 189 n. *xxx*
 ‘Inyan Tūm’a Ve-ṭohora, 180
 n. *xxi*, 181 n. *xxii*
 Adriel, 69
 adultery, 77, 151, 153
 Ahasuerus, 13, 13 n. 8, 157
 Akkathriel Yah, 117
 Aleppo, 168 n. *vii*
 Alexander, King of Macedon, 13,
 13 n. 9
 Alexander Yannai, King, 19, 21 n.
 19, 23, 23 n. 23, 25
 Alexandria, 23, 25, 27, 168 n. *vii*
Alphabet of Ben Sira, 155 n. 106
 Amram, 109, 109 n. 62
 ‘Anan ben Shafat, see David,
 ‘Anan ben
 Angel of Death, 143
 Ankori, Zvi, 182–83 n. *xxiv*

Antigonos of Sokho, 27 n. 25
 Antiochus, King of Macedon, 13,
 15 n. 11, 17
 Apocrypha, 13 n. 9
Aqeda, 83
 Aristetas, letter of, 15 n. 11
 Aristobulus II, 19 n. 15
 astrologers, 105, 149, 149 n. 86
 Austrian Empire, 31 n. 28
aviv, 37, 87, 167–68 n. *vii*, 169 n.
 viii
 ‘Avoda Zara, Bab. Talm.
 3b, 119 n. 70
 Avoth de-Ribbi Nathan 5:2, 28
 n. 25
 ‘Aẓeret, see Shavu’oth

B
 Babylonia, 9, 11
 Babylonian exile, 35
baraitha, 177 n. *xvi*, 179 n. *xix*, 190
 n. *xxx*
 bastards, 73
 Bašyachi, Elijah, 164 n. *iii*, 189 n.
 xxx
bath qol, 143
 Bava Bathra, Bab. Talm.
 general, 119, 131
 16a, 155 n. 104
 75a, 127 n. 73
 111b, 91 n. 54
 Bava Meẓi’a, Bab. Talm.
 21b, 190 n. *xxxii*
 86a, 127 n. 75

Belshazzar, 11
 beautiful captive woman, 105
ben ha'arbayim, 39, 41, 171–72 n. x
 Ben Sira, 155
Bené Yisra'el, 187 n. xxx–189
 n. xxx
 Benjamin (Tribe), 7, 11, 17, 27, 31
 Berakhoth, Bab. Talm.
 3a, 121 n. 71
 7a, 117 n. 68
 31b, 153 n. 100
 32a, 151 n. 94
 48a, 23 n. 23
 Bible
 Latin Vulgate version, 11 n. 7
biqqoreth, 75, 77
 Birnbaum, Philip, 177–78 n. xvi
 bloodletting, 103, 105
 Boaz, 111, 153
 Boethius, 27, 29 n. 25
 Boethusians, 25 n. 25, 184 n. xxvi
 bone goblet, 157
C
 Caesar, 31 n. 28
 Caleb, 139
 calendar, see also *aviv*, new
 month; new moon
 astronomical calculations for,
 165 n. iv
 beginning of month, 35
 equinox, 37, 105, 169 n. viii
 festival calendar, 163–64 n. iii
 intercalation of, 168 n. vii
 Karaite, 166–67 n. vi
 laws for setting the month,
 161–62 n. iii

 leap year, 37, 169 n. viii
 lunar conjunction, 35
 molad, 35
 new moon, 35, 37, 131, 159,
 164–65 n. iv, 166 n. vi
 Nisan, 37, 159, 168 n. vii
 solstices, 105
 Charles, King of Sweden, 3, 3 n. 1
 cherubim, 155
 circumcision, 33, 149 n. 84, 161
 n. ii
 circumcision of the heart, 101
 Constantine, Prince, 3, 3 n. 3
 Cozbi, 153, 153 n. 97
 Cyrus, King of Persia, 9, 11
D
 Damascus, 168 n. vii
 Darius I, 161 n. i
 Darius II, 13, 13 n. 8
 David, Abraham ben, 187 n. xxix
 David, 'Anan ben, 29, 31, 173 n. xi
 David, King, 3, 7, 17, 99, 153, 155,
 155 n. 102
 Davidic monarchy, 17, 29
 death penalty, 77, 87, 173 n. xii,
 177 n. xvi
 Decalogue, 41, 45
 Deuteronomy Rabbah, 133 n. 78
 divination, 103, 105
Dod Mordokhai, 27
E
 Egypt, 7, 9, 15, 19, 23, 23 n. 24, 25,
 143, 167 n. vii
 Egypt, temple in, 23 n. 24, 25 n.
 24

- Egyptian sea, 139
 Egyptians, 131, 133, 135
 Eleazar the priest, 139
 Elijah, 147
 Elijah, Aaron ben, 85 n. 53, 163 n. *iii*, 175 n. *xiii*, 189 n. *xxx*.
 Elijah Bašyachi, see Bašyachi,
 Elijah ben
 Elijah, Gaon of Vilna, 171 n. *ix*
 Elimelech, 111
Elul, 83 n. 51
 Enoch, 119, 147
 Ephraim, Kingdom of, 7, 121
‘eruv, 43 n. 33–34
‘Eruvin, Bab. Talm.,
 general, 133, 133 n. 77
 Esau, 149
Eshkol Ha-kofer, 167 n. *vii*, 188 n. *xxx*
 Esther, 13, 13 n. 8, 157, 166 n. *v*
ethrog, 21, 21 n. 21, 23
 exile(s)
 Babylonia, 9, 35
 cities of the Kingdom of
 Israel, 9 n. 6
 in Egypt, 7, 9
 of Israel, 39
 of Judah from Babylonia, 11
 in lands of the Kaiser, 31
 of ten tribes, 9
 Ezekiel, 155, 157 n. 108
 Ezra, the Priest, 11, 13, 67 n. 44, 85,
 85 n. 53
‘Ezra, Abraham ibn, 41, 171 n. *x*

F
 fasts
 Av, 166 n. *v*
 Esther, 166 n. *v*
 Kippur, 166 n. *v*
 Tammuz, 166 n. *v*
 feast for righteous in Paradise,
 127
 festival(s)
 calendar, 163–64 n. *iii*
 general, 37, 45, 79, 83, 83 n.
 52, 166
 pilgrimage, 137
 sacrifice, 23, 23 n. 22
 shabbath, 79
 shabbath shabbathon, 79
 fetus, 77, 183 n. *xxv*
 First Temple
 Babylonian exile, 35
 construction, 7
 foods, forbidden, 85, 87, 179 n. *xix*
 foreskin, 33, 99, 149, 149 n. 84
 fornication, 149

G
 Gabriel, angel, 141, 143
 Gad (Tribe), 137
 Gamliel, Rabban, 37, 37 n. 30,
 164–65 n. *iv*
Gan ‘Eden,
 Diné Mumin, 175 n. *xiii*
 ‘Inyan Sukkoth, n. 53
 ‘Inyan Tefilla, 189 n. *xxx*
 ‘Inyan Ṭum’a Ve-ṭohora, Diné
 Nig’é Zāra’ath, 180 n. *xxi*
 ‘Inyan Qiddush Ha-ḥodesh,
 163 n. *iii*
 Gaon of Vilna, 171
 Garden of Eden, 147

Gazanzag'el, 143, 143 n. 81

Gehinnom, 125, 127

Gemara, masters of, 49

Genesis Rabbah, 151 n. 90

Golden Calf, 139, 151

Great Hallel, 159, 159 n. 111

Great Sabbath, 159, 159 n. 111

Greece, 13

Greece, Kingdom of, 15

H

Hadassi, Judah, 167 n. *vii*, 188 n.

xxx

Ḥagiga, Bab. Talm.

general, 119, 119 n. 69

16b, 23 n. 23

halakha, rabbinic, 19 n. 18, 23 n.

23, 41 n. 32, 172 n. *x*, 173 n. *xii*,

176 n. *xiv*, 178 n. *xvii*, 186 n.

xxviii, 191 n. *xxxiii*, 192 n. *xxxvi*

Ham, Son of Noah, 13, 15, 15 n. 10

Ha-ma'aravi, Israel, 167–68 n. *vii*,

Ha-mozi, 127

Hananiah, 159

Ḥanina bar Abbahu, 192 n. *xxxvi*

Ḥanukka, 166 n. *v*

Hasmonaeon(s), 17, 17 n. 13, 17 n.

15, 19

heaven, 3, 115, 127, 129, 131, 133,

137, 139, 145

heavenly council, 123

heavenly court, 190 n. *xxxi*

heavenly voice, 143

Heber the Kenite, 153

Heifer, 89, 91

hillazon, 89, 186–87 n. *xxix*

Hillel, 49, 191 n. *xxxiii*

Hillel 11, 165 n. *iv*

Holland, Kingdom of, 29

Holland, sages of, 27

Hosha'na Rabba [seventh day of
Sukkoth], 166 n. *v*

Ḥullin, Bab. Talm.

59a, 57 n. 37, 178 n. *xviii*

98a, 179 n. *xix*

human measurements, 115

Hyrchanus, John, King, 19, 19 n. 16,
19 n. 18, 21, 21 n. 20

I

ibn 'Ezra, Abraham, 41, 171 n. *x*

idolatry, 155

impurity,

laws of, 61 n. 39

one-day, 65, 67

seven-day, 67, 69

inheritance, 91, 91 n. 54, 111, 183
n. *xxiv*

intercourse, sexual, 65 n. 42, 155

Isaac, 7, 83, 149

Isaiah, 103, 119, 121, 123, 141

Ishmael, 117, 117 n. 68

Israel, Kingdom of, 9, 9 n. 6

Israel Ha-ma'aravi, 167–68 n. *vii*

Issachar Baer, 171 n. *ix*

Isserlein, R. Israel, 170 n. *ix*

J

Jacob, 7

Jael, 153

Japheth, 15 n. 10

Jeremiah, 43, 103, 155

Jeroboam, 7, 9

Jerusalem

- Antiochus, 13
 calendar, 167 n. vi
 Davidic monarchy, 17
 Ezra, 11
 First Temple in, 7
 Israelites, 137
 Judah ben Ṭabbai, 23–24 n. 23
 Kingdom of Judah, 7, 9
 moon, sighting of the, 163, 166
 moon, witnessed the, 35
 Tiglath-Pil'eser, 9 n. 6
 Jerusalem Temple, 25
 Jochebed, 109 n. 62
 John III, King of Poland, 3, 3 n. 3
 John [Yoḥanan], 19
 Jonathan, 17 n. 14
 Joseph, Aaron Ben, 162 n. iii, 176
 Josephus, 13 n. 9, 15 n. 11, 19 n. 17,
 23 n. 24
 Joshua, 35, 135, 139, 151, 151 n. 96
Josippon, 13, 13 n. 9, 15 n. 11
 Judah, Maccabaeus, 17 n. 12, 17
 n. 14
 Judah (Tribe), 7, 15, 27, 31
 Judah, Kingdom of, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15,
 17, 19, 21, 25, 27
 Judah, Rabbi, 29
 Judah, son of Mattathias, 17 n. 12,
 17 n. 14
 judges, appointment of, 103
- K**
 Kaiser, 31, 31 n. 28
 Karethoth, Bab. Talm.
 6a, 177 n. xvi
 11a, 75 n. 48
 Kasher, M.M.
- Tora Shelema*, 176 n. xiv
 kemoharar, 5 n. 4
 Kethubboth, Bab. Talm.
 77b, 145 n. 83
 Kishon River, 131
Kitāb al-Anwār wal-marāqib:
 Code of Karaite Law, 188 n.
 xxx
kohen, 65
 kosher
 animals, 55, 127, 188 n. xxx
 birds, 57–58
 food, 186 n. xxviii
 mammals, 57
 non, 57, 59, 61, 77, 149, 179 n.
 xviii, 186 n. xxviii
 pig, 59, 59 n. 38
 slaughter, 162 n. iii, 184 n. xxv
 two signs for mammals, 57, 59
 two signs for fish, 57
- L**
 Laban, 149
 Laḥash, 139, 141
 Land of Israel, 111, 137, 164 n. iii,
 167 n. vi, 168 n. vii
 Lejda, 29 n. 26
 Levi, Joshua ben, 145, 147
 Levi ben Yefeth, see Yefeth, Levi
 ben
 Lipmann Heller, Yom Ṭov, 187 n.
 xxviii
 Lithuania, 31
 liturgical blessing, 127
 lost and found, 107
 lower world, 129
lulav, 21, 21 n. 21

Lutsk, 3

M

I Maccabees

2:4, 17 n. 12

2:49 ff., 17 n. 14

Maagarim database, 185 n. xxvii

Machabaeus, 17, 17 n. 12

Maḥlon, 111

Maimonides, 117 n. 67

Hilkhoth Geneva 9:13, 175 n. xii

Hilkhoth Issuré Bi'a 2:3, 192 n.

xxvi

Hilkhoth Ma'akhaloth Asuroth

5:13, 184 n. xxv

Hilkhoth Sheḥiṭa 11:4 ff., 178

n. xvii

Hilkhoth Zizith 1:7, 187 n. xxix

Hilkhoth Zizith 3:10, 190 n. xxx

Makkoth, Bab. Talm.

22b, 109 n. 61

Malachi, 11, 103, 119

mamzer(im), 183 n. xxiv

Mangoubi, Tomer, 69 n. 45, 71 n.

47, 161 n. iii, 166 n. vi, 172 n. xi,

175 n. xiii, 176 n. xv, 180 n. xx,

180 n. xxi, 181 n. xxii, 185 n.

xxvii, 187 n. xxx

marriage rules, 71, 71 n. 47, 73, 109

marriages, forbidden, 73

Mattathias, 15, 17, 17 n. 12, 17 n.

14, 19

mazza, 39

Mazzoṯ, Festival of, 39, 77, 79, 79

n. 49, 81 n. 51, 185 n. xxvi

Megilla, Bab. Talm.

3a, 151 n. 96

13b, 157 n. 110

Menahoth, Bab. Talm.

43a, 190 n. xxx

44a, 186 n. xxix

65a–b, 184 n. xxvi

109b, 23 n. 24

menstruant woman, 63, 65, 65 n.

42, 67, 69, 180 n. xx, 181–82 n.

xxii, 182 n. xxiii, 183 n. xxiv

menstruation, 69, 181 n. xxii

Meṭaṭron, 113, 115, 117, 119, 191 n.

xxxv

Meyer, L.E., 167 n. vii

mezuzoth, 97, 101

Michael, angel, 137, 141, 14

Michal, 69

Midian, 89

Mishkan, 135, 151

Mishna

Avoth 8–9, 23 n. 23

Giṭṭin 9:10, 191 n. xxxiii

Ḥagiga 2:2, 23 n. 23

Ḥullin 3:1, 178 n. xvii

Ḥullin 4:5, 183 n. xxv

Makkoth 3:10, 191 n. xxxiv

Menahoth 13:10, 23 n. 24

Rosh Ha-shana 1:3–3:1, 35 n.

29

Rosh Ha-shana 4:8, 186 n.

xxviii

Sanhedrin 7:4, 192 n. xxxvi

Shabbath 19:6, 161 n. ii

Mishna, masters of, 49

Modi'ith, Mount, 15

Mo'ed Qaṭan, Bab. Talm.

18b, 151 n. 91

- 28a, 105 n. 59
 Mo'ed Qaṭan, Pal. Talm.
 2:2, 23 n. 24
 money lending, 47
 Mordecai, 157
 Moses, 119
 death of, 133, 133 n. 78, 135, 141,
 143, 145
 first month, 35
 Joshua, 135, 139
 oral law, 25, 29, 161–62 n. *ii*
 oral traditions, 29
 parents, 109 n. 62
 pilgrimage festivals, 137
 sins, 151
 Song of, 133
 soul reincarnated, 125, 135
 Torah of Moses, 7, 11, 15, 25, 31,
 139, 151, 162 n. *ii*
Murex trunculus, 187 n. *xxxix*
musaf, 23, 23 n. 22
- N**
 Naḥmani, 129, 131
 Nebuchadnezzar, King of
 Babylonia, 9, 11, 157 n. 109
 Nedarim, Bab. Talm.
 22b–23a, 93 n. 55
 23a, 95 n. 56
 Nemoy, Leon, 173 n. *xi*, 188 n. *xxx*.
 new month, see also calendar
 based on calculation, 37, 165
 by witnesses of moon, 165
 new moon, see also calendar
 abolish sighting of, 164–65
 n. *iv*
 calculation of, 37
 local sighting governs, 161–64
 n. *iii*
 not written in Torah, 35, 161
 n. *iii*.
 witnesses, 166–67 n. *v*
 Nidda, Bab. Talm.
 66a, 182 n. *xxiii*
 Nile, 151
 Noah, 15, 15 n. 10
- O**
 Obadiah of Bertinoro, 191 n.
 xxxiii
 'omer (sheaf-offering), 53, 77, 79
 n. 49
 Onan, 109
 Onias, 23 n. 24
 Onias, Temple of, 23 n. 24
Oraḥ Ḥayyim, 171 n. *ix*
 Osnappar, 9 n. 6
- P**
 Pappa River, 129
 penalty, lenient, 174 n. *xii*
 Pentecost, see also Shavu'oth, 79,
 81, 81 n. 51,
 peri'a, 33
 Persia, King of, 9, 11
 Persian Empire, 13
 Pesah, 37, 166 n. *v*, 168 n. *vii*, 169
 n. *viii*, 170–71 n. *ix*, 172 n. *x*
 Pesahim, Bab. Talm.
 108b, 133 n. 77
 Pharaoh, 131
 Phineas, 153, 153 n. 97
Pirqé De-ribbi Eli'ezer, 83 n. 52
 Poland, 31

Pompey, 19 n. 15
 prophets
 Ezekiel, 157
 false, 9, 83, 121
 Haggai, 11
 Malachi, 11, 103, 119
 true, 27, 29
 Zechariah, 11
 Ptolemy, King of Egypt, 15, 15 n.
 11, 19
 Pul, 9 n. 6
 purification days, 182 n. *xxii*
 purification of corpse-impurity,
 89
 purification of Temple, 61 n. 39
 Purim, 37, 166 n. *v*

Q
 Qiddushin, Bab. Talm.
 77a, 19 n. 18
qim leh bi-derabba minneh, 173
 n. *xii*
 Qirqisani, Ya'aqov, 188 n. *xxx*

R
 Rabba, 9 n. 6
 Rashi, 13 n. 8, 157 n. 108, 169 n. *viii*
 Rava, 123, 173–74 n. *xii*
re'ayon, 39
 reincarnation, 125, 127
Responsa of Maimonides, 117 n.
 67
 restitution, 174–75 n. *xii*
 Reuben (Tribe), 137
 Reuben, Jacob Ben, 183 n. *xxiv*
 risky behavior, 175 n. *xiii*
 robbery, 174 n. *xii*

Rosh Ha-shana, Bab. Talm.
 3b, 13 n. 8
 20a, 166 n. *v*
 25a, 164 n. *iv*
 Ruth, 111, 153

S
 Sabbath
 carrying items, 43, 172 n. *xi*,
 186 n. *xxviii*
 commandment of, 41
 eve of, 159 n. 111
 fire prohibited, 41, 41 n. 32
 gentiles, 45
 Joshua violated, 151, 151 n. 96
 labor is prohibited, 41, 43
 Mazṣoth, 185 n. *xxvi*
 morrow, 77
 ovens, 43
 seventh, 81
 shabbath shabbathon, 79
 siege on, 153 n. 96
 violation of, 43 n. 33, 85, 87,
 151
 waving the 'omer, 77, 79
 sacrifice
 daily, 151, 151 n. 96
 eating, 61 n. 39
 musaf, 23
 '*oloth*, 25
 Pesah, 169 n. *viii*
 zevaḥim, 25
 Sadducees, 23 n. 23, 29 n. 25
 Sahl Ha-kohen, 105 n. 60
 Salmon ben Yeruḥim
 Milḥamoth Adonai, 117 n. 67
 Sambaṭyon, River, 9

- Sammael, 137, 139, 141, 143, 145
 Sanhedrin, 15, 15 n. 11
 Sanhedrin, Bab. Talm.
 general, 123
 8a, 151 n. 93
 11a, 168–69 n. *viii*
 11b, 169 n. *viii*
 19b, 153 n. 98
 38a, 149 n. 84
 38b, 191 n. *xxxv*
 54a, 192 n. *xxxvi*
 65b, 123 n. 72
 70a, 149 n. 85
 72a, 173 n. *xi*, 173 n. *xii*
 92b, 157 n. 109
 94a, 9 n. 6
 107a, 155 n. 103
 Sanhedrin, Pal. Talm.
 4:2, 176 n. *xiv*
 Sarah, 83
 Satan, 83
 Saul, King, 7, 69
 Second Temple, see also *Josippon*
 construction, 9, 11, 17, 19, 21,
 27, 161 n. *i*
 destruction, 11, 29, 35, 37, 37 n.
 30, 161 n. *i*
 Seder 'Olam, 17 n. 15
 Sefer Ha-'ibbur, 166 n. *iv*
 Sefer Ha-mivhar
 Parashath Bo El Par'o, 162
 n. *iii*
 Parashath Mishpatim, 176 n.
 xiii
 Se'ir, Mount, 185 n. *xxvi*
 seminal emission, 67 n. 44, 149,
 149 n. 8, 155
 Sennacherib, King of Assyria, 9,
 9 n. 6
 Septuagint, 15 n. 11
sethama di-gemara, 174 n. *xii*
 sexual impropriety, 19, 19 n. 18
 sexual relationships, forbidden,
 69, 69 n. 45, 73
 Shabbath, Bab. Talm.
 129b, 190 n. *xxxi*
 156a, 149 n. 86
 Shabbath, Pal. Talm.
 1:8, 151 n. 96
shabbath shabbathon, 79
shabbathon, 79, 79 n. 49, see also
 festivals
 Shaddai, 115
 Shafat, 29
 Shammai, 49, 191 n. *xxxiii*
 Shavu'oth [Pentecost], Festival
 of, 79, 81, 81 n. 51, 166 n. *v*, 184
 n. *xxvi*,
 Shemini 'Azereth, 79 n. 49, 145
 n. 82
Shi'ur Qoma, 115, 117 n. 67
 shofar, 81, 83, 83 n. 52, 185 n. *xxvii*,
 186 n. *xxviii*
Shulhan Arukh, 166
 §428, 166 n. *v*, 171 n. *ix*
 Sifré Deuteronomy, 103 n. 57
 Simeon, son of Mattathias, 17 n.
 15, 19
 Simeon, son of Gamliel, 169 n.
 viii

Simeon, son of Shataḥ, 23, 23 n.
 23–24, 25 n. 24, 27
 Simeon the Righteous, 13
 Simḥath Tora, 145 n. 82
 Sinai, Mount, 7, 9, 25, 139, 151, 162
 n. *iii*, 167 n. *vi*
 sin-offering, 131
sirkha, 57, 178 n. *xvii*
 Sisera, 153
 sisters in judgment, 73
 skin afflictions, 65, 127, 155, 155
 n. 102
 slaughter
 kosher, 127, 162 n. *iii*, 184 n.
xxv
 non-kosher, 77
 slave (female), 75, 77
 slaves and *zizith*, 190 n. *xxx*
 Sobieski, King John III, 3 n. 3
 Sobieski, Prince Konstanty
 Władysław, 3 n. 3
 Solomon, King, 7, 9, 99, 125, 155
 Song of Moses, 133
 Soṭa, 153
 Soṭa, Bab. Talm.
 36b, 149 n. 89
 soul of dumb animal, 125
 soul of righteous person, 125, 127
 spices, four types of, 51
 spiritual soul, 125
 Staff of God, 143
 Stern, Sacha, 165 n. *iv*
 Sukka, Bab. Talm.
 43a, 186 n. *xxvii*
 48b, 21 n. 19, 21 n. 21
sukkoth (booths), 85, 85 n. 53, 87

Sukkoth, Festival of, 21, 21 n. 19,
 23 n. 21, 79 n.4, 83, 85, 145 n.
 82, 166 n. *v*, 186 n. *xxviii*
 T
 Ṭabbai, Judah ben, 23, 23 n.
 23–24, 27, 29
 Ta'anith, Bab. Talm.
 31a, 127 n. 74
 Talmud, 67 n. 44
tefillin, 97, 119, 121
tekheleth, 89, 186 n. *xxix*
 Temple, Solomon's, 7, see also
 First Temple
 Ten Tribes, 7, 9
terefa, 178 n. *xvii*
terefoth, 57, 178 n. *xvii*
Terumath ha-deshen, 170–71 n. *ix*
teru'a, 81, 83
 Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria,
 9, 9 n. 6
 Titus, 11
 Tizraḥ Hashemesh, 159, 159 n. 112
 Torah
 oral, 29, 31, 125
 written, 7, 27, 29, 31, 162 n. *iii*
Tosafoth, 13 n. 8
 Tosfoth Yom Ṭov, 186 n. *xxviii*
 Tosefta Pesahim
 1:24, 170 n. *ix*
toṭafoth, 97
tsimmes, 61, 61 n. 40
Tur (law codes), 166 n. *v*
 Twelve Tribes of Israel, 7
 U
 usury, sin of, 75

V

Vespasian, Emperor, 11

vows, 93

W

water-libation, 21 n. 21,

wife's property, 91, 91 n. 54

wilderness, 135, 143, 151, 185
n. xxvi

wine-libation, 21 n. 21

Y

Yannai, Ribbi, 169 n. viii

Yaqqira, 9 n. 6

yaroq, 89

Yavan, 13, 15 n. 10

Yefeth, Levi ben, 172 n. xi, 187 n.
xxx

Yevamoth, Bab. Talm.

103a, 153 n. 99

Yevamoth, Pal. Talm.

2:3, 192 n. xxxvi

Yom Ha-kippurim, 79, 186 n. xxvii

Yom Kippur, v n. 5, 37, 79, 79 n.
50, 186 n. xxvii

Yom Teru'a (Rosh Ha-shana), 37,
79, 79 n. 49, 164 n. iv, 166 n. v,
186 n. xxvii

Yoma, Bab. Talm.

general, 119

9a, 161 n. i

22b, 155 n. 102

44b, 155 n. 105

Z

Zadok, 27, 29 n. 25

Zagnazge'el, 141, 143, 143 n. 81

Ṭaqun, 139, 141

zara'ath, 180–81 n. xxi

zava, 69, 182 n. xxiii

Ze'eri, 67 n. 44

Zerubbabel, 11

Zimri, 153, 153 n. 97

zizith, 89, 99, 121, 187 n. xxix, 187
n. xxx

Karaite Works Referenced in this Edition¹¹⁴

Ḥakham ‘Anan ben David (ca. 715–795 CE): The citation to Ḥakham ‘Anan in this work is from a translation provided by Dr. Leon Nemoy in his *Karaite Anthology: Excerpts from the Early Literature*, Yale Judaica Series, 1952.

Ḥakham Daniel Al-Qumisi (tenth century): The citation to Ḥakham Daniel in this work is from the Academy of Hebrew Language’s version of his commentary on Leviticus 23:24.

Ḥakham Ya‘aqov Qirqisani (first half of tenth century): The edition of Ḥakham Ya‘aqov’s *The Book of Lights and Watch Towers* referenced in this work was published by Dr. Leon Nemoy under the name, *Kitāb al-Anwār wal-marāqib: Code of Karaite Law*.

Ḥakham Levi ben Yefet HaLevi (late tenth to early eleventh century): The edition of Ḥakham Levi’s *Sefer Miẓvoth* referenced in this work is a modern publication by Yosef El-Gamil (Ashdod, Israel).

Ḥakham Jacob ben Reuben (eleventh century): The citation to Ḥakham Jacob in this work is a translation of Hebrew text from Dr. Zvi Ankori’s *Karaites in Byzantium: The Formative Years, 970–1100*, Columbia University Press, 1959.

Ḥakham Judah Hadassi (twelfth century): The edition of Ḥakham Judah’s *Eshkol Ha-kofer* referenced in this work was published in Gozlov in 1836.

Ḥakham Aaron ben Joseph (ca. 1260–1320): The edition of Ḥakham Aaron’s *Sefer Ha-mivḥar* referenced in this work is the three volume edition published in Ramla, Israel in 2010.

¹¹⁴ *Note from Tomer Manguoubi*: I composed this appendix in order to help contextualize the Karaite works cited in this publication. In that regard, I have listed the authors of these works in chronological order.

Ḥakham Israel Ha-ma'aravi (late thirteenth to early fourteenth century): The citation to Ḥakham Israel in this work is from in Sh. Asaf and L.E. Meyer, *Sefer Ha-yishuv*, volume 2, Jerusalem, 1944.

Ḥakham Aaron ben Elijah (ca. 1328–1369): The edition of Ḥakham Aaron the Younger's *Gan 'Eden* referenced in this work is the 1864 Gozlov edition, as stored in Stanford University's library and scanned by Google Books.

Ḥakham Elijah Bašyachi (ca. 1420–1490): The edition of Ḥakham Elijah's *Addereth Eliyyahu* referenced in this work is the 1835 Gozlow edition, as scanned by Google Books.