

THE PALANQUIN
אפֿיריִון עֶשָׂה לוֹ
Appiryon 'Asa Lo



AUTHORED BY
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(1650–1740, Troki)

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THE KARAITE PRESS



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Introductory Notes from The Karaite Press

About the Translator: Esther Mangoubi has been an instructor teaching German and at times French at several Boston area universities. Most of her previous translation projects involved translating works from English into French or German. She has also translated various letters of Solomon Schechter.

About the Vocalizer and Annotator: Dr. Gabriel Wasserman (PhD Yeshiva University, 2016) is a scholar of Jewish texts, with a specialty in *piyyuṭim*, Hebrew liturgical poetry. Wasserman previously served as the translator and annotator of *Royal Attire: On Karaite and Rabbanite Beliefs* (Daly City: The Karaite Press, 2016). In addition to his work with The Karaite Press, 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). His PhD dissertation is on *piyyuṭim* for Ḥanukka in mediaeval European Jewish communities. Wasserman is also the author of a Rabbanite Passover Haggada, *Ashira Va'ashannena Baḥashiqoth* (New York, 2015), which includes both his scholarship and his original poetic compositions.

As always, The Karaite Press is thankful for the work of Tomer Mangoubi, who contributed his insights to this project throughout.

About the Author:¹ Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron has been referred to (at least in one manuscript) as *He-ḥakham Ha-kolel*, a title that generally refers to someone who possesses great knowledge in the fields of liberal arts, humanities, philosophy and or medicine – in addition to knowledge of religious matters.² As this attribution suggests, he was among the most prominent Karaite sages of his time.

Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron was born in 1650 in the city of Paswoł in the Lithuanian district of Panėvėžys. In the early 1700s, he and his family moved to the city of Troki, which was subsequently devastated by a plague in 1710. The plague took the lives of Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron's wife and their two sons: Mordecai and Simḥa. A prolific poet, he wrote elegies lamenting the destruction caused by the plague. One such poem, "A'orer Levavi Leqonen" ("I stir up my heart to lament"), commemorates the victims of the plague, and appears in the Vilna edition of the Karaite prayer book.³ This prayer book also contains a song for the Sabbath, written by Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron in memory of his son, Mordecai.⁴ After the plague, Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron moved for a short time to the city of Vilna, where he served as the head of the Beth Din. In 1719, he returned to Troki.

Like his contemporary Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan, Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron received significant attention from Christian

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

2 Riikka Tuori, p. 62, note 111; the cited manuscript is St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy Ms. Ao65, folio 6a.

3 *Siddur Ha-tefilloth Ke-minhag Ha-qara'im* (Volumes 1–4, Vilna, 1890–1892), vol. 4, pp. 260 f. The prayer book introduces the poem with a rather somber note: "[At one time,] in the lands of Poland and Lithuania, there were more than thirty [Karaite] communities, and their remnants [at the time of printing] are just three, and they are Troki, Łutsk, and Ponevez." See page 260.

4 Volume 4, p. 108.

Hebraists.⁵ *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* itself was written in response to questions posed by Johann Uppendorff, a Swedish professor at the University of Riga. In addition to *Appiryon 'Asa Lo*, Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron wrote at least two other polemical works: one on the relations between Karaites and Rabbanites; and the other, a refutation of Christianity.

It should be noted that Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron wrote two distinct versions of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo*. It appears that the shorter one, upon which this publication is based, was written for a Christian Hebraist audience; while the more extensive one was likely written later and intended for Karaite consumption.

About this Edition: This edition is the only known English-language translation of either version of Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron's *Appiryon 'Asa Lo*.⁶ This work, like Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan's *Levush Malkhuth*,⁷ first came to light in academic circles in 1866, when Adolf Neubauer published an unvocalized text of the shorter version, after his examination of previously unpublished Karaite manuscripts in the Russian National Library in Saint

5 The Karaite Press has previously published Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan's letter to the King of Sweden discussing the major differences between Karaites and Rabbanites: Mordecai ben Nisan, *Royal Attire: On Karaite and Rabbanite Beliefs*, translated and annotated by Gabriel Wasserman (Daly City, 2016).

6 As indicated in Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron's work, he chose the title *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* because those three words are equivalent in *gemaṭrīyya* to *Sefer Minhagē Qara'ē* (*The Book of Customs of the Karaites*). The title *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* translates to "[he] made for himself a palanquin." This title serves as an allusion to the name of our author, Shelomo/Solomon, for the words of the title appear in Song of Songs 3:9: *King Solomon made himself a palanquin from the wood of the Lebanon* [Forest].

7 This work has recently been published under the title *Royal Attire*. See fn. 5, *supra* (Daly City: The Karaite Press).

Petersburg.⁸ In 1956, the nascent Karaite community in Israel published an unvocalized Hebrew version of *Levush Malkhuth* together with the short version of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo*. It appears that the only substantive differences that the Karaite community introduced in *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* are that they consistently changed any references to Rabbanites to say “our brothers the Rabbanites,” and often changed references to “Karaite sages” to say “our sages.”⁹

About the Hebrew Text: This edition of Ḥakham Solomon ben Aaron's *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* is based on Neubauer's 1866 publication. We have normalized the Hebrew spelling to fit the standard in vocalized Hebrew texts. In addition, we have made the following changes from Neubauer's text: (i) addition of paragraph breaks in a number of places, to make the changes in topic easier for the reader to follow; (ii) correction of clear typographical errors; and (iii) in two places, changing a Biblical quotation to fit our text of Scripture. We have included an appendix of these three types of changes for those interested in reviewing them. Finally, the table of contents in ed. Neubauer reverses the order of chapters 23 and 24 from how they appear in the actual text; in our edition, we have changed the table of contents to fit the text.

As with our publication of *Levush Malkhuth/Royal Attire*, the reader should be assured that these adaptations do not impact the substance of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo*. Academics will take comfort in the fact that Neubauer's publication of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* is

8 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 (1866)].

9 As noted, there also exists a significantly longer version, in two parts, which is found in many manuscripts; in 2000, the Karaite R' Yosef Elgamil published Part I of this longer version, but Part II remains unpublished.

available online at Archive.org.¹⁰ 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: {2} or {ב}.

¹⁰ <https://archive.org/details/ausderpetersbuironeubgoog>.

הקדמה למהדורת תשנ"ו

חברת ההצלחה לבני מקרא שמחה להביא לפני הקהל הרחב, רבנים, וקראים, את הספר הראשון מסדרת הספרים העומדים להדפיסם.

החברה תספק את כלי תשמישי הקדושה כגון: ספרי תפילה, הגדות לפסח, ענין השחיטה, סכיני שחיטה, כלי ברית מילה, ציציות, טליתות וכדומה. כ"כ מוכנה לאפשר לכל אחד מבני העדה לעיין בספרי חכמינו ע"ה הנמצאים בידה ואשר יגיעו לידה.

ברצונינו להסב את תשומת לב הקורא היקר על הסיבה שהניעה אותנו להדפיס את הספר הנ"ל, לא על מנת לפגוע במי שהוא חלילה וחס, אלא כדי לספק חומר נכון מקוצר על ההבדלים הקיימים בין הרבנים והקראים, זה מאחר שפנו אלינו מספר מוסדות בארץ ומחוצה לה ובקשו לדעת את האמת לאמיתו.

אנו נמשיך בדרכינו כדי להוכיח את הצדק בין כל קהל ישראל כי התורה שבידינו היא תורה אחת ויחידה שאינה מוחלפת בשום תורה אחרת, היא תורת משה רבנו עליו השלום ונביאיו הטהורים.

Preface to 1956 Israeli Edition

The Association for the Success of Karaites is happy to present to the general public, Rabbanites, and Karaites, the first book in the series of books that they are planning to print.

The association supplies ritual items, such as prayer books, *haggadoth* for Passover, [books on] the matter of kosher slaughtering, knives for such slaughter, tools for circumcision, *zizioth*, *tallethoth*, and the like. Similarly, it is prepared to allow any member of the community to examine any books of our sages, may they rest in peace, that [the association] currently possesses or might have in the future.

It is our wish to make the dear reader aware of the reason that caused us to print this book: it is not in order to insult anyone, God forbid, but only to supply correct, concise material regarding the differences between Rabbanites and Karaites, for various institutions in Israel and abroad have turned to us, and asked to know the truth [about this matter].

We will continue in our way, to demonstrate the truth among the whole Jewish community, that the Torah in our hands is one, single Torah, which is never exchanged for any other Torah; it is the Torah of Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace, and of [God's] pure prophets.

ספר
אפריון עשה לו

THE PALANQUIN

סֵפֶר
אֶפְרַיִם עֹשֶׂה לוֹ
הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מַעֲצָת ה' הִיא תִקּוּם

עֲמוּדָיו עֹשֶׂה כֶּסֶף גִּבְחָר לְשׁוֹן צִדִּיק, בְּהוֹדַעַת סִבַּת חֶלְקֶת
הַקְּרָאִים מִהֶרֶבָּנִים; רִפִּידָתוֹ זֶה"ב, בְּבָאָרוֹ כִּי יִסּוֹד דָּת הַקְּרָאוֹת
עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲמוּדִים: ז' מִיַּגִּי הֶהָקֵשׁ, הֶעֱתִיקָה הַמִּשְׁתַּלְשֵׁלֶת
בְּחֶלֶק, הַמִּצּוֹת שֶׁהֵם עֹשֶׂה וְלֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה; מְרַכְּבוֹ אֲרָגְמָן, בְּהִנְיָחוֹ
סֵדֶר הַחֻקִּים וּמִנְהָגִים כְּפִי סֵדֶר שְׁנוֹת הָאָדָם מִיּוֹם הַוָּלְדוֹ עַד
בּוֹא חֲלִיפָתוֹ, וּבַחֻקִּים הַתְּלוּיִם בְּזָמָן כְּפִי סֵדֶר יְמֵי הַשָּׁנָה;

Appiryon ‘Asa Lo
A Palanquin He Made for Himself,
King Solomon, from the council
of the Lord, that shall stand¹

He made its pillars of choice silver of the tongue of the righteous,² informing the cause of the division between the Karaites and the Rabbanites; its top is of gold,³ in that it explains that the foundation of the legal code [*dath*]⁴ of Karaism stands on three pillars: the seven types of analogy [*heqqesh*]; transmission that is passed down smoothly; and the commandments, which are positive and negative; its seat is purple,⁵ in laying out the rules and customs in order, according to the order of the years of a person's life, from birth until death, and the rules dependent on season, following the order of the year; its inside is inlaid with love

1 A pun on two verses: *King Solomon made himself a palanquin of the wood (me-‘azé) of Lebanon* (Song of Songs 3:9); and *But the counsel (va-‘azath) of the Lord, that shall stand* (Proverbs 19:21).

2 A conflation of two verses: *He made the pillars thereof of silver* (Song of Songs 3:10), about Solomon's palanquin; and *The tongue of the righteous is as choice silver* (Proverbs 10:20).

3 Continuation of Song of Songs 3:10, about Solomon's palanquin: *the top thereof of gold*. Our author uses the word *zahav* (Z-H-B), "gold," as an acronym: Z represents the numeral seven; H stands for "tradition," *ha'taqa*; B stands for smoothly, *beḥalaq*. The text indicates these letters with special symbols over them.

4 We have translated the word *dath* as "legal code." The Hebrew word *dath* (derived from the Persian word *dāta*) is often translated as "religion," but refers more specifically to the legal and ceremonial aspects of a religion. In that regard, we have translated it as religion elsewhere, where context seems to dictate that understanding.

5 Again from Song of Songs 3:10, about Solomon's palanquin: *the seat thereof of purple*.

אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֶׂה לוֹ ❖ אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֶׂה לוֹ

תּוֹכּוּ רְצוֹף אֶהְבֶּה מִבְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, לְמִשׁוֹךְ לֵב הַחוֹקְרִים בְּזֶה
הַמַּאֲמָר הַקָּטָן, לְרַב קִצּוּרוֹ וְיִפִּי סֵדֶר הַנִּחָתוֹ.

from the daughters of Jerusalem,⁶ to attract the heart of people who study this brief work, because of its great shortness and its [convenient] arrangement.

⁶ The conclusion of Song of Songs 3:10: *the inside thereof being inlaid with love, from the daughters of Jerusalem.*

ראשי פרקים למאמר הקטן

I. הקדמתו, לבאר סבת חלקת הקראים מהרבנים, ובאיזה זמן משנות הבריאה, ומי היה ראשית החלקה.

פרק א' בענין הג' יסודות אשר עליהן עמדו כל ישראל; והם כתוב, הקש, וסבל הירשה הנקראת העתקה המשתלשלת.

פרק ב' בענין המילה, ומה החלקה בזאת המצוה בינינו ובין הרבנים.

פרק ג' בענין השבת, באיזה אפן שביתתה, ומה הם הדברים האסורים והמתירים בה, ואיך דין המחלל בגלוי או בסתר, בזמן המלכות או בזמן הגלות.

פרק ד' בענין קדוש החדש וחשבון הימים והשנים, איך היה בזמן המלכות ואיך עתה בזמן הגלות, ומה החלקה בזה הענין בינינו ובין הרבנים.

פרק ה' בענין חג הפסח, סבת זה החג, וחיוב אכילת מצה ומרור, וחיוב בעור חמץ, ושאר הדברים השייכים.

פרק ו' בענין ספירת חמשים הימים אשר מפסח עד חג השבועות, ומאיזה יום התחלתם, ומה חלקה בינינו ובין הרבנים. {ב}

פרק ז' בענין חג השבועות, ולאיזה זכר נקבע החג.

Table of Contents of the Short Work

I. Introduction: Explaining the cause of the split between the Karaites and the Rabbanites, and in what year after creation, and who was at the head of the split.

Chapter 1: Regarding the three foundations upon which all Israel stands, namely: Scripture, Analogy, and the Burden of the Inheritance, which is called the “tradition that is passed down.”

Chapter 2: Regarding circumcision, and the disagreement between us and the Rabbanites regarding this commandment.

Chapter 3: Regarding the Sabbath; how is its rest [to be accomplished], and what matters are forbidden and permitted on it, and what is the rule regarding someone who violates it in public or in private, in the time of the Monarchy or in the time of the Exile.

Chapter 4: Regarding the sanctification of the month and the calculation of days and years, how it was in the time of the Monarchy, and how it is today in the time of the Exile, and what is the disagreement between us and the Rabbanites.

Chapter 5: Regarding the Festival of Passover, the reason for this festival, and the obligation to eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs, and the obligation to destroy leaven, and other relevant matters.

Chapter 6: Regarding the counting of fifty days between Passover and Shavu'oth, on what day they begin, and the disagreement between us and the Rabbanites. ^[2]

Chapter 7: Regarding the Festival of Shavu'oth, and in memory of what was this festival established.

אֶפְרַיִם עָשָׂה לוֹ ❖ רָאשֵׁי פָרָקִים לַמֶּאמָר הַקָּטָן

פָּרָק ח' בְּמִנְהַג חֹדֶשׁ תַּמוּז וְחֹדֶשׁ אָב, וּבְעֵנִי הַצּוּמוֹת, וּמָה
הַהֲבִידֵל בֵּינֵינוּ בְּעֵנֵן זֶה וּבֵין הָרַבָּנִים.

פָּרָק ט' בְּעֵנֵן מוֹעֵד יוֹם תְּרוּעָה בְּחֹדֶשׁ תִּשְׁרִי, וְאִיךְ בָּאָה
הַעֲתָקָה עָלָיו, וְאוֹדוֹת עֲשָׂרַת יָמֵי רַחֲמִים וְסְלִיחוֹת.

פָּרָק י' בְּעֵנֵן יוֹם הַכִּפּוּר, וּמָה הָעֵסֶק בָּהּ.

פָּרָק יא בְּעֵנֵן חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת, וּמוֹעֵד שְׁמִינִי עֲצָרָת.

פָּרָק יב בְּעֵנֵן הַתְּחִלַּת הַתּוֹרָה בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, וְעֵנֵן הַחֲנֻכָּה
לְרַבָּנִים בְּחֹדֶשׁ כֶּסֶלּוֹ.

פָּרָק יג בְּעֵנֵן צוּם חֹדֶשׁ הָעֲשִׁירִי, וְיָמֵי הָרַחֲמִים וְהַסְּלִיחוֹת
בְּשָׁנֵי יַחֲמִישִׁי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה.

פָּרָק יד בְּעֵנֵן וּמִנְהַג חֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר, וְיָמֵי הַפּוּרִים.

וְאַחֲרֵי זֶה יִמְשְׁכוּ הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּנְהָגִים
הַבִּלְתִּי נִגְבָּלִים בְּזִמּוֹן:

פָּרָק טו בְּעֵנֵן עֲבוֹדַת הָאֱלֹהִים עֲבוֹדַת הַתָּמִיד, שֶׁהִיא הַתְּפִלָּה.

פָּרָק יו בְּעֵנֵן עֲקָרֵי הָאֱמוּנָה לְפִי דַעַת חֻכְמֵי הַקְּרָאִים.

פָּרָק יז בְּעֵנֵן מִצְוֹת צִיצִית, וְאֶסּוּר לְבִישׁת שַׁעֲטָנִז, וְלֹא יִהְיֶה
כָּלִי גָבֶר עַל אִשָּׁה וְלֹא יִלְבַּשׁ גָּבֶר שִׁמְלַת אִשָּׁה.

Chapter 8: Regarding the customs of the month of Tammuz and the month of Av, and regarding the fast days, and the disagreement regarding this between us and the Rabbanites.

Chapter 9: Regarding the holiday of the Day of Shouting [Yom Teru'a], and what transmission has come down regarding it, and regarding the Ten Days of Mercy and *seliḥoth* [penitential prayers].

Chapter 10: Regarding the Day of Atonement, and what ceremony [was held] on it.

Chapter 11: Regarding the Festival of Sukkoth, and the holiday of Shemini 'Azereth.

Chapter 12: Regarding beginning [the cycle of reading] the Torah in this month, and regarding the Rabbanites' Ḥanukka in the month of Kislev.

Chapter 13: Regarding the Fast of the Tenth Month [the Tenth of Ṭeveth], and the Days of Mercy and *seliḥoth* in this month.

Chapter 14: Regarding the Month of Adar and its customs, and the days of Purim.

After this follow the laws and customs
that are not bounded by time:

Chapter 15: Regarding the service of God on a regular basis, which is prayer.

Chapter 16: Regarding the principles of faith according to the opinion of the Karaite sages.

Chapter 17: Regarding the commandment of *zizith* (fringes), and the prohibition to wear *sha'aṭnez* [mixed wool and linen in garments], and *a woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment* [Deuteronomy 22:5].

אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֵׂה לוֹ ❖ רֵאשֵׁי פָּרָקִים לַמֶּאמָר הַקָּטָן

פָּרָק יח בְּעֵינַי טְמֵאָה וְטִהְרָה, טְמֵאָת הָאָדָם זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה, טְמֵאָת הַבְּעָלִי־חַיִּים וְהַשְׂרָצִים, וְהַחֲלוּף אֲשֶׁר בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵין הָרִבָּנִים.

פָּרָק יט בְּעֵינַי הַשְּׁחִיטָה, וְכָל הַשִּׁיכִים לְזֶה הָעֵינַי, וְהַמְחֻלָּקָת אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵין הָרִבָּנִים.

פָּרָק כ' בְּהַכָּשֵׁר הַמֵּאכָלִים וְאֶפְנֵי הַנְּהָגָתָם.

פָּרָק כא בְּעֵינַי הַזְּווֹג וְהַנְּשׂוּאִין, וְדִין נוֹאֵף וְנוֹאֶפֶת, וְאֶפְנֵי הַגְּרוּשִׁין בְּעֵרֹת דָּבָר.

פָּרָק כב בְּעֵינַי אֲסוּרֵי עֲרִיּוֹת, וְאִיךָ נִפְלָה הַחֲלָקָה בֵּין הַחֲכָמִים הַקְּדָמוֹנִים וּבֵין הָאַחֲרוֹנִים.

פָּרָק כג בְּעֵינַי הִירְשׁוֹת וְהַחֲלוּקִין בַּנִּחְלָה, כְּפִי דִין תּוֹרָה.

פָּרָק כד בְּעֵינַי הָאֲבִלוֹת וְדִין קְבוּרַת הַמֵּת.

Chapter 18: Regarding purity and impurity; the impurities of human [bodies], male and female; the impurities of animals, specifically vermin; and the disagreement between us and the Rabbanites.

Chapter 19: Regarding *sheḥiṭa* [kosher slaughter], and everything that pertains to this, and the disagreement between us and the Rabbanites regarding it.

Chapter 20: Regarding what makes foods kosher, and conduct regarding them.

Chapter 21: Regarding coupling and marriage, and the laws of adulterers and adulteresses, and the ways of divorce for an unseemly [adulterous] affair.

Chapter 22: Regarding prohibited sexual relations, and the disagreement that there is between the earlier and later [Karaite] sages.

Chapter 23: Regarding inheritance, and division of estates, in accordance with the Torah's law.

Chapter 24: Regarding mourning, and the laws of burying the dead.

הָעֶרֶת הַמַּחְבֵּר עַל הַנִּכְנָסִים לַפְּרִדָּס הַתּוֹרָה לְתַרְץ הַמַּאֲמָרִים
עַל־פִּי הוֹרָאת פְּשׁוּטֵי הַמִּקְרָא, עִם עֶזֶר לַפְּעֻמִּים הָעֵתֶקָה
הַמְּשִׁלְשֵׁלֶת וְסִבָּרָא הַיְשָׁרָה; וְלָמָּה יִשְׁגָּה בְּקִבְלָהּ הַמִּנְצַחַת
וְזָרָה? לָזֶה הַקָּדִים בִּפְתִּיחָהּ, וַיִּדְבֵּר אֶת דְּבָרֵי הַשִּׁירָה: {ג}

שְׁקוּד לְבִי עָלִי דְלִתּוֹת תְּבוּנָה, וְהִתְנַהֵּג בְּדַת אֵל בְּאֻמוֹנָה,
לְבַלְתִּי תַחֲטֹא לַפְּרוֹשׁ דְּבָרָיו פָּנִי דְרַךְ גִּדְרָתוֹ הַגּוֹנָה.
מִצּוֹא הַחֵן וְשִׁכְל טוֹב בְּעֵינַי אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם, וְגַם אֲנָשִׁי אֻמוֹנָה.
הֵכִי יֵשׁ לָךְ יְסוּד מִקְרָא לִיתֵּד בִּיד נְאֻמוֹ, וְלֹא תִלְמוּד וּמִשְׁנָה.
בְּצִדָּה תַעֲרוֹן הַקֵּשׁ וְהָעֵתֶק, וְתֵן חֶלֶק לְשִׁבְעָה גַם שְׁמוֹנָה.
אֲסוּף הָרַבָּה רְאִיּוֹת נְאֻמָּנוֹת, וְתִשָּׁיב עַל מִנְצָחִים לַעֲדִינָה.
וְאִם תִּיטִיב שְׂאת עֵין בְּשִׁכְל, בְּתוֹכָהּ תִּמְצָא בְּאוֹר וּבִינָה,
וְלֹא תִגְרַע וְלֹא תוֹסִיף עָלֶי הַ כְּתוּבִים מֵאֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ אֻמוֹנָה.
וְאִם תִּמְצָא גִדְרוֹת הַחֲכָמִים מְתַקְנִים שְׂאוּבִים מִתְּבוּנָה,
דָּעָה כִּי לֹא יִסְדּוּם מִלְּבָבָם, אֲבָל לָהֶם בְּדַת מְקוֹר וּפְנָה.
חֲקֵרוּם עִם יְפִי שִׁכְלָם וּמִצָּאוּ בְּתוֹרָה בְּנִבְיָאִים אִם לְבִינָה,

Author's note regarding those that enter the orchard of the Torah to explain [its] words in accordance with the plain meaning of the text, sometimes using the aid of tradition that has been passed down, and of commonsense understanding. Why should one err, using a [Rabbanite] tradition that is triumphalist and foreign [to the Biblical text]? To this end, [the author] is beginning with an introduction, speaking the words of this poem: {3}

Be diligent, O my heart, at the doors of understanding,
And behave in accordance with God's Law, in faith,
So that you not err in interpreting its words,
When you face its path, whose fence [of restrictions] is
appropriate.
To find favor and good understanding in the eyes of
The eternal Lord, and the people of faith,
You have, indeed, the foundation of Scripture as a peg
In the hand of a reliable person – not Talmud or Mishna.
Alongside it, perform analogy and parallels,
And give a portion to seven, yea, to eight.
Gather many reliable proofs,
And respond to those [Rabbanites], who are triumphalist
over delightful [Torah].
And if you are good at bearing your eye with understanding,
Then in it will you find explanation and understanding,
And you will not subtract, nor add, to
The Scriptures, such that they will be faithful.
And if you find that the restrictions of the sages
Are well set, drawn from understanding –
Know that they established them not from their own heart,
But they have a source point in the Law.
They investigated them with their beautiful understanding,
and found
In the Torah [and] in the Prophets, a mother of wisdom;

זְקוּקִים מֵאֲמִיָּהֶם כְּכֶסֶף, בְּלִי סוֹתָרִים לְעֵדוֹת נֶאֱמָנָה,
קְבוּעִים בִּכְתָב כְּדִרְבּוֹנוֹת, עֲטָרַת דָּת לְהַחֲזִירָה לְיִשְׁנָה,
לְשִׁמְרָה מִתְמוֹרוֹת מַחְלִיפִים, תְּמִימָה שְׁתֵּהָא בְּלִתִּי מִשְׁנָה.
בְּכֹן בִּשְׁם בְּקֶרְאִים קְרוּאִים, הָיוֹת מְקָרָא לְיָדָם הִיא לְמִקְנָה.

Their words are refined like silver,
And do not contradict [Scripture's] faithful testimony.
They are established in the Text, like goads,
To restore the Law's crown, as in olden times,
To guard it from the changes of people who modify,
So that it will be perfect, and not changed.
Therefore, they are called by the name "Karaites,"
For Scripture is a possession in their hand.

הַקְדָּמָה¹

אֶז אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה: ה' אָמַר לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבָנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרוֹתָיו וְכָבוֹד
הַדֵּר מַלְכוּתוֹ. יַעַן שֶׁהַפְצִירָנִי עַל־פִּי כְּתָבִיו וְאַגְרוֹתָיו הָאִישׁ
הַנוֹדֵעַ בְּחֻכְמוֹת רָמוֹת, הָאֶדוֹן יוֹחֲנָן פֶּפֶנְדֹּרְף* רֹאשׁ יְשִׁיבַת
מֶלֶךְ שׁו"ד בְּרִיגָא יְרוּשָׁה הוֹדוּ וְתַנַּשּׂא מַלְכוּתוֹ, לְהוֹדִיעַ לוֹ
סֵבֶת חֻלְקַת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשָׁנִים, קְרָאִים וְרַבָּנִים, וְגַם לְבָאֵר לוֹ
יְסוּדֵי דַת הַקְּרָאוֹת עַל מָה אֲדִנְיָה הִטְבָּעוּ; בְּאָמְרוֹ שֶׁהַרְבָּנִים
הֵם יְדוּעִים בְּכָל מְקוֹמוֹת קְצוֹי הָאָרֶץ וַיָּם רְחוֹקִים, וְהַקְּרָאִים
רַק שְׁמֵם גְּזֻפְרִים בְּסִפְרֵי הַחֻכְמִים כְּמוֹ בְּסִפְרֵי בּוֹקֶשְׁדוֹרְף וּשְׂאֵר
הַמַּעֲתִיקִים סִפְרֵי הַקְּדָשׁ, וְלֹא נוֹדַע זֶה הָעֵנִין בְּאֵמַת אֶצְלָם,
כִּי כֹאשֶׁר הָעֵתִיקוּ מֵהַרְבָּנִים עֲנִינֵי הַקְּבָלוֹת מִצָּאוֹ שֶׁהַרְבָּנִים
יִחְסוּ אוֹתָנּוּ וְאֵת הַחֻלְקָה הַזֹּאת לְעֵנִין קָרָה בְּזִמָּן אֲנִיגְנוֹס אִישׁ

* נראה שצ"ל אופפֶנְדֹּרְף, ועי' הערה 7 בתרגום האנגלי.

^{4} Foreword

Then Solomon said: God said *to announce to mankind His might and the glory of His reign* (Psalms 145:12). [I have undertaken this work] because Lord Johann Puffendorf⁷ – who is known for his great scholarship, and is head of the King of Sweden’s institution of study in Riga (may [the king’s] glory be exalted and his kingdom uplifted) – has entreated me in his writings and letters to inform him about the reasons for the division of the House of Israel into two, Karaites and Rabbanites, and also to explain to him the fundamentals of the legal code of Karaism, upon which its foundations are fastened. For he said that the Rabbanites are known in all places, to the far ends of the land and the sea, whereas the Karaites are mentioned, only by name, in the books of scholars, such as the books of Buxtorf⁸ and other translators of holy books; and this matter [of the split between Rabbanites and Karaites] is not really known among [these scholars], for when they copied matters of the transmission [of Jewish religion] from the Rabbanites, they found that the Rabbanites attributed us [Karaites] and this division to an incident that happened during the time of Antigonus of Sokho and his two students, who are

7 This is the version of the name that appears in ed. Neubauer. However, MS Frankfurt Hebr. Oct. 271 reads “Uppendorff,” and indeed, this seems to be the correct reading; if we accept this reading, the addressee is Johann Uppendorff (1645–1698) of the University of Riga. See Daniel Lasker, “The Karaite Reception of David Gans’ Work” *Judaica Bohemiae* 51,1 (2016), p. 153, note 17; Riikka Tuori, *Karaite zēmīrōt in Poland-Lithuania: A study of paraliturgical Karaite Hebrew poems from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (PhD Dissertation, University of Helsinki, 2013), p. 80, note 213. Tuori notes that somewhere along the transmission of the text of *The Palanquin*, “[a]pparently the German Baron Samuel Puffendorf (1632–1694) has been confused with the Swedish Uppendorff.”

8 Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1629), Professor of Hebrew at Basel, and author of many works on Hebrew and Judaism.

שָׁכָה עִם שְׁנֵי תַלְמִידָיו שֶׁהֵם צָדוֹק וּבִיתוֹס, וְזֶה שֶׁקָּר, כֶּאֱשֶׁר יִתְבָּאֵר לְמַטָּה; כִּי שְׁנֵאת הַדֵּת הַבִּיָּאָם לִיְחֻסָּנוּ אֶל הַצְדֻּקִּים, וּבְזֶה הֵם גְּבוּכִים בְּאַרְצָ, וְלֹא יִכְלוּ לְמַצּוֹא הַפֶּתַח לְזִכּוֹר יְמוֹת עוֹלָם וּלְהַבִּין שְׁנוֹת דּוֹר וָדוֹר.

כִּי הָרַמְ"בִּים וּבַעַל סֵפֶר הַיּוֹחֲסִין כָּתְבוּ כִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן פְּרָחִיא הָיָה בְּדוֹר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֶּן טַבָּאי, וְהָרַא"ב וְאַבְנֵי יַחֲיָא בַּעַל שְׁלֹשֶׁת קְבָלָה כָּתְבוּ כִּי בֶן טַבָּאי הָיָה קֹדֶם מִבֶּן פְּרָחִיא. וְכֵן בְּעֵינֵי מַלְכוּת וּמַמְשָׁלֶת הַחֲשֻׁמָּנָאִים לְפִי דַּעַת אַבְרָבִינְאֵל הָיָה זְמַן מַמְשָׁלָתָם קמ"ב שָׁנִים, וּלְפִי דַּעוֹת הָאַחֲרִים וְסֵדֶר עוֹלָם הָיָה ק"ד שָׁנִים. וְהִנֵּה בֵּין מֵהַעֲדָר יְדִיעָתָם בֵּין מִשְׁנֵאתָם יָבִין כָּל חֲכָם לֵב כִּי הִרְחִיקוּ זְמַן חֲלָקֶת הַקְּרָאִים מֵהֶם לְזְמַן אֲנִטִּיגְנוֹס; וְגַם זֶה הַזְמַן לֹא יָדְעוּ בְּבִירוֹר, כִּי בַּעַל סֵפֶר צֶמַח דָּוִד כָּתַב שֶׁלֹּא נוֹדַע אֲצֻלָּם זְמַן צָדוֹק וּבִיתוֹס. וְלֹא נִמְצָא בֵּין הָרַבָּנִים מוֹדָה עַל הָאֲמָת רַק רַבִּי יְהוּדָא הָלֹוּי בְּסֵפֶר כּוֹזָרִי בְּמֵאֲמָר שְׁלִישִׁי,

Zadok and Boethus – and this is a lie, as will be explained below, for it is religious hatred that brought them to link us with the Sadducees, and in this they are confused,⁹ and cannot even begin¹⁰ to recount the chronology of the world and to understand the years of each generation.

[Firstly,] Maimonides and the author of *Sefer Ha-yuḥasin*¹¹ wrote that Joshua ben Peraḥya lived at the time of R. Yehuda ben Ṭabbai, but the Ra'avad¹² and Ibn Yaḥya, the author of *Shalsheleth Ha-qabbala*,¹³ wrote that ben Ṭabbai came before ben Peraḥya. The same [confusion] exists [regarding] the Hasmonaean monarchy and dominion, [for] according to Abravanel,¹⁴ the time of their reign was 142 years, but according to the opinion of others, and [according to] *Seder 'Olam*,¹⁵ it was 104 years. And now, whether it is from their lack of knowledge or whether it is from their hatred, any intelligent person will understand that they have moved the time of the separation of the Karaites to Antigonus's time; and even that time they did not know exactly, for the author of the book *Zemah David*¹⁶ wrote that the time of Zadok and Boethus is unknown to them. And there is no one among the Rabbanites who admits the truth, except for the sage

9 Literally “confused in the land,” using the words of Exodus 14:3.

10 Literally “are unable to open the door,” using the words of Genesis 19:11.

11 *The Book of Genealogy*, by Abraham Zacuto (1452 – c. 1515).

12 Abraham ibn Da'ud (1110–1180), author of *Sefer Ha-qabbala*, available in English translation by Gerson Cohen: *The Book of Tradition*, Jewish Publication Society, 1967, reprinted 2010.

13 *The Chain of Tradition*, by Gedalya ibn Yaḥya (c. 1515 – c. 1587).

14 R' Isaac Abravanel, a Spanish Rabbanite. See p. 113.

15 *The Order of All Time*, an ancient rabbinic chronographic work, attributed to the second-century sage R. Yoṣe ben Ḥalafta, available in English translation by Heinrich W. Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology*, Jason Aronson, 1998.

16 *David's Sprout*, by David Gans (1541–1613).

וְהֶהָכַרְח הִבִּיאוּ לְגִלּוֹת הָאֱמֶת, בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ מִדְּבַר עִם הַמֶּלֶךְ וְלֹא
הָיָה מְקוֹם לְשִׁנּוֹת וּלְהַחֲלִיף הַדְּבָרִים.

וּלְמַעַן תִּגָּלֶה הָאֱמֶת כְּצֵאת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּגִבּוֹרֶתָהּ, אֶת קִסְתִּי
נָתַתִּי בְּעֵנֶיךָ לְבָרֵךְ וּלְלַבֵּן עֵינֶיךָ הַחֲלָקָה הַזֹּאת ^(ה') כֹּאֲשֶׁר נִעְזְרֶתִי
מִסִּפְרֵי קְדְמוֹנֵינוּ. וְקִרְאתִי שֵׁם זֶה הַמֶּאֱמָר הַקָּטָן אַפְרִיּוֹן עֲשֵׂה
לוֹ, כִּי אֵלֹהֵי הַג' תִּיבּוֹת בְּגִימָטְרִיָּא עוֹלָיִן "סֶפֶר מְנַהֲגֵי קִרְאִי";
וְעוֹד כִּי שְׁמִי נִחָתָם בְּתִיבַת "עֲשֵׂה". וְאַתְחִיל בְּעֵנֶיךָ:

לְפָלְגוֹת רְאוּבֵן

גְּדוּלִים חֲקֵרֵי לֵב (שׁוּפְטִים ה:טז).

הִנֵּה נִמְצָא בְּסֶפֶר עֲשֵׂרָה מְאֻמְרוֹת לְהַחֲכֶם הַכּוֹלֵל הָרַב
רַבֵּינוּ כָּלֵב בֶּן אֱלִיָּהוּ אֶפִּינְדוּפּוֹלוֹ, מִחֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים אֲשֶׁר

R. Judah Ha-levi in his book *Kuzari*,¹⁷ part 3. And necessity made him reveal the truth, for he was speaking with the king, and had no opportunity to change or to switch things.

In order that the truth may be revealed, as the sun comes out in its splendor,¹⁸ I have used my inkstand for this matter¹⁹ in order to sort out and clarify the matter of this division, ^{5} with the help of the books of our predecessors. I called this small work *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* ("A Palanquin He Made for Himself"), for these three words are equal in *gematriyya* to *Sefer Minhagé Qara'é* (*The Book of Customs of the Karaites*);²⁰ and furthermore, my name is signed in the letters of the word 'asa (made).²¹ And I will begin the matter:

*At the divisions of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart* (Judges 5:16).²²

It can be found in the book *'Asara Ma'amaroḥ* (*Ten Utterances*), by the comprehensive scholar R. Caleb ben Elijah Afen-

17 *The Book of the Khazar*, by Judah Ha-levi (c. 1079 – 1141), available in English translation by Hartwig Hirschfeld, *Book of Kuzari*, 1905, revised 1930, reprinted 1946.

18 That is, clearly; using the language of Judges 5:31.

19 Hebrew *eth qasṭi nathatti ba-'inyan*, a very clever re-write of Genesis, 9:13, *eth qasṭi nathatti be-'anan* (*I have put my rainbow in the cloud*).

20 Actually, *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* = 758, and *Sefer Minhagé Qara'é* = 759, but it is customary not to be concerned with a difference of one when calculating *gematriyya*.

21 It is unclear exactly what the author means. In the longer version of the work, as found, e.g., in manuscript New York JTS Mic. 3325, he writes that his name is signed in the word 'asa, whose three letters expand into an acrostic of 'asa ha-melekh shelomo, "King Solomon made" (with the order of the words switched). The phrase, and the title of the book, are taken from Song of Songs 3:9: *King Solomon made himself a palanquin from the wood of the Lebanon [Forest]*. Our author's name was Solomon, though he was not a king, so using this verse as the title of the book alludes to his name.

22 Because of the word "divisions," our author uses this verse to introduce his discussion of the divisions of the Jewish people.

בקושטנדינא רבֿתא, ובספרי הרב רבנו יפת בן צעיר, ושאר חכמי הקראים, האחרונים והראשונים:

כי זמן חלקת הקראים והרבנים היה בזמן בית שני, כשגברו החשמנאים, הוא מתתיהו כהן גדול ובניו, והרגו את פיליפוס שר צבא אנטיוכוס מלך יון.

(עד כאן לשון החכם ה"נל בספר הנ"ל). ואני, לפי בקשת האדון הנ"ל, נתתי את לבי במספר השנים, ומצאתי כי התחלת בנין בית שני היה בשנה ראשונה למלכות כרש והיא שנת ג' אלפים שצ"ד לבריאת העולם (3394); ולא נבנה הבית, כי נהרג כרש; ומלך אחשורוש של אסתר י"ד שנה ומת; ואחר כך מלך דריוש בן אסתר הוא ארתחששתא, ובשנת אחת למלכו גזר לבנין הבית, ונשלם הבית בשנת ח' למלכו, והוא מלך ל"ב שנה; והרגו אליכסנדור מוקדון, והתחילה ממשלת יון, ונתקיימה עד שנת רי"ב לבנין הבית. ואז גברו החשמנאים ומרדו באנטיוכוס מלך יון, והרגו את פיליפוס, שהיה משנה על ירושלים. ועמדה והצליחה מלכות החשמנאים מאה ושלוש שנים, עד זמן הורודוס מלכא, שהיה בשנת ג' אלפים תשכ"ה לבריאה. והנה בשנת רי"ב לבנין הבית מלך מתתיה, הוא חשמנאי, ומת בשנה ההיא. ואחר מלך בנו יהודא הבכור, הנקרא מכבי, שש שנים, ומת; ומלך יונתן אחיו שבע שנים, ומת; ומלך שמעון אחיו ח' שנים, ומת. ואחר כך מלך יוחנן

dopolo, of the Karaite sages in great Constantinople, and in the books of R. Yefeth ben Z̄a'ir, and the other earlier and later sages of the Karaites:

The time of the separation of the Karaites and the Rabbanites was during the time of the Second Temple when the Hasmoneans, that is the High Priest Mattathias and his sons, became mighty, and killed Philippus, the captain of the guard of Antiochus, the King of Greece.

(This is a quote from the above-mentioned sage in the above-mentioned book). And I, in accordance with the request of the above-mentioned gentleman [Johann Uppendorff], have applied myself [to know] the number of years, and found that the beginning of the building of the Second Temple was in the first year of the reign of Cyrus, that is the year 3394 since the creation of the world; and the Temple was not built, because Cyrus was killed; and King Ahasuerus of Esther reigned for 14 years, and died; afterwards was Esther's son, King Darius, who is Artaxerxes, who decreed the building of the Temple in the first year of his reign, and the Temple was completed in the eighth year of his reign, and he reigned 32 years; and Alexander the Macedonian killed him, and the Greek rule began, and continued until the year 212 after the building of the Temple. Then the Hasmonaeans gained power, and revolted against Antiochus, the king of Greece, and killed Philippus, who was his governor over Jerusalem. The kingdom of the Hasmoneans stood and prospered for 103 years, until the time of King Herod, which was in the year 3725 of the creation. So, in the year 212 after the building of the Temple, Mattathias, also known as Hasmonaeus, reigned, and died during that year. After him, his eldest son Judah, called Maccabaeus, reigned six years, and died; and Jonathan, his brother, reigned seven years, and died; and Simeon, his brother, reigned eight years and died. Afterwards, John son of Simeon son of Mattathias, whose Greek

בן שמעון בן מתתיה, הנקרא בלשון יון הרקנוס הראשון, והוא היה מלך וכהן גדול. ומפני אהבת הקצור, לא ארחיב מה שיקרה בינו ובין החכמים הפורשים, מסבת איש שולח מדגים ובליעל. הוא אליעזר אשר נתן פגם בכהנתו הגדולה; ונהרגו החכמים על שלא השתיקו לאליעזר הנ"ל. וזה הרקנוס מלך על ישראל ל"א שנה, ומת. וימלוך בנו הקטן, הוא ינאי המלך, הנקרא אליכסנדר - כי ג' בנים היו לו: הא' אריסתובולוס, הב' אנטיגנוס, הג' אליכסנדר. ושאל את פי ה' מי ימלוך אחריי, ובאה התשובה: "אליכסנדר ימלוך אחריי". והוא היה נמאס בעיניו; ויהי לפני מותו, וימלוך בנו אריסתובולוס, וישם שר צבא על עם ה' את אחיו אנטיגנוס, ואת ינאי אסר בנחשתים. ולא האריך אריסתובולוס על מלכותו רק שנה א', כי מתו שניהם, ⁽¹⁾ עם אנטיגנוס אחיו; וימלוך ינאי אחיהם, כפי דבר השם; והיה כמו כן מלך וכהן גדול. ובימי חג הסוכות, כאשר

name was Hyrcanus I, reigned, as both king and high priest. However, for the sake of brevity, I will not go into detail about what happened between him and the Pharisees²³ because of a man who created quarrel and wickedness. This man is Eliezer, who intimated that [John Hyrcanus's] high priesthood was flawed; and the sages were killed, because they did not silence this Eleazar.²⁴ And this Hyrcanus reigned over Israel for thirty-one years, and then died. His youngest son, King Yannai, who is called Alexander, reigned [after him] – for [Hyrcanus] had three sons: the first was Aristobulus; the second, Antigonus; and the third, Alexander. He consulted God about who would reign after him, and the answer came: “Alexander will reign after you.” [Alexander] was vile in his eyes; [so,] before his death, [he made] his son Aristobulus king, and he made his brother Antigonus the commander of the army over God's people, and he put Yannai in chains. But Aristobulus's rule did not last long, only one year, for he died, together ⁶¹ with his brother Antigonus; and their brother Yannai reigned, in accordance with God's word; he, too, was both king

23 The text in ed. Neubauer has the odd spelling *porshim*, rather than the usual *perushim*; one might read this as “separatists” or “schismatics,” but it is clear that our author understands the Pharisees as the main group of Jewish sages, the ancestors of both Karaites and Rabbanites, so the spelling is probably a quirk. Both our author and his contemporary, Ḥakham Mordecai ben Nisan, the author of *Royal Attire*, assert that the Pharisees were the precursors to both the Karaites and the Rabbanites. See *Royal Attire*, pp. 27–29. In the Middle Ages, Rabbanite sages, such as R. Abraham ibn Ezra and Maimonides, referred to Karaites as Sadducees, a group that opposed the Pharisees during the time of the Second Temple. See Abraham ibn Ezra's comment on Leviticus 23:40, and Maimonides, *Mishné Tora*, Laws of Slavery 6:6. Neither *Royal Attire* nor this short version of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* accepts the view that the Karaites are related to the Sadducees.

24 Thus in ed. Neubauer: First time Eliezer, second time Eleazar. In *Josippon*, ed. David Flusser (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1978, chapter 30, pp. 19 ff.), the name is Eleazar throughout; Flusser does not indicate any manuscripts that have the variant “Eliezer”, but these similar names are often interchanged in Hebrew texts.

הַעֲלָה עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עוֹלוֹת, הַעִיז פָּנָיו אֶחָד מֵהַתְּלַמִּידִים, וְהִכָּה בְּכַפְרֵי עֵץ לְמִצְחוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ. וְגַם בְּזֹאת הַפֶּעַם נָתַנוּ פָּגָם בְּכֹהֲנֵתוֹ, מִסִּבָּה שְׂאֵמוֹ, אֲשֶׁת אָבִיו שָׁמְעוֹן, נִשְׁבְּתָה בְּהַר הַמּוֹדֵעִית, וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה לֹא הָיָה רָאוּי לְכֹהֵנָה, מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁד. וַיִּקְצוֹף הַמֶּלֶךְ, וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת גְּדוּדָיו, וַיַּהֲרֹגוּ מִן הַמִּפְרָשִׁים שֵׁשֶׁה וַחֲמִשִּׁים אָלֶף; וּלְבַסּוֹף הַשְׁמִיד ח' מֵאוֹת חֲכָמִים גְּדוֹלִים שֶׁנִּסְתָּרוּ בְּבֵית שְׁמֹשׁ. וְלֹא נִמְלָט מִכָּלֵל הַחֲכָמִים מוֹרֵי תוֹרָה אֲלָא שָׁמְעוֹן בֶּן שֹׁטָח, שֶׁהָיָה אֶחָד לְאִשְׁתֵּי הַמֶּלֶךְ, וַחֲבֵרוֹ יְהוּדָא בֶּן טַבָּאי, שֶׁהָיוּ תְּלַמִּידֵי נְתַאי הָאֲרִבְלִי, כְּאֲשֶׁר הִשִּׁיבֵם הַמֶּלֶכָה אֶלְכָּסְנִדָּרָה, אֲשֶׁת הַמֶּלֶךְ יִנְאִי, שָׁמוֹ כְּמוֹ כֵּן אֶלִיכָסְנִדָּר. וְהוּא שָׁמְעוֹן בֶּן שֹׁטָח, אֲשֶׁר בָּדָה מִלְּבוֹ תוֹרָה שְׁבַעַל פֶּה, הָיָה רֹאשׁ לְרַבָּנִים; וַיְהוּדָא בֶּן טַבָּאי, אֲשֶׁר הֵלַךְ אַחֲרֵי תוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עִם בָּאוֹר מִסָּכִים לְפָשׁוּטוֹ שֶׁל מֶקְרָא, הָיָה רֹאשׁ לְקָרְאִים. וְהֵנָּה כְּאֲשֶׁר תַּחֲשׁוּב שְׁנוֹת מַלְכֵי חֲשֹׁמְנָאִי מִשְׁנַת רי"ב לְבִגְנִין בֵּית שִׁגִּי כ"ג עַד מוֹת יִנְאִי הַקָּטָן, שֶׁהוּא

and high priest. During the festival of Sukkoth, while he was offering burnt-offerings on the altar, one of the students was insolent and pelted the king on his forehead with a piece of fruit. Also at this time, they intimated that his priesthood was flawed, because his mother, the wife of his father Simeon,²⁵ had been a captive on Mount Moda'ith, and because of that he was unfit for the priesthood, because of suspicion [that his lineage was not fit for the priesthood].²⁶ The king became furious, and he sent his battalions, and they killed 65,000 of the Pharisees;²⁷ in the end, he annihilated eight hundred great sages, who were [trying to] hide in Beth Shemesh. Out of all the sages who taught the Torah, only Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ, who was the brother of the king's wife, and his colleague Yehuda ben Ṭabbai, both students of Nittai the Arbelite, survived through the time when Queen Alexandra, wife of King Yannai, whose name is also Alexander, allowed them to return. It is this Simeon ben Shaṭaḥ who fabricated the Oral Law, who became head of the Rabbanites. Yehuda ben Tabbai, who followed Moses's Law with an exegesis that accords with the plain meaning of the Bible, became the head of the Karaites. Now, if one calculates the years of the Hasmonaeen Kings from the year

25 This must mean either "his father John" or "his grandfather Simeon."

26 The suspicion is that his mother had either been raped by a non-Jew, or committed fornication with one, while in her captivity. If such an act produced John Hyrcanus, he would not be a priest, because priesthood is transmitted from father to son. Moreover, a woman who has been involved in 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. On this point, many of the Karaite sages agree with the rabbinic halakha.

27 Here, the form used for Pharisees in ed. Neubauer is even more unexpected: *meforashim*. This literally means "people set apart" or "people designated;" our author may understand "Pharisees" as meaning "separatists, ascetics."

אֲלִיכֶסְנֶדֶר בֶּן הֶרְקֵנוֹס, תִּמְצָא שְׁמוֹנִים וְאַחַת שָׁנָה. וּמִזֶּה נִדְעַ
כִּי זְמַן חֲלָקֶת הַקָּרָאִים מִהֶרְבָּנִים הָיָה בְּשָׁנַת פ"א לְמַלְכוּת
הַחֲשֻׁמְנָאִים, שֶׁהָיָא שָׁנַת מֵאָתַיִם תְּשָׁעִים וְשָׁלֹשׁ לְבִנְיָן בֵּית
שְׁנִי, וְהָיָא שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים שְׁבַע מֵאוֹת וְאַרְבַּע שָׁנִים לְבְרִיאַת
הָעוֹלָם, קכ"ד שָׁנִים קֹדֶם חֲרָבֹן הַבֵּית. וְעַנֵּין צְדוּק וּבִיתוֹס עִם
אֲנִטִּיגְנוֹס רַבָּם הָיָה רנ"ד שָׁנִים קֹדֶם מִזְמַן חֲלָקֶת הַקָּרָאִים
מִהֶרְבָּנִים. אִם כֵּן שִׁפְתָּ אֱמַת זֹאת תִּכּוֹן לַעַד, וְעַד אֲרֻגִּיעַ לְשׁוֹן
שֶׁקֶר שֶׁל הֶרְבָּנִים.

212 of the building of the Second Temple, as mentioned above, until the death of Yannai the Younger, who is Alexander ben Hyrcanus, one will find eighty-one years. From this follows that the time of the separation of the Karaites from the Rabbanites was in year eighty-one of the Hasmonaean reign, that is, year 293 from the building of the Second Temple, which is year 3704 from the creation of the world, and 124 years before the destruction of the Temple.²⁸ But the dispute of Zadok and Boethus with their teacher Antigonus happened 254 years before the time of the separation of the Karaites and Rabbanites. This being the case, the lip of truth shall be established forever, but I shall silence the lying tongue of the Rabbanites.²⁹

28 If we assume 68 CE as the year of the destruction of the Temple (as assumed in most traditional Jewish chronology), then this would come out to 57 BCE, whereas our author's date for Antigonus would come out to 187 BCE.

29 This sentence uses the language of Psalms 12:19.

בְּעֵינֵי הַיְסוּדוֹת אֲשֶׁר דָּת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹמֶדֶת עֲלֵיהֶן

הַעֲמוּדִים אֲשֶׁר דָּת הַיְהוּדִים נִכּוֹן עֲלֵיהֶם הֵם שְׁלֹשָׁה: כְּתוּב, הֶקֶשׁ, וְסִבֵּל הִירָשָׁה, שֶׁהִיא הַעֲתָקָה הַמְּשִׁתְּלִשְׁלֶת. וּבְאוֹר אֱלוֹ כִּי הַכְּתוּב בְּכָלֵל הֵן מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה וּמִצְוֹת לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה, כְּגוֹן הַמּוֹל יִמּוֹל יֶלֶד בֵּיתְךָ (בראשית יז:א), וְעָשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית (במדבר טו:לח); וּכְגוֹן לֹא תִבְעֲרוּ אֵשׁ בְּכָל מִשְׁכְּנֵיכֶם (שמות לה:א), לֹא תֹאכַל כָּל תוֹעֵבָה (דברים יז:א) וגו'; וְכָל הַמִּצְוֹת הַכְּלוּלִין בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה; וְלֹא נִתְּנוּ לָהֶן חֻכְמֵי הַקְּרָאִים סֵף קָצוּב, בְּרָאִיָּה מִדְּבַרֵּי דָוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשָּׁלוֹם וְחֻבָּה מִצֻּתְךָ מְאֹד (תהלים קיט:צו); אֲבָל הַרְבֵּגִים מִנּוֹ אוֹתָם

Chapter I

Regarding³⁰ the Foundations upon which the House of Israel Stands

The pillars on which the Jewish faith rests are threefold: Scripture (*kathuv*); Analogy (*heqqesh*);³¹ and the Burden of the Inheritance (*Sevel Ha-yerusha*), which is the transmission that has been passed down. The explanation of these is:

Scripture includes positive and negative commandments, for example: *he that is born in thy house must needs be circumcised* (Genesis 17:13), and *bid them that they make them fringes* (Numbers 15:38); and, [as examples of negative commandments,] *ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations* (Exodus 35:3),³² *thou shalt not eat any abominable thing* (Deuteronomy 14:3); and so forth, and all the commandments included in Moses's Torah; the Karaite sages did not enumerate them with a definite number, giving as proof the words of King David, may he rest in peace: [*I have seen an end to every purpose;*] *but Thy commandment is exceeding broad* (Psalms 119:96). But the Rabbanites counted 248

30 In the Hebrew, the chapter headings begin variously with the particle *be-*, or the word *be'inyan* or *odoth*. All of these mean "regarding, concerning, on the matter of." For the sake of consistency, we have rendered them all into English as "regarding."

31 Because the term "Analogy" translates the Hebrew *heqqesh*, a technical term indicating one of the three foundations of the faith, we capitalize the word from here on, just as we capitalize the words "Scripture" and "Burden of the Inheritance."

32 The mediaeval Karaite understanding of this verse is *ye shall cause no fire to burn*; but, as we shall see in chapter 3, our author does not understand Scripture to forbid leaving flames lit, but only actual kindling of flames on the Sabbath. Therefore, we have kept the JPS translation of this verse, as is our usual practice regarding Biblical verses.

מִצּוֹת עֹשֶׂה רַמ"ח וְלֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה שְׁס"ה, וְכָלֶלֶם תַּרְי"ג.

הַקֵּשׁ: יֵשׁ מִצּוֹת נֹהֲגוֹת בְּאֻמָּתָנוּ בְּהַקֵּשׁ, וְהֵן יוֹצְאוֹת מִכַּח הַכְּתוּב, כְּגוֹן לֹא תַחַרֵּשׁ בְּשׁוֹר וּבַחֲמֹר יַחְדּוֹ (דְּבָרִים כ"ו:), כִּי מִמַּלְת "חֲרִישָׁה" לֹוֹקָחִים הַקֵּשׁ וְדַמְיוֹן לְכָל מְלָאכּוֹת, וּמֵאֲמַר "בְּשׁוֹר וַחֲמֹר" לְכָל שְׁנֵי מִיָּנִים, רוֹצֶה לֹוֹמַר מִן טָהוֹר עִם מִן טָמֵא, וְהַחֲזִק עִם חֵלֶשׁ.

סֶבֶל ^(ז) הִירְשָׁה הֵם הַמְּנַהֲגִים אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנָהֲגֵנוּ בָּהֶם מִזְמַן אֲבוֹת הַקְּדוֹשִׁים, כְּגוֹן הַמִּילָה - בְּאִיזָה אֶבֶר וּבְאִיזָה אֶפֶן וְכַמוֹת כְּרִיתַת הָעֶרְלָה, וְכֵן הַשְּׁחִיטָה - בְּאִיזָה מְקוֹם וּבְאִיזָה אֶפֶן; שֶׁלֹא הוֹרָה הַכְּתוּב בְּכָל זֶה בְּבֹאוֹר. וּמִסֶּבֶל הִירְשָׁה יִדְעֵנוּ שֶׁהִיא בְּצִוָּאֵר הַבְּהֵמָה, וְכֵן נִקּוֹר הַבֶּשֶׂר וְהוֹצָאת הָעוֹרָקִים הַדְּמִיִּים. וְכֵן עֲנִינֵי הַזִּוּג וְהַנְּשׂוּאִין, וְעֲנִינֵי הַתְּפִלוֹת בְּאִיזָה מְנַהֵג, וְעֲנִין קָדוֹשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ - כָּל אֵלֹו וְדוֹמִיָּהֶם אֵינָם מְבֹאֲרִים בַּתּוֹרָה בְּבִירוֹר, אֲבָל יִדְעֵנוּ אוֹתָם מִהַעֲתָקָה שֶׁמִּשְׁתַּלְּשֵׁלֶת מֵהָאֵב לְבָנוּ וּמֵהָרֵב לְתַלְמִידוֹ.

הַרְבֵּנִים מְכֻנִּים הַקְּבֵלָה שֶׁלָּהֶם בְּהַעֲתָקָה, וְאוֹמְרִים שֶׁהִיא פְּרוּשׁ לְתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה. אֲבָל חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים לֹא הִסְכִּימוּ, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁיֵּשׁ בְּקִבְלָתָם דְּבָרִים סוֹתְרִים לְתוֹרָה שֶׁבְּכַתָּב. וּלְפִי דַעַת הַקְּרָאִים, כָּל הַעֲתָקָה שֶׁיֵּשׁ לָהּ סִיוֵּעַ מִן הַכְּתוּב, וְלֹא תַעֲמוּד

positive commandments and 365 negative commandments, for a total of 613.

Analogy: Certain commandments are observed by our people through Analogy, and they are derived from the authority of Scripture, as, for example: *Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together* (Deuteronomy 22:10), for from the word “plowing” an analogy and similarity is established to all kinds of work, and from the words *with an ox and a donkey* to any two species, that is, a pure species with an impure species, or a strong one with a weak one.

The Burden of the ^{7} Inheritance is the customs that we have followed from the time of our holy fathers, for example, on which body part and in which way to perform circumcision, and how much to cut the foreskin, or in what place and in which way to perform kosher slaughtering [*sheḥiṭa*] – for Scripture does not give an clear explanation for any of this. From the Burden of the Inheritance we know that slaughtering is done on the throat of the animal, and we also know about porging meat and removing the veins. The same is true for the matter of marriage, and for [certain] customs regarding prayer, and for the matter of sanctifying the months.³³ All these and similar [laws] are not explicitly explained in the Torah, but we know them from the transmission that is passed down from father to son, from teacher to student.

The Rabbanites call their tradition transmission, and say that it is an explanation of the Written Law. However, the Karaite sages do not agree, because there are things in their tradition that contradict the written Torah. According to the opinion of the Karaites, any transmission that has support in Scripture, and does not contradict the Torah, is true, and we accept it upon us.

33 That is, how to determine what day is the first of the month.

אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֶׂה לּוֹ ❖ פָּרָק א'

נֶגֶד הַתּוֹרָה, הִיא אֲמִתִּית, וְנִקְבְּלָה עֲלֵינוּ. וּבְעֵבוֹר זֶה הִיָּתָה
הַחֲלָקָה בִּינֵיהֶם, כְּאִשּׁוֹר יִתְבָּאֵר.

It is for this reason that the division between [the Karaites and the Rabbanites] occurred, as will be explained.

במצות מילה

זאת המצוה היא הראשונה לכל בר ישראל, כי תעשה לבן שמונת ימים מיום הלידה. וממאמר ועל זכר (בראשית י"ד) הכתוב בפרשת לך לך, ידענו מקום המילה; ואפן עשייתה, וכמות כריתת הערלה, ובאיזה כלי - ידענו מסבל הירשה דור אחרי דור. וצריך שיהיה המל מאמין בתורת משה, ויודע סוד המצוה ותכליתה. ואם קרה הענין ומל הגוי כראוי, אין צריך להמול פעם שנית, לפי דעת חכמי הקראים. אבל הרבנים אומרים שצריך להטיף דם - וזה יקרא פצע, לא מילה. ויש בזאת המצוה חלקה בין הקראים והרבנים, כי הרבנים

Chapter 2

Regarding the Commandment of Circumcision

This is the first commandment for any male in Israel, for it is performed on males on the eighth day after birth. From the words *and the uncircumcised male* (Genesis 17:14), written in *Parashath Lekh Lekha*,³⁴ we know the place of circumcision; [whereas] the way to perform it, and how to cut the foreskin and with what kind of tool – we know [these] from the Burden of the Inheritance from generation to generation.³⁵ The circumciser must believe in Moses's Torah, and know the commandment's [underlying] secret and purpose. [However,] according to the Karaite sages, if it should happen that a gentile has performed a proper circumcision, it is not necessary to perform a second circumcision. The Rabbanites, by contrast, say that one needs to draw blood; but this would be called a wound, not a circumcision!

In this commandment, there is [also another] difference

34 Our author often cites Biblical passages by *parasha*, that is, the Torah-portion in which the passage occurs, according to the traditional Jewish cycle of reading the Torah over the course of a year. See below, chapter 12. In all such cases, we have added chapter and verse numbers, so a reader unfamiliar with the *parasha* divisions will have no trouble finding the precise citations.

35 In our punctuation of this sentence, we have split these various aspects into two categories: the place of circumcision on the body, which is derived from the word *male* in Scripture; and the other aspects, which are known only from the Burden of Inheritance. This resolves the apparent contradiction in this sentence, for our author begins by saying that we know these from Scripture, but concludes by saying that we know them all from the Burden of Inheritance. It is also possible not to split the aspects into two categories, and to read the author as meaning that all this is commanded by Scripture, even though it is not stated explicitly, and we need the Burden of Inheritance to tell us what Scripture means.

אומרים שצריך מילה ופריעה, ומביאים ראיה ממאמר השם
 יתברך ליהושע: ושוב מל את בני ישראל שנית (יהושע ה:ב). והקראים
 אומרים כי מלת שנית שב אל הרחוק, ונקשר למלת שוב, כמו
 ולצלע המשכן השנית (שמות כו:כ), שמלת שנית לא תדבק למלת
 משכן, רק למלת צלע, והטעם שישב מהכונה שהסכים מתחלה
 להיות ישראל הנולדים במדבר ערלים, ועכשו הצרך למול
 אותם. ועל-כן אמר שוב שנית מהכונה הראשונה. ולי נראה
 לפרש מלת שנית, עם דבקתה למלת שוב, לטעם שנצטוה
 יהושע בזה המאמר שני דברים: הא' לעשות כלי המילה,
 שיהיו מוכנים לו ולבאים אחריו; הב' להמול על ידו ממש,

of opinion between the Karaites and the Rabbanites, for the Rabbanites say that there need to be both *mila* [removal of the foreskin] and *peri'a* [peeling back of the tissue connecting the foreskin to the glans, to expose the circumcised glans]. They cite as proof what God, blessed be He, said to Joshua: *and go back, circumcise the children of Israel the second time*³⁶ (Joshua 5:2). But the Karaites say that the word *a second time* [*shenith*] is linked to earlier in the sentence, to the word *go back*; just as in [the verse] *and for the second side of the tabernacle* (Exodus 36:25), where the word *second* is not linked to *tabernacle*, but to *side*.³⁷ The meaning is that [Joshua] should go back from his earlier intention, for he had agreed at first for the Israelites who were born in the Wilderness to be uncircumcised, and now he needed to circumcise them. Therefore [God] said *go back* [. . .] *a second time* from their first intention. [Alternatively,] it seems to me to explain the word *a second time*, along with *go back*, as meaning that Joshua was commanded two things in these words: the first was to make tools for circumcision, to be prepared for him and for [the generations] coming after him; the second was

36 The JPS translation reads: *and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time*. However, our author makes a point of the meaning of the word *shuv* as “go back” (rather than “again”), so we have translated the verse accordingly.

37 The order of words in Hebrew in the Exodus verse, *ulezela' ha-mishkan ha-shenith*, would read in English as: “and for the side of the tabernacle, the second one.” Thus, the word “second” is closest to “tabernacle;” but nonetheless, the verse is clearly not describing a second tabernacle, but a second side, so the word “second” must refer to the word “side” earlier in the verse, not to the adjacent word “tabernacle.” In Joshua, too, the word “second” is closer to the word “circumcise,” but our author argues that it refers to a word earlier in the sentence, “go back.”

וְלֹא בַיָּד אַחֵר. וּבַעֲבוּר אֱלוֹהֵי הַבַּיִת פְּעֻלֹת נֶאֱמַר שִׁנִּית.
 וְכָל חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים הוֹרִו שְׁצָרֵיךְ מִלֵּה לְבַד, בְּלֹא פְרִיעָה,
 כִּי זֶה הוֹסְפָה לְדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה. וְחֹב לְכָל בֶּרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל {ח} לֵהִיּוֹת
 גְּמוּלָה, כִּי בְּבִטּוֹל זֹאת הַמִּצְוָה הַזֵּהִירָה הַתּוֹרָה לְנַפֵּשׁ כָּרַת
 מֵעוֹלָם הַחַיִּים הַנִּצְחִיִּים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַזֵּאת מֵעַמּוּךָ,
 אֶת בְּרִיתִי הַפָּרָה (בראשית יז:ט). וְאִם יִהְיֶה הַיֵּלֶד חָלָשׁ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי,
 אֲזִי מִמֵּתִינִים וְאִינָם מְלִים עַד כַּמָּה יָמִים, כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא תִהְיֶה
 גְּרָמָא לְמִיתָה, מִמָּה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אֲתָם הָאָדָם וְחַי בָּהֶם
 (ויקרא יח:ה); וְכִשְׁתִּירְפָא אֲזִי מְלִים. וְזֹאת הַמִּצְוָה לְכָלֵל מִצְוֹת
 הַתּוֹרָה הַנִּמְשָׁכוֹת אַחֲרֶיהָ.

to circumcise with his own hands and not through someone else's hands. On account of these two actions, it says: *a second time*.³⁸

[In any case,] all the Karaite sages taught that only *mila* without *peri'a* is necessary, for [*peri'a*] is an addition to the words of the Torah. It is the duty of every male in Israel ^{8} to be circumcised, for the Torah warns that one who neglects this commandment will have his soul cut off from eternal life, as it is said: *that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant* [Genesis 17:14]. However, if the child is weak on the eighth day, then one waits and does not circumcise for a few days, in order not to cause a death, because of what is said [regarding the commandments]: *which if a man do, he shall live by them* [Leviticus 18:5]; and when he recovers, then they must circumcise him. This commandment is a general principle for all the commandments of the Torah, which derive from it.³⁹

38 It is unclear exactly how the author reads the verse to refer to these two principles, but presumably he reads *a second time* to mean “a second rule, in addition to the first one.”

39 This sentence seems to refer not to circumcision, but to the principle that preserving life takes precedence over all other commandments.

בְּעֵינֵי שַׁבָּת

זאת המצוה יסודתה מזמן הבריאה, אבל הצווי בא על שמירתה על ידי משה רבנו במתן התורה. ונקרא זה היום בשני שמות, שַׁבָּת וְשַׁבְתוֹן. ופרשו חכמינו כי שם "שַׁבָּת" יאמר על עצם היום השביעי, אבל "שַׁבְתוֹן" על החלק הנוסף מחל על קדש בליל ז' ובמוצאי שַׁבָּת. וטעם השביתה הוא בטול והנחת מלאכה. והנה חכמי הקראים אסרו כל מלאכות שבעולם, מלבד עבודת האלהים וטלטול מזונות האדם תוך הבית הצריכים למחיתו, ושאר צרכיו ההכרחיים, כגון הצעת המטה, לבישת המלבושים. והעושה מלאכה מלבד אלה נקרא מחלל שַׁבָּת, ודינו בזמן המלכות בסקילה וגם כרת, ובזמן הגלות כדין העובר שאר לאוין. אבל חכמי הרבנים מנו המלאכות, והעלו סך המלאכות העקריות ל"ט אבות מלאכות, כאשר הם ידועים בספרי החכמים.

חכמי הקראים הראשונים אסרו הדלקת הנר ביום ששי שימצא דולק בשַׁבָּת; אבל האחרונים התירו, מפני שהיא

Chapter 3

Regarding the Sabbath

The foundation of this commandment stems from the time of the creation, but the instruction to observe it comes from Moses our Teacher, at the giving of the Torah. This day has two names, *shabbath* and *shabbathon*. Our sages explained that the name *shabbath* is used for the seventh day itself, but *shabbathon* is used for the part that is added from the secular to the holy on the eve of the seventh day [Friday] and at the end of the Sabbath.⁴⁰ The meaning of “resting” [*shevitha*] is cessation from and letting go of labor. Now the Karaite sages forbade every single kind of labor in existence, except for the service of God, and carrying food inside the house when it is needed for people’s sustenance, and all other necessary tasks, such as making the bed and putting on clothes. Whoever performs tasks, except for these kinds, is called a Sabbath-desecrator, and his punishment during the time of the Monarchy was stoning and also *kareth*,⁴¹ and during the time of the Exile it is the same as the punishment of anyone who breaks any other prohibition. The sages of the Rabbanites, however, counted the kinds of work, and fixed the number of basic kinds of work at thirty-nine “major categories of work,” as they are known in the books of the [Rabbanite] sages.

The early Karaite sages forbade the lighting of a candle on Friday that would still be burning on the Sabbath. But the later sages permit it, because it is natural work, with only one [human]

⁴⁰ That is, one must stop working for a bit of time already before the onset of the *shabbath* proper, and not start working again until a bit of time after the conclusion of the *shabbath* proper; this extra time is called *shabbathon*.

⁴¹ *Kareth* refers to the Biblical penalty of being ‘cut off’ from the People of Israel (Genesis 17:14 et passim).

מִלֵּאכָה טְבַעִית, וּבִנְגִיעָה אַחַת לְבַד, וְהִיא צָרָה גָדוֹל לַחֲיֵי הָאָדָם
בְּאֲכִילָתוֹ וּשְׂאֵר תְּנוּעוֹתָיו - וּבִתְנָאֵי שִׁידָלֶק קֶדֶם הַשַּׁבָּת. וּכְבָר
אָסוּר לְכַבּוֹתוֹ, כִּי הַכָּבוֹי בַּשַּׁבָּת מִלֵּאכָה.

וְכָל הַמִּלֵּאכוֹת שֶׁהֵן חוּץ הֶהֱכָרְחִים, בֵּין עַל־יְדֵי עֲצֻמוֹ בֵּין
עַל־יְדֵי צוּי, אָסוּרוֹת. וּמָה שִׁיעֲשֶׂה הַגּוֹי בַּשַּׁבָּת - אָסוּר לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַנּוֹת מִמֶּנּוּ, חוּץ אִם יִהְיֶה בְּלִתִּי יָדִיעֶתוֹ; כָּל־שָׂכָן לַעֲשׂוֹת
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֲצֻמוֹ מִלֵּאכָה. וּבִדְרָךְ כָּל־חֹב לְכָל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְנוֹחַ
בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה, וְלִשְׁבוֹת מִכָּל מִלֵּאכָה, הוּא וְעַבְדּוֹ וְאִמָּתוֹ וּבְהֶמְתּוֹ,
כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ עַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתְךָ כָּמוֹךָ (דְּבָרִים ה:יד). וְהַ"קְדוּשָׁה"
הַנִּזְכָּר בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הוּא לְשׁוֹן הַפְּרָשָׁה, וְהַטָּעַם שֶׁיִּהְיֶה מְבֻדָּל
וּמִפְּרֵשׁ מִשְׂאֵר יְמֵי הַשָּׁבוּעַ בְּכָל אָפֶן. וְהַ"בְּרָכָה" שֶׁנֶּאֱמָרָה בּוֹ
הִיא עַל לְמוּד הַתּוֹרָה. וְאִין יוֹתֵר פְּעֻלָּה וְעֶסֶק בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, רַק
פְּעֻלַּת הַשֶּׁכֶל בַּתּוֹרָה. וְאָסוּר בַּשַּׁבָּת לְלַקוֹט הַפְּרוֹת וּלְתַלוֹשׁ
הָעֵשְׂבִים וּלְהַכִּין הַמֶּאֱכָל, מִמֶּאֱמָר וְהִיא בְּיוֹם הַשֵּׁשִׁי וְהַכִּינוּ (שְׁמוֹת
ה:טו). וְאָסוּר לְהַתְעַנּוֹת בַּשַּׁבָּת, מִמֶּאֱמָר וְקִרְאָתָהּ לַשַּׁבָּת עֲנֵג (יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ
נח:יג) - חוּץ מִיּוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים, כִּי הָעֲנוּי בּוֹ חֹב. וְכֵן אָסוּר לְשַׁכֵּב
עִם אִשָּׁה, {ט} מִמֶּאֱמָר זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ (שְׁמוֹת כ:ח), וְכֵן
מִמֶּאֱמָר וְיִקְדַּשׁ אֹתוֹ (בְּרַאשִׁית ב:ג); הַפָּךְ דַּעַת הַרְבָּנִים, שֶׁהֵם אֲדִרְבָּא
מַחֲיִבִּים הַזּוּג, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאֲמָרוּ: עוֹנֵת תַּלְמִיד חָכָם מֵעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת

touch, and it is a great need for people's lives in eating and in all other movements, as long as it is lit before the Sabbath.⁴² And it is already forbidden to extinguish it, because extinguishing on the Sabbath is work.

All kinds of work that are not necessary, whether performed by oneself or by a delegate, are forbidden. And it is forbidden for a Jew to profit from what a gentile does on the Sabbath, unless it happened without [the Jew's] knowledge; and all the more so [it is forbidden for the gentile] to perform labor for the Jew. In general, it is a duty for every Jew to rest on this day and to cease from all work, he and his male and female servants and his animals, as it is written: *that thy man-servant and maid-servant may rest as well as thou* (Deuteronomy 5:14). [The fact that] the Sabbath is called "holy" refers to separation, meaning that it should be distinguished and separated from the rest of the days of the week in every way. [The fact that the Torah] refers to "blessing" [on the Sabbath] refers to Torah study.⁴³ There is no other activity or business that one may do on the Sabbath, only mental activity in Torah study. It is forbidden to pick fruit on the Sabbath, or to tear off weeds or prepare food, as it is said: *And it shall come to pass on the sixth day that they shall prepare* (Exodus 16:5). And it is forbidden to fast on the Sabbath, as it is said: *and call the Sabbath a delight* (Isaiah 58:13), except for Yom Kippur, for fasting on it is an obligation. It is also forbidden to have intercourse with a woman,^{9} as it is said: *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy* (Exodus 20:8); and as it is said: *and [He] hallowed it* (Genesis 2:3). The Rabbanites are of the opposite opinion; for, on the contrary, they require marital

42 The words "with only one [human] touch" suggest that our author permits kindling of fire before the Sabbath because human involvement in the fire ceases after the initial "touch."

43 Presumably the words "holy" and "blessing" refer to Genesis 3:3: *And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it*; and to Exodus 20:11: *wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it*.

לְעָרֵב שַׁבָּת, וְהוּא עוֹן פְּלִילִי יִדְרָשׁוּ בַּעֲוֹנָם. וְהִהְלִיכָה חוּץ
 לַתְּחוּם וְהִטְלִיטוּל מִרְשׁוֹת אֶל רְשׁוֹת אָסוּר, מִמֶּאֱמַר שָׁבוּ אִישׁ
 תַּחְתָּיו אֶל יֵצֵא אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ (שְׁמוֹת טו:כט). כִּי לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ,
 תַּחְתָּיו מוֹרָה עַל הָרְשׁוֹת, וּמִקְוֵמוֹ עַל הַתְּחוּם. וּמִדַּת הַתְּחוּם עַד
 אֲלֵפִים אֲמָה בַּמִּדָּה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁהָיָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם. וְכֵן מִסָּבֵל הִירָשָׁה
 אָסוּר לַעֲבוֹר הַנֶּהָר, בֵּין בִּגְשָׁר בֵּין בְּכָלִי גִמָּא, כִּי הַנֶּהָר וְהַיִּבְשָׁה
 כְּשֵׁנֵי גְבוּלִים. מִתָּר לַעֲשׂוֹת מְלָאכָה בַּשַּׁבָּת בַּעֲבוֹר סְכַנַּת נַפְשׁ,
 כְּגוֹן לְהִלָּחֵם בְּאוֹיֵב, וּלְהַצִּיל הַשְׂרָפָה וְהַטּוֹבֵעַ בַּנֶּהָר, וּלְהַכִּין
 רְפוּאוֹת לַחֹלָה, מִמֶּאֱמַר וְחֵי בָהֶם (ויקרא יח:ה).

relations [on the Sabbath], as they say: “The time [for marital relations] for students of the sages is once a week, on Friday night.”⁴⁴ It is a criminal sin that they require. Walking outside of an area [*tehum*] and carrying from one domain [*reshuth*] to another are forbidden, as it is said: *abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day* (Exodus 16:29). According to the opinion of our sages, *in his place* [Heb. *tahtav*, literally “beneath himself”] indicates the domain, [out of which one may not carry items,] and *out of his place* indicates the area, [out of which one may not walk]. And the size of the area is up to 2000 cubits, as was in Jerusalem. And from the Burden of the Inheritance, [we know that] it is forbidden to cross a river, either by bridge or by boat, because the river and the dry land are two boundaries. It is permitted to do work on Shabbat in the case of mortal danger, for example to fight an enemy, to save someone from burning or from drowning in a river, or to prepare medication for a sick person, as it is said: *he shall live by them* (Leviticus 18:5).

44 Babylonian Talmud, Kethubboth 62b.

בְּעֵינֵי קְדוֹשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ

דַּע כִּי יְדִיעַת קְדוֹשׁ הַחֹדֶשׁ יְסוֹד גָּדוֹל בַּעֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִפְּנֵי
הַמוֹעֲדִים וַיָּמִים הַמְקֻדָּשִׁים תְּלוּיִם בִּידִיעַת זְמַן חֲדוֹשׁ הַלְבָּנָה,
וַיִּמְשֹׁךְ מִמֶּנָּה חֲשֹׁבוֹן הַשָּׁנִים וְהַחֲדָשִׁים וְהַיָּמִים. וְהִנֵּה בְּזֶה
הָעֵינֵן לֹא בָּאָה מִצְוַה גְּלוּיָהּ וְהוֹרָאָה מִפְּרִסְמָת, רַק בְּרִמְזֵי מִצְּאֵנוּ
שֶׁהָיוּ מִקְרִיבִים קָרְבָּנוֹת וְעוֹלוֹת בְּרֹאשֵׁי חֲדָשִׁים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:
וּבְרֹאשֵׁי חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם תִּקְרְבוּ עֲלֶיהָ לַיהוָה' (במדבר כח:יא). וּבְכַמָּה מְקוֹמוֹת
בַּתּוֹרָה וּבִנְבוּאוֹת הַסְּמִיכָה לַיָּמִים הַמְקֻדָּשִׁים, מִפְּנֵי הַקְּרִבּוֹן;
וְגַם הוֹדִיעַ הַמוֹעֲדִים בְּכַמָּה לַחֹדֶשׁ. וַיִּדְּעֵנוּ מִסִּבֵּל הַיְרֵשָׁה כִּי
בְּזְמַן הַמְּלָכוֹת וּבְזְמַן הַנְּבִיאִים וּבֵית דָּוִד הַגָּדוֹל הָיוּ מְקֻדָּשִׁים
הַחֹדֶשׁ עַל־פִּי הָרֹאֶה, וְהָיוּ מְעַבְּרִין הַשָּׁנִים בְּאַרְץ הַקְּדוּשָׁה
עַל־פִּי הָאֲבִיב. אָבֵל כְּאֲשֶׁר רָאוּ שֶׁעֲתִידִין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהִתְרַחֵק
מֵאַרְצָם, תִּקְּנוּ אֲנָשִׁי כְּנָסֶת הַגְּדוּלָּה, שֶׁהֵם עוֹלִי בָּבֶל, חֲשֹׁבוֹן
הַמַּחְזוֹר שֶׁל י"ט שָׁנִים, הַנִּקְרָא בְּפִי הַכֹּל "מִסְפַּר זָהָב", בִּי"ב

Chapter 4

Regarding the Sanctification of the Month

You should know that knowledge about the sanctification of the month is a fundamental principle for the Jewish community, because the appointed times and the holy days depend on knowing the time of the New Moon, and from it follows the calculation of the years, the months, and the days. Now in this matter, there is no explicit commandment and no proclaimed instruction [in Scripture]; it is only through a hint that we find that sacrifices and burnt offerings were offered on the day of the New Moon, as it is said: *And in your new moons ye shall present a burnt-offering unto the Lord* [. . .] (Numbers 28:11). And in some places in the Torah and in the Prophets, it mentions [the New Moon] in proximity to the sanctified days, because of the sacrifice;⁴⁵ and it informs us of the appointed times according to their date in the month. From the Burden of the Inheritance, we know that during the time of the Monarchy and the time of the Prophets and the High Court, the month was sanctified based on sighting [the moon], and the years were fixed in the Holy Land according to the *aviv*.⁴⁶ However, when it became clear that the people of Israel were going to be far from their country, the Men of the Great Assembly, who had come up from Babylonia [to build the Second Temple], fixed a nineteen-year cycle of the calendar, which is generally called

45 The author's words "because of the sacrifice" seems to refer to the fact that the New Moon, just like the festivals, has a special *musaf* sacrifice.

46 The *aviv* is the spring barley that ripens in the Land of Israel. Because the Torah calls Nisan (which is the month of Passover) "the month of the *aviv*" (Deuteronomy 16:1), the calendar must not be allowed to drift to such an extent that Nisan falls before the ripening of the *aviv*.

פְּשׁוּטוֹת וְז' מַעֲבָרוֹת, עַל־פִּי הַנְּסִיּוֹן שֶׁזֶה הַחֲשָׁבוֹן מִשְׁתַּנּוֹה עִם
הַמָּצָא הָאֲבִיב בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְהִנֵּה חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִין אָפְלוּ בְּזִמְנָן
גְּלוּת אֵין סוּמְכִין עַל הַחֲשָׁבוֹן הַמְתָּקָן לְבַד, אָבָל מִשְׁתַּדְּלִים עַל
בִּקְשֵׁת רְאִית הַלְּבָנָה בְּעֵת חֲדוּשָׁהּ, וְכִשְׁתִּרְאֶה אֲזִי מְקַדְּשִׁים
הַחֲדָשׁ וְקוֹבְעִים הַיָּמִים. וְאִם תִּהְיֶה אֵיזָה מְנִיעָה בְּעֶנְיִי שְׁמִיא
מִצַּד הַשְּׁתַּנּוּת הָאֲוִיר לְהַגְשִׁים, אֲזִי נִעְזָרִים בְּחֲשָׁבוֹן הָאֲמִתִּי,
כְּדֹרֶךְ הָאֲצֻטְגִּינִים, עַל־פִּי מִהֲלֹךְ הַמְּאֹרוֹת הַשְּׁוֹהַ וְהָאֲמִתִּי;
כִּי בְּאֶפֶס דְּעֵת הַבְּרוּר הוֹלְכִים עַל־פִּי דְּעֵת הַהִקְרָבָה - לֹא
כְּמוֹ שֶׁהִרְבָּנִים אֵין חוֹשְׁשִׁים לְרִאֲיָהּ, אָבָל כָּל עֵקֶר סְבָרָתָם עַל
הַחֲשָׁבוֹן הַשְּׁוֹהַ אוֹ הָאֲמָצְעִי, לֹא עַל הַחֲשָׁבוֹן הָאֲמִתִּי, כִּאֲשֶׁר
יָדוּעַ לַחֻקָּרִים בְּסִפְרֵיהֶם. וּמִלְבָּד זֶה עוֹד טוֹעִים וּמִטְעִים
אֶת הָעַם בְּדַחֲיוֹת אֲשֶׁר בָּדוּ מִלִּבָּם, "לֹא בָד"ו פֶּסַח וְלֹא אָד"ו

“the golden number,”⁴⁷ twelve regular years and seven leap years, based on the experience that this calculation evens out with the finding of the *aviv* in the Land of Israel.⁴⁸ Now the Karaite sages, even during the time of the Exile, do not rely solely on the fixed settings, but rather try to get sightings of the moon at the time when it is new; when it is seen, they sanctify the month and fix the days. If there is any obstacle [to sighting the moon, such as] clouds in the sky, or rainy weather developments in the air, then [the Karaites] are aided by the true calculation [of the new moon] in the manner of the astronomers, in accordance with the regular, true movement of the sun and the moon; for in the absence of clear knowledge, they follow an approximation – not like the Rabbanites, who do not concern themselves at all with sighting [the moon], but base their entire position on the average calculation, the equal calculation,⁴⁹ not on the true calculation as known in the scientists’ books. Moreover, they also err, and cause the people to err, with laws of postponement, which they have fabricated:⁵⁰ that Passover may not [begin] on a Monday,

47 The golden number generally refers to a year’s placement within the nineteen-year cycle, and usually does not refer to the entire cycle itself.

48 Seven years in the cycle are intercalated, that is, have an extra month. It is not clear whether our author uses the term “evens out” to convey that in any given year Nisan will not come before the appearance of the *aviv*, or whether over nineteen years this intercalated calendar evens out with a calendar based on physical observation. Here we note that the Karaite Ḥakhamim Judah Hadassi (Constantinople, twelfth century) and Israel Ha-ma’aravi (Egypt, 1313) reported that the Karaites of their day who lived close to the Land of Israel would investigate the state of *aviv* and set their calendars accordingly. See *Royal Attire*, pp. 167–168, n. vi.

49 “The average calculation” and “the equal calculation” are synonymous, for using the average position of the moon means assuming that the length of every lunar month is equal.

50 The Rabbanites have rules to postpone the celebration of the New Moon by a day if it the calculated date will cause certain holidays to fall on certain days of the week.

רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה וְלֹא יִי גֵה"ז עֲצֶרֶת", וּשְׁאֵר הַטְּעִיּוֹת אֲשֶׁר בָּאֵרוֹ
חֲכָמֵיהֶם, וְזֶה מֶרֶד גָּדוֹל בְּדַבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה, לְהוֹסִיף וּלְגָרוֹעַ. וּכְבָּר
הָרָאוּ הַקְּרָאִים טְעוֹת הָרַבָּנִים בְּעִנְיַן זֶה, בְּזִמְנִים וּבְמִקְוֹמוֹת
יְדוּעוֹת, כֹּאֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה הַיָּרֵחַ הַיָּשׁוֹן בְּבִקְרָה, וְהֵם הָיוּ מְקַדְּשִׁים
הַחֹדֶשׁ; וְכֹאֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה הַחֹדֶשׁ, וְהֵם לֹא הָיוּ מְקַדְּשִׁים הַחֹדֶשׁ.
בְּסִפְרֵי הַקְּרָאִים יִמָּצֵא.

וְהִנֵּה קְבִיעַת הַיָּמִים וְהַחֹדֶשִׁים אֲצֵל הַקְּרָאִים בְּזֶה הָאָפֶן:
מוֹצִיאִים חֲשֹׁבוֹן קִשְׁת הָרִאשִׁי בְּדַבְרֵי הַתְּכוּנָה, לְפִי כָּל מָקוֹם
וּמַחֲזֹז, וְעַל־פִּי הַחֲשֹׁבוֹן הַהוּא קוֹבְעִים יָמֵי הַחֹדֶשִׁים אִם מָלֵא

Wednesday or Friday;⁵¹ and Rosh Ha-shana may not [fall] on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday; ^{10} and 'Azereth [i.e., Shavu'oth] cannot fall on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Saturday; and other matters that their sages have explained, to lead the people to err, which is a great rebellion, [for it is] adding and taking away from the words of the Torah. The Karaites have already showed the error of the Rabbanites regarding this in certain times and places, when the old moon was seen in the morning, and [the Rabbanites nonetheless] sanctified the month [in the evening],⁵² and when the new moon was seen [in the evening], yet [the Rabbanites] did not sanctify the new month. This can be found in the books of the Karaites.

The Karaites set the days and the months in the following manner: they arrive at a calculation of the angular separation⁵³ [between the sun and the moon], in accordance with astronomy, according to each place and region;⁵⁴ and in accordance with that calculation, they establish the days of the months – whether the months will be full or lacking, for the ones that are full have thirty days, and the ones that are lacking have twenty-nine days. Even so,

51 The days of the week here are all indicated by acronyms. The first acronym is BaD"U, that is, Passover may not begin on Monday (the second day of the week, *beth*), Wednesday (the fourth day of the week, *daleth*), or Friday (the sixth day of the week, *vav*). Our author alludes ironically to this acronym when he uses the word "fabricated," *badu*, earlier in the sentence, which is also an allusion to 1 Kings 12:33: *And [Jeroboam] went up unto the altar which he had made in Beth-el on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised [bada] of his own heart.*

52 Sanctifying the month in the evening would mean sanctifying it before it is visible at all, because the new moon is not visible until at least twelve hours after the old moon has disappeared.

53 Hebrew *qesheth ha-re'yya* (cf. Maimonides, *Mishné Tora*, Laws of Establishing the New Month, chapter 17). Ed. Neubauer prints *qezath ha-re'yya*, "a bit of calculation," which makes no sense in this context, so we propose this emendation, which yields perfect sense.

54 Indeed, the majority historical Karaite view is that the local moon is the moon that determines the start of months. See *Royal Attire*, pp. 161–164, n. iii.

וְאִם חָסֵר, כִּי הַמְּלָאִים הֵם שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם, וְחֹסְרִים כ"ט יוֹם. וְעַם
כָּל זֶה נֶעְזְרִים גַּם בְּרֵאִיָּה, כִּי מְלִיל הָרֵאִיָּה מוֹנִים כ"ט יוֹם,
וְאִם יֵרָאֶה הַיָּרֵחַ בְּלִיל שְׁלֹשִׁים אָזִי מְקַדְּשִׁים הַחֹדֶשׁ הַבָּא,
וְהָעֶבֶר חָסֵר; וְאִם לֹא יֵרָאֶה בְּלִיל שְׁלֹשִׁים אָזִי מְקַדְּשִׁים יוֹם
ל"א לַחֹדֶשׁ הַבָּא, וְהָעֶבֶר מָלֵא. וּבְלִיל ל"א, בֵּין יֵרָאֶה וּבֵין לֹא
יֵרָאֶה, מְקַדְּשִׁים יוֹם ל"א, כִּי מְקַבְּלֵת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ דוֹר אַחֵר דוֹר
שְׂאִין לָךְ חֹדֶשׁ חָסֵר מִכ"ט וְלֹא מָלֵא מְשֻׁלָּשִׁים. וּבִשְׁנַת הָעֶבֶר,
לְעוֹלָם מְעַבְרִין חֹדֶשׁ אֶדֶר. וּבָאֵם יִקְרָה סִפְק בְּחֹדֶשׁ תְּשׁוּרֵי אוֹ
בְּחֹדֶשׁ נִיסוֹן, שְׁבָהֵם מוֹעֲדִים, אָזִי מְקַדְּשִׁים שְׁנֵי יָמִים מִסִּפְק.

they also use help from sightings, for they count twenty-nine days from the evening of the sighting, and if the [next New] Moon is seen on the eve of the thirtieth day, then they sanctify the coming month, and [know that] the preceding month has been lacking; but if the moon is not seen on the eve of the thirtieth day, then they sanctify the thirty-first day as the coming month, and [know that] the preceding month has been full. On the eve of the thirty-first day, whether or not the moon was has been sighted, they sanctify the thirty-first day, because it was transmitted from our forefathers, generation after generation, that there is no month with fewer than twenty-nine days, and no month with more than thirty. In a leap year, they always intercalate the month of Adar.⁵⁵ And if there is doubt in the month of Tishri or in the month of Nisan, which have the festivals in them, then they sanctify two days, because of the doubt.⁵⁶

55 That is, a leap year must have thirteen months, and the extra month is always a second Adar, never a second Nisan, a second Iyyar, or any other month.

56 That is, apparently, they treat both day thirty and day thirty-one as the New Moon, and, consequently, if the doubt is not resolved, both day forty-four and day forty-five as the first day of Passover, etc.; and, similarly, for the holidays in Tishri.

בְּעֵינַי חַג הַמִּצּוֹת

זֶה הַמוֹעֵד חַג מַג' הַחֲגִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ זְכוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבוֹגְרִים
עוֹלִים לִירוּשָׁלַיִם, כְּעֵינַי שְׁנָאֲמַר: שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָּל
זְכוּרָךְ (דברים טו:טו). וְזֶה הַמוֹעֵד זָכָר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, וְהַתְחַלְתּוֹ
מִיוֹם ט"ו לַגִּיטָן. וּבְזֶמֶן הַמַּלְכוּת הָיוּ קָרְבִּים קָרְבָן צֶאֱן פֶּסַח, וְהָיוּ
מִקְדָּשִׁים מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ ז' יָמִים, וְהָיוּ מִבְּעָרִים הַחֲמֵץ, וְאוֹכְלִים
מִצּוֹת. וְעַתָּה בְּזֶמֶן הַגָּלוּת בְּטָלוּ הַקִּרְבָּנוֹת, רַק נִשְׁאָר לָנוּ מִקְרָא
קֹדֶשׁ וּבַעוֹר הַחֲמֵץ וְאֹכִילַת מִצּוֹת, מִמָּה שֶׁכָּתוּב: וּזְכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד
הָיִיתָ בְּמִצְרַיִם, וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וַעֲשִׂיתָ אֶת הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה (דברים טו:יב).

וְטַעַם עֵינַי חֲמֵץ הוּא הַשְּׂאוֹר הַנֶּעֱשֶׂה בַדֶּרֶךְ הַטָּבֵעַ, לְכַתְחֻלָּה
אוּ בַדֶּרֶךְ מִקְרָה, מִחֲמַשָּׁה מִינֵי דָגָן, שֶׁהֵם חֹטָה שְׁעָרָה שִׁיפוֹן
שִׁבְלַת שׁוּעֵל וְכֶסֶם; וּלְדַעַת קִצְתָּ הַחֲכָמִים, גַּם הַדָּחִן עִמָּהֶם.

Chapter 5

Regarding the Festival of Unleavened Bread (*Hag Ha-mazẓoth*)

This holiday is one of the three festivals when the adult Israelite men used to go up to Jerusalem, as it is said: *Three times in a year shall all thy males appear* (Deuteronomy 16:16). This holiday is in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt. It starts on the fifteenth day of Nisan. During the time of the Monarchy, they used to offer the *pesah* sacrifice from the flock, and they would sanctify a holy convocation for seven days, and destroy their leavened matter [*hameẓ*], and eat unleavened bread [*mazẓoth*]. Now, in the time of the Exile, the sacrifices are no more, and only the holy convocation, the destroying of leaven, and the eating of unleavened bread remains for us, as it is written: *And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt; and thou shalt observe and do these statutes* (Deuteronomy 16:12).⁵⁷

The meaning of *hameẓ* is the fermentation (*se'or*) that is produced in a natural way, whether intentionally or accidentally, from five species of grain, which are: wheat, barley, *shifon*, *shibboleth shu'al*, and *kussemeth*,⁵⁸ and according to the opinion

⁵⁷ In the Biblical context, this verse is about Shavu'oth; however, our author is using it here in the context of Passover and the Festival of Mazẓoth.

⁵⁸ This list of five grains that can become *hameẓ* is identical to the list in Mishna, Pesahim 2:5. The first two names (*hittim*, which is wheat, and *se'orim*, which is barley) are clear, but the identification of the remaining three is controversial. Zohar Amar has written an entire book on the subject (from a Rabbanite-Talmudic, but scientific, point of view): *Five Types of Grain: Historical, Halachic, and Conceptual Aspects* (Hebrew), Mechon Har Bracha, 2011. Because our author mentions the same rare, uncertain names of grains as the Mishna does, it is clear that his list derives, whether directly or indirectly, from the Mishna.

וְהֵם שָׁשָׂה מִיָּנִים מַחְמִיצִים, וְהַשָּׂאָר חוּץ מֵאַלָּה, כְּגוֹן הָאָרֶז
וּמִיָּי קִטְנִיּוֹת, שֶׁהֵם זִרְעוֹנִים אֲפוּנִים פּוֹלִים וְעֵדָשִׁים וְדוּמִיָּהִם,
מִתָּרִים לְהֵאָכֵל בַּפֶּסַח, כִּי אֵינָם מַחְמִיצִים; וְאֶפְלוּ אִם יִרְטְבוּ
בְּמֵי־הֵם מִסְרִיחִים. וְעָשִׂיתָ הַמִּצְוָה בְּשִׁמְרָה גְדוֹלָה, שֶׁלֹּא
יִהְיֶה חֲמֵץ. וְשָׂאָר הַדְּבָרִים הַחֲמוּצִים זֹלַת אֵלֶּה, כְּגוֹן יִרְקוֹת
וְחֶלֶב וּמֵי פְרוֹת וּדְבַשׁ, מִתָּרִים בַּפֶּסַח.

וְקִדּוּשׁ הַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן וְהַשְּׁבִיעִי כְּמוֹ בַּשַּׁבָּת, חוּץ מִמְּלֶאכֶת
אֹכֵל, מִמֶּה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: אַךְ אֲשֶׁר יֹאכַל לֶכֶל נֶפֶשׁ הוּא לְבָדוֹ יַעֲשֶׂה לָּכֶם
(שְׁמוֹת יב:טז). וּבָזָה יֵשׁ הַפָּרֶשׁ בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵין הָרַבָּנִים, כִּי {יא} הֵם
מִתָּרִים לְשַׁחוּט הַבְּעִלֵּי־חַיִּים בַּמוֹעֵד, שֶׁהֵם לְתַכְלִית הָאֲכִילָה;
אֲבָל חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים דִּיקוּ מִמֶּלֶת "אַךְ", שֶׁמּוֹרָה עַל הַמַּעֲוֹט,
לְמַעַט הַמְּלָאכּוֹת אֲשֶׁר בַּהֲכָנַת הַמֶּאֱכָלִים, וְהַתִּירוּ רַק הַמְּלָאכָה

of a few sages also millet.⁵⁹ These six species leaven, but other species, such as rice and all kinds of legumes, such as legumes,⁶⁰ peas, fava beans, lentils, and the like, are permitted for consumption on Passover, for they do not leaven; even if they are wettened with water, they [simply] spoil, [but do not leaven.] The commandment [of destroying *ḥamez*] is carried out with great safeguarding, so that there will not be *ḥamez*. But other fermented things, such as vegetables, milk, fruit juice, and honey, are permitted on Passover.⁶¹

The sanctity of the first and seventh day is the same as that of the Sabbath, except for the preparation of food, as it is said: *save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you* (Exodus 12:16). In this, there is a difference between us and the Rabbanites, for ^{11} they permit slaughtering animals on the festival, for the ultimate goal [of this activity] is to eat them; whereas the Karaite sages, on the other hand, derived from the word *akh* (“save”), which indicates a limitation, that [the permission to do labor on the festival] is limited to labors in [direct] preparation of food; they permit only the kind of labor that is followed [imme-

59 See Ḥ' Elijah Bašyachi, *Addereth Eliyyahu*, ‘Inyan Ḥag Hamazzoth, Chapter 5, folio 39c.

60 The first instance of “legumes” translates the Hebrew *qitniyyoth*, and the second translates Hebrew *zer'onim*. The two Hebrew words are usually synonymous, though the author seems to have understood *zer'onim* as a subset of *qitniyyoth*.

61 In the Middle Ages, there was an intra-Karaite debate regarding the definition of *ḥamez*. Some Karaites held, as does our author, that in the context of the Festival of Mazzoth, the only forbidden *ḥamez* is that produced from these specific grains; this is also the Rabbanite view. Other Karaites held that *ḥamez* refers to fermented products in general, even from non-grain sources. See Ḥ' Elijah Bašyachi, *Addereth Eliyyahu*, *ibid.*, folio 39d, who cites this opinion, but strongly opposes it. The practice of the Karaite Jewish community in Egypt in modern times was to refrain from consuming all fermented products. See Mourad El-Kodsi, *The Karaite Jews of Egypt: 1882–1986* (Lyons, N.Y.: Wilprint, Inc., 1987), p. 146, note 6, and 148, note 15.

שְׁאַחֲרֶיהָ הָאֲכִילָהּ, כְּגֹון הַבָּשׂוּל וְהָאֲפִיָּה לְדַבָּרִים הַמוֹכְנִים
מִיּוֹם אֶתְמוֹל. וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה יָמִים הִנָּקְרָאִים חֹל הַמוֹעֵד, אֵין בָּהֶם
שְׁבִיתַת מְלָאכָה, וְעַל־כָּל־פָּנִים עָשׂוּ הַחֲכָמִים גָּדֵר, שֶׁלֹא יַעֲשׂוּ
הַמְּלָאכּוֹת הַכְּבִידוֹת בָּהֶם, מִפְּנֵי כְבוֹד הַמוֹעֵד. וּמִנְהֵגֵי הָעֲבוּדָה
הָאֱלֹהִית, שֶׁהִיא הַתַּפְּלָה, בִּיָּמֵים הָאֵלּוּ, יָדוּעַ בְּסִדּוֹר הַתַּפְּלוֹת
שֶׁל קָרָאִים.

diately] by eating, such as cooking and baking of items that have been [otherwise] prepared on the previous day. During the five days that are called “weekdays of the festival” [*ḥol ha-mo’ed*], there is no cessation of work; but nonetheless, the sages made a fence, anyway, that no heavy work should be done on these days, out of respect for the festival. The customs of the divine service for those days, i.e., prayer, are known from the prayer book of the Karaites.

בְּעֵינַיִן סְפִירַת חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁבַּעַת יְמֵי מַצָּה

עֵינַיִן זֹאת הַסְפִּירָה בָּאָה בַּתּוֹרָה בְּפֶרֶשֶׁת אֱמֹר, אַחֵר עֵינַיִן חֵג הַמִּצּוֹת. וְזֹאת הַסְבָּה, כִּי בְּאַרְץ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעוֹלָם קָצִיר שְׁעָרִים מְשִׁיג בִּימֵי הַפֶּסַח. וּבְזֶמֶן בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיוּ מְקַרְיָבִים עֹמֵר לְהַגִּיף תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי ה', וּלְהוֹדוֹת לְצוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ. וּמִיּוֹם הַנִּפְתַּח הָעֹמֵר הָיוּ מוֹנִים חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם עַד בְּכוּרֵי קָצִיר חֲטִיִּם, שֶׁהוּא זֶמֶן מוֹעֵד וְחֵג הַשְּׁבֻעוֹת. וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּה אֶחָד הוֹדוּ כִּי הַתְּחִלַּת זֹאת הַסְפִּירָה הִיְתָה בִּימֵי חֵג הַמִּצּוֹת; רַק הִיְתָה חֲלָקָה בִּינֵיהֶם אֹדוֹת זֶה הָעֵינַיִן, כִּי חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים אֹמְרִים שִׁיוֹם הַתְּנוּפָה וְהַסְפִּירָה בְּיוֹם מַחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת אֲשֶׁר בְּז' יְמֵי הַפֶּסַח לְעוֹלָם, כִּפִּי פְּשׁוּטוֹ שֶׁל מְקָרָא; וּבָאֵם יִקְרָה לִהְיוֹת

Chapter 6

Regarding the Counting of Fifty Days from the Day following the Sabbath that Falls in the Seven Days of Unleavened Bread

The discussion of this count comes up in the Torah in *Parashath Emor*, after the discussion of the Festival of Unleavened Bread; the reason for this is that in the Land of Israel, the barley harvest is always reached during the days of Passover. During the time of the Temple, the Israelites used to offer a sheaf [*omer*], to wave it as a wave-offering before God, and to thank the Rock of Israel, *for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever* (Psalms 136:1). And from the day of the waving of the sheaf, they would count fifty days until the first crops of the wheat harvest, which is the time of the festival of Shavu'oth. All Jews unanimously acknowledge that the beginning of this count is during the days of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, but there is a difference of opinion among them concerning this matter, for the Karaite sages say that the day of waving [the sheaf] and the [first day of] the count are always on the day following the Sabbath that falls during the seven days of Passover, according to the plain meaning of the

יום ראשון דפֿסח ביום שבת, אַזי הספירה נופֿלת ביום מחרת
יום טוב, שהוא יום ראשון דפֿסח. זה בראיה ממאמר הכתוב
ממחרת השבת (ויקרא כג:יא, טו) בה"א הידיעה; ולפי הוראת הדקדוק
לא יובן על יום אחד מימי השבוע, אלא על יום השבת ממש,
שהוא שבת בראשית, כפי מגן ימי הבריאה. אבל הרבנים
בארו מחרת יום טוב, וסברתם על יום ראשון דפֿסח לעולם.
וכן הם לעולם סופרים ממחרת יום טוב ראשון, ולפי זה גם

text.⁶² If it happens that the first day of Passover is a Sabbath, then the counting begins on the day following the first day,⁶³ which is the Sunday of Passover; [they cite] evidence from what is said in Scripture: *on the morrow after the sabbath* (Leviticus 23:11,15), with the definite article, which in accordance with its grammatical meaning, cannot be understood as one of the days of the week, but only as the actual Sabbath, which is the Sabbath of Creation [*shabbath bereshith*],⁶⁴ according to the count of the days of the creation. On the other hand, the Rabbanites interpret [the phrase] as meaning “the day following the holiday,” and understand [the word *shabbath*] as referring to the first day of Passover, always, [even in a year when this falls on a different day of the week.] Therefore, they always count from the day follow-

62 There is a syntactical ambiguity in the author’s words here, in the phrase “the day following the Sabbath that falls during the seven days of Passover” – what falls during the days of Passover: the Sabbath, or the day following the Sabbath? This ambiguity results in a practical difference only if the first day of the Festival of Mazzoth is a Sunday, in which case that Sunday falls during the seven days of Mazzoth, but the Sabbath that precedes it does not. If the relevant Sabbath must be during the week of Mazzoth, then in such a year, the sheaf-waving, and the beginning of the count, would not be until the next week, the Sunday following the Passover holiday. However, if only the Sunday need be during the days of Mazzoth, then the sheaf-waving, and the beginning of the count, would be on the first day of the holiday. The standard Karaite approach is that the Sunday must fall out during the festival (see *Ad-dereṯ Elyyahu*, ‘Inyan Ḥag Ha-shavu’oth, Chapter 6, folio 42d, who discusses this at length).

63 Literally “the day after the holiday” (*yom ṭov*), for the first day of Passover, unlike the next five days, has the status of *yom ṭov*, a holiday when work is prohibited.

64 The term *shabbath bereshith*, “the Sabbath of Creation,” is used in post-Biblical Hebrew writing to mean specifically the day “Saturday;” it refers to the fact that the Sabbath is introduced at the end of the account of creation, in Genesis 2:1–3, and is used to distinguish Saturday from other meanings of the word *shabbath*, such as the Sabbatical year (Leviticus 25:2 et passim), and, according to the Rabbanite interpretation, the first day of Passover (see the next sentence in *Appiryon*).

הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת שֶׁל הָרִבְּנִים נוֹפֵל בְּכָל יְמֵי הַשָּׁבוּעַ, לֹא בְיוֹם יָדוּעַ, כַּאֲשֶׁר דָּעַת חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים לְעוֹלָם חַג הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת בְּיוֹם רִאשׁוֹן לַשָּׁבוּעַ, מִמַּחֲרַת הַשְּׁבִיעִית. וַיֵּשׁ רֵאיוֹת לְחֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים כַּאֲרִיזוֹת עַל חֲזוֹק זֶה הַמֶּאֱמָר. וּבְזֶמֶן הַחֲכָם הָרַב רַבִּנוּ עֲנָן, מִחֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים, שֶׁהָיָה מְזַרֵּעַ הַמְּלוּכָה מִשְׁלֹשֶׁלֶת יְהוֹיָכִין הַמֶּלֶךְ, בְּשָׁנַת אַרְבַּעַת אֲלָפִים וְאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת לְבְרִיאַת הָעוֹלָם, הָיְתָה מְלַחֲמָה גְדוֹלָה בֵּין הַקְּרָאִים וְהָרִבְּנִים עַל אוֹדוֹת זֹאת הַחֲלָקָה, וְהַחֲכָם הַגָּדוֹל הָעֶרֶה לַמּוֹת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּיַד הָרִבְּנִים - תֵּהָא מִיתָתוֹ כְּפָרְתּוֹ.

יב) מִנְהַג הַסְפִּירָה אֲצֵל הָרִבְּנִים בְּעֵת תְּפִלַּת עֶרֶב, כְּדָרְךְ הַתְּחִלַת יְמֵי הַבְּרִיאָה; אֲבָל הַקְּרָאִים סוֹפְרִים אַחֵר תְּפִלַּת בֶּקֶר, בְּרִאִיָּה מִתְּנוּפַת הָעֶמֶר, שֶׁהָיָה בְּבִקְרָא אַחֵר עוֹלַת הַתָּמִיד. וְעַתָּה בְּהִיוֹתָנוּ חוֹצֵה לְאַרְץ הַקְּדוּשָׁה, אֵין לָנוּ הַקְּרִבַת הָעֶמֶר,

ing the first festival day, and consequently the Shavu'oth of the Rabbanites falls out on any day of the week, not on a given day as in the opinion of the Karaite sages, [for whom] the Festival of Shavu'oth is always on the Sunday, the morrow of the seventh Sabbath. The Karaite sages have arguments [as strong] as lions confirming this point. During the time of the sage R. 'Anan, of the Karaite sages, who was a descendant of the royal family of King Jehoiachin,⁶⁵ in the year 4400 from the creation of the world,⁶⁶ there was a great war between the Karaites and the Rabbanites concerning this difference of opinion, and the above-mentioned sage bared his soul unto death⁶⁷ by the hands of the Rabbanites. May his death be his atonement.⁶⁸

{12} The custom among the Rabbanites is to count at the time of the evening prayer, in accordance with the beginning of the days of creation;⁶⁹ but the Karaites count after the morning prayer, [citing] as evidence the waving of the sheaf, which was in the morning, after the daily burnt offering. And now that we are outside of the Holy Land, we do not have the offering of the sheaf,

65 Jehoiachin was one of the last descendants of King David to reign in Jerusalem. He was followed only by his brother Zedekiah, whose children were all killed, so Jehoiachin's descendants are the heirs to the Davidic throne.

66 Corresponding to 640 CE.

67 Using the language of Isaiah 53:12.

68 That is, may whatever sins he may have committed in his lifetime be atoned by his tragic death. Note that the claim that the Rabbanites killed 'Anan is almost certainly not historically correct, but it was not entirely invented by the author of *Appiryon*. Rather, it seems to be an expansion of what is found in the works of earlier authors, who suggested that the Rabbanites sought to kill 'Anan but without success. See Jacob al-Qirqisānī, *The First Section of the Book of Lights and Watchtowers*, chapter 8, translated by Bruno Chiesa and Wilfrid Lockwood, in *Ya'qūb Alqirqisānī on Jewish Sects and Christianity* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1984), p. 135.

69 In Genesis 1, the account of creation, each day is described as *there was evening* and then *there was morning*, and this is how dates on the Jewish calendar work, for both Karaites and Rabbanites.

אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֶׂה לּוֹ ❁ פָּרָק ו'

רַק סְפִירַת הַיָּמִים לְבַד. וְנִסַּח הַסְּפִירָה יָדוּעַ בְּסִדּוּר תְּפִלוֹת
בַּחֶלֶק הָרִאשׁוֹן.

but only the counting of the days. The wording of the counting can be found in the first part of the prayer book.

בְּעֵנִין חַג הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת

זֶה הַמוֹעֵד שְׁנֵי מֵהֵג' רְגָלִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ זְכָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבּוֹגְרִים חִיבִים לְהֵרָאוֹת אֶת פְּנֵי ה' בַּמָּקוֹם הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּכָל שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה. וְנִקְרָא גַם "יוֹם הַבְּכוֹרִים", שֶׁהָיוּ מְקַרְבִּים מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה, שֶׁהָיָה קָצִיר חֲטִים מְשִׁיג קָרוֹב לְיוֹם זֶה, כְּאֲשֶׁר מִבָּאָר עֵנִין הַבְּכוֹרִים בְּפֶרֶשֶׁת אֱמֹר. זֶה הַיּוֹם נִקְבַּע מוֹעֵד וְחַג לְזֵכֶר שְׁנֵי עֲנִינִים, לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים. הָא' לְזֵכֶר כְּבוֹשׁ אֶרֶץ ז' עַמִּים וְאֲכִילַת תְּבוּאָתָהּ, וְזֶהוּ טַעַם "שְׁבוּעוֹת", כְּעֵנִין שִׁבְעַת חֻקֹּת קָצִיר יִשְׁמַר לָנוּ (יִרְמִיָּהוּ ה:כד). הַב' לְזֵכֶר מִתֵּן תּוֹרָה בְּהַר סִינִי, כִּי לְפִי דַעַת רַב הָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה. וּשְׁנֵי הָעֲנִינִים קְרוּבִים, וְאִי אֶפְשָׁר לְאַחַד זֹלַת הָאֲחֵר, כְּמֵאמַר הַחֲכָמִים: "אִם אֵין קָמַח, אֵין תּוֹרָה." וְהָא' שְׁלָמוֹת הַגּוֹף, שֶׁהוּא הַמְּזוֹן, וְהַב' שְׁלָמוֹת הַנַּפֶּשׁ, שֶׁהִיא הַתּוֹרָה. וְלֹא נִקְבַּע בַּיּוֹם יָדוּעַ מִהַחֲדָשׁ, כִּי יִדְעָתָהּ תְּלוּיָהּ בְּסִפְרֵת הַיָּמִים.

Chapter 7

Regarding the Festival of Shavu'oth

This is the second of the three pilgrimage festivals when the adult Israelite men were required to appear before God every year in the holy place. It is also called the Day of the Firstfruits [*yom ha-bikkurim*], when they would offer a new grain-offering, because the wheat harvest was reached close to this day, as the matter of the firstfruits is explained in *Parashath Emor*.⁷⁰ This day is established as a holiday in memory of two things, according to the opinion of the Karaite sages. The first is in memory of the conquest of the [Holy] Land from the seven nations, and the eating of its produce; this is the meaning of [the word] *shavu'oth* [literally “weeks”], as in [the verse]: *that keepeth for us the appointed weeks of the harvest* [Jeremiah 5:24]. The second is in memory of the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, for most people say that it took place on this day.⁷¹ These two ideas are related, and one cannot exist without the other, as the sages say: “When there is no flour, there is no Torah.”⁷² The first is the wholeness of the body, which is food; and the second is the wholeness of the soul, which is Torah. [This holiday is not established] on a fixed day of the month, for knowing its [date] depends on the counting of

⁷⁰ That is, the offering of the two loaves of bread from the new wheat-crop, called “bread of the first-fruits” (*lehem ha-bikkurim*) in Leviticus 23:20. This is completely different from the firstfruit ritual described in Deuteronomy 26, to which Scripture never assigns an explicit date.

⁷¹ Scripture never gives an explicit date for the Revelation at Sinai, but it states that the people arrived at the Wilderness of Sinai *in the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt* (Exodus 19:1), i.e., the month of Sivan, in which Shavu'oth always falls.

⁷² This is a quote from the Rabbanite text *Pirqé Avoth* (included in the Mishna) 3:20. The quote continues: “And when there is no Torah, there is no flour.”

אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֶׂה לוֹ ❁ פָּרָק ז'

וּלְעוֹלָם זֶה הַמוֹעֵד לְפִי מְנַהֵג הַקְּרָאִים בְּיוֹם מַחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת.

the days. According to the practice of the Karaites, this festival always occurs on the day following the Sabbath.

בעניני הצומות

מִצָּאנוּ בְּכַתְבֵי הַנְּבִיאִים אַרְבַּעַה חֲדָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם נִקְבְּעִים צוּמוֹת, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנִּתְבָּאָר בְּנִבְאוֹת זְכַרְיָה, סִימֵן ח' פָּסוּק י"ט. וְלֹא בָאָרֶם בְּכֻמָּה יָמִים לַחֲדָשׁ וְלֵאזֶה סִבָּה; אֲבָל בְּדֶרֶךְ הַקְּבִלָּה יִדְעֵנוּ דוֹר אַחֵר דוֹר שֶׁהַצּוּמוֹת הָאֵלֶּה לְסִבַּת הַצָּרוֹת וְהָרָעוֹת שֶׁאֲרָעוּ לְאַמֶּת יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֵלוֹ הַחֲדָשִׁים, שֶׁהֵם תַּמוּז אֲב תִּשְׁרִי טֵבֵת, בִּימֵי יְדוּעִים מֵהֶם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסוֹף סֵפֶר מְלָכִים וּבְסוֹף סֵפֶר יִרְמְיָהוּ: כִּי בַעֲשָׂרָה לַחֲדָשׁ טֵבֵת נִלְכְּדָה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם וַתִּבָּא בַּמָּצוֹר עַל־יְדֵי נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר; וּבְחֲדָשׁ תַּמוּז בַּתְּשַׁעָּה בּוֹ הִבְקָעָה הָעִיר; וּבְחֲדָשׁ אֲב בְּשִׁבְעָה וּבַעֲשָׂרָה בּוֹ שָׂרְפוּ בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְאֵת כָּל בְּתֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם נְבוֹזְרָאֲדָן עִם סִיעָתוֹ. וּבְחֲדָשׁ תִּשְׁרִי בִּכ"ד בּוֹ צָמוּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסֵפֶר נַחֲמִיא סִימֵן ט'. וְהִנֵּה בְּעֵנֵן הַצּוּמוֹת חִלְקָה בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵין הָרַבָּנִים, כִּי הָרַבָּנִים אֵינָם מִתְאַבְּלִים כָּלֵל בְּעַד חֲרָבַן בֵּית ראשון, וְנוֹתְנִים טַעַם שֶׁכָּבַר הִיָּתָה הַנִּחְמָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעִבּוֹר חֲרָבַן בֵּית ראשון בְּזִמְנָן בֵּית שְׁנִי. וּמֵה שֶׁהֵם מִתְעַנִּים בְּחֲדָשִׁים הַנִּ"ל אֲזִי בְּעַד חֲרָבַן בֵּית שְׁנִי בְּחֲדָשׁ אֲב, וּבְחֲדָשׁ תַּמוּז בְּעַד שְׁבִירַת הַלְּוִיחֹת. אֲמָנָם חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים אָמְרוּ וְהִשִּׁיבוּ לָהֶם ^{יג} כִּי לֹא הִיָּתָה הַנִּחְמָה שְׁלֵמָה בְּבִגְדֵי בֵּית שְׁנִי; וְאֵלּוֹ הָיָה כְּפִי דַעַת הָרַבָּנִים, אֲזִי כְּפִי נִבְאוֹת וְיַעֲוֵד זְכַרְיָה הַנְּבִיא הָיוּ יָמֵי הַצּוּמוֹת לְשִׁמְחָה וּלְשִׂשׁוֹן וּלְמַעֲדִים טוֹבִים (זְכַרְיָה ח:ט) – וְזֶה לֹא נִמְצָא בִּימֵי הָאֵלֶּה בְּזִמְנָן בֵּית שְׁנִי;

Chapter 8

Regarding the Fasts

In the books of the Prophets, we find four months in which fasts are established, as explained in the prophecy of Zechariah, chapter 8, verse 19. He does not explain on which day of the month [they are observed], or for what reason; but by way of the tradition, we know, generation after generation, that these fasts are because of the tragedies and disasters that befell the People of Israel in those months, which are Tammuz, Av, Tishri, and Ṭeveth, on specific days of [these months], as is written at the end of the book of Kings and at the end of the book of Jeremiah: on the tenth of Ṭeveth, Jerusalem was captured, and the siege by Nebuchadnezzar began; and on the ninth of Tammuz the [wall of the] city was breached, and on the seventh and the tenth of Av, Nebuzaradan and his men burned the Temple and all the houses of Jerusalem. And on the twenty-fourth of the month of Tishri, all the Israelites fasted, as is written in the book of Nehemiah [9:1]. Now, there is a division of opinion between us and the Rabbanites, for the Rabbanites do not mourn at all for the destruction of the First Temple, giving as a reason that consolation for the destruction of the First Temple already came to Israel during the time of the Second Temple. Thus, they fast during the above-mentioned months for the destruction of the Second Temple in the month of Av, and for the breaking of the [Two] Tablets [by Moses] in the month of Tammuz. But our Karaite sages say in response to them ^{13} that the consolation [resulting] from the building of the Second Temple was not complete; if, indeed, the Rabbanite opinion [were correct], then according to the prophet Zechariah's prophecy and promise, the fast days would have turned into *joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons* (Zechariah 8:19) – but this was

אֶדְרָבָא, גַּם בְּזֶמֶן בֵּית שְׁנֵי מִצָּאנוּ שֶׁהִתְעַנּוּ בְּחֹדֶשׁ תְּשׁוּרֵי בֶּכ"ד
 בּוֹ. וְגַם שְׁאֵלֶת הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּעִבּוּר הַצּוּמוֹת הָיָה בְּזֶמֶן בֵּית שְׁנֵי, כְּמוֹ
 שֶׁכְּתוּב בְּנִבְיֹאת זְכַרְיָא סִימָן ז' פָּסוּק ג'. וּמִנֵּהג אֵלּוּ הַצּוּמוֹת
 לְהִתְעַנּוֹת מִעֶרֶב עַד עֶרֶב, וּלְהִתְנַהֵּג בְּאַבְלוּת, וְשֵׁלֹא לִטְעוֹם
 שׁוֹם דָּבָר בִּפְהָ. וּבְעֶרֶב, מוֹצָאֵי הַצּוֹם, מִתְּפַלְּלִים עִם סְלִיחוֹת
 וְתַחֲנוּנִים; וְעַנְיָנֵי הַתְּפִלוֹת יָדוּעַ בְּסִדּוּר.

וּמִתְשַׁעָּה בְּתַמּוּז עַד עֶשְׂרָה בָּאָב מִתְנַהֲגִים אַבְלוּת גְּדוּלָּה;
 וּבְכָל שַׁבַּת מֵאֵלּוּ הַשַּׁבָּתוֹת נֶאֱסָפִים אַחֲרֵי צִהָרִים לְבֵית הַכְּנָסֶת
 וְקוֹרְאִים קִינּוֹת יִרְמְיָהוּ עִם תּוֹכָחוֹת הַנְּבִיאִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, וּמִתְרַץ
 הַחֲזֵן הַקִּינּוֹת לְהַמּוֹן בְּלִשׁוֹנָם. וְאֵינָם עוֹשִׂים שׁוֹם עֶסֶק שְׂמִיחָה
 עַד עֶשְׂרָה בָּאָב; וְאַזּ מְקַבְּלִים הַנְּחֻמָּה, בְּרֹאִיָּה מִהַכְּתוּב בִּיחֻזְקָא לֹ
 סִימָן אַרְבָּעִים.

not [how] these days were observed during the Second Temple period; on the contrary, we find that they fasted even during the Second Temple period, on the twenty-fourth of the month of Tishri. Moreover, it was during the Second Temple period that the priests inquired about the fasts, as is written in the prophecy of Zechariah, chapter 7, verse 3.⁷³ The custom of these fasts is to fast from evening to evening, to be in mourning, and not to taste anything in one's mouth. In the evening, at the conclusion of the fast, we pray with penitential prayers [*seliḥoth*] and supplications [*tahhanunim*]; these prayers can be found in the [Karaite] prayer book.

From the ninth of Tammuz to the tenth of Av, we practice great mourning, and on every one of the Sabbaths [in this period], we gather in the afternoon in the synagogue and read the Lamentations of Jeremiah,⁷⁴ along with the prophets' admonishments to the Israelites.⁷⁵ And the cantor [*hazzan*] explains the lamentations to the common people in their [native] language. We do not make any festive celebrations until the tenth of Av; [only] then do we accept consolation, taking evidence from what is written in Ezekiel, chapter 40.⁷⁶

73 God's response, through Zechariah, in 7:4 ff., does not directly answer the question of whether or not the fasts still apply in the Second Temple period; in 8:19, he says that these fasts will become *joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons*, but it is not clear whether he is talking about the present or about some unspecified period in the future. Our author clearly understands Zechariah as referring to the future.

74 That is, the Book of Lamentations, *Ekha*.

75 That is, various passages from prophetic books, which rebuke the people.

76 This seems to mean that Ezekiel 40 is read liturgically on this day; this chapter of Ezekiel promises the building of a future Temple, so this is "evidence" that is used for consolation.

בְּעֵינֵי יוֹם תְּרוּעָה

בְּכַרְשֵׁת אָמַר בָּאָה מִצּוֹת זֶה הַיּוֹם, שִׁיְהִיָּה שְׁבִתוֹן, זְכָרוֹן, מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ, בְּאַחַד לַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי. וְהָיָה אָמְרוּ שְׁבִתוֹן וּמִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ (ויקרא כג:כד) - הַטָּעַם בּוֹ מוֹעֵד, וְרָאוי לְקֹדֶשׁוֹ בְּשִׁבִּיתַת מְלָאכָה כְּשֶׁאֵר הַמוֹעֲדִים. וְהָיָה מִפְּשׁוּטוֹ וְגִלּוּי שֶׁל מִקְרָא לֹא נֹדַע טָעַם יָסוּד זֶה הַמוֹעֵד. אָמְנָם מִהַקְבֵּלָה דוֹר אַחֵר דוֹר, הַנִּקְרָא סֶבֶל הִירָשָׁה, וּמִדִּיוֹק מֵאֲמַר זְכוּן תְּרוּעָה (שם), יִדְעֵנוּ שֶׁזֶה הַמוֹעֵד הַתְּחִלָּה לִימֵי הַתְּשׁוּבָה וְהַתְּעוּרָרוֹת אֵלֶיהָ; וְזֶהוּ אָמְרוּ זְכוּן תְּרוּעָה - לְהַזְכִּיר וּלְהַעֲלוֹת עַל לֵב עֵינֵי הַתְּשׁוּבָה, שֶׁזֶהוּ טָעַם תְּרוּעָה, כְּעֵינֵי נְרִיעָה לְצוֹר יִשְׁעָנוּ (תהלים צה:א). וְהִיסוּד אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו נִבְנָה עֵינֵי זֶה הַמוֹעֵד הוּא סִבַּת עֲקֵדַת יִצְחָק; וְעַל־כֵּן נִשְׁאָר הַמִּנְהַג מִהֶרָאשׁוֹנִים בְּאֵלוֹ הַיָּמִים עֲשָׂרָה מִיּוֹם תְּרוּעָה עַד יוֹם כְּפוּר לְהַשְׁכִּים בַּחֲצוֹת הַלַּיְלָה בְּתַחֲנוּגִים וְדוּיִים וּסְלִיחוֹת

Chapter 9

Regarding Yom Teru'a

In *Parashath Emor* comes the commandment for this day to be *a solemn rest [shabbathon], a memorial [. . .], a holy convocation [miqra qodesh]* (Leviticus 23:24), on the first of the seventh month. Since [the Torah refers to this day] as *shabbathon* and *miqra qodesh*, the meaning is that it is a holiday, which is fitting to sanctify by ceasing work, as on the other holidays. Now, from the plain, apparent meaning of the text, the reason for this holiday is not known. However, we know from the tradition handed down from generation to generation, called the Burden of the Inheritance, and from a precise exegesis of the expression *zikhron teru'a*,⁷⁷ that this is the time of the beginning of the days of repentance and the awakening to it; this is the meaning of *zikhron teru'a* – to remind us to take repentance to heart, which is the meaning of *teru'a*, as in: *let us shout for joy [nari'a]*⁷⁸ *to the Rock of our salvation* [Psalms 95:1]. The foundation on which this holiday is based is the binding of Isaac; and therefore the custom, preserved since early days, is that on these ten days from Yom Teru'a to Yom Kippur, we get up at midnight for supplications [*tahanunim*], confessions

⁷⁷ This expression, “commemoration of a *teru'a*” or “commemorative *teru'a*,” is a subject of dispute between Karaites and Rabbanites. Most Karaite interpreters understand the word *teru'a* as meaning “shouting,” whereas Rabbanite tradition understands it as meaning “blowing the *shofar* (animal horn).” The 1917 JPS translation of Scripture, in accordance with the Rabbanite tradition, renders the expression as: *a memorial proclaimed with the blast of horns*. At least one Karaite sage, Ḥ' Daniel al-Qūmisī, advocated blowing the *shofar* on *Yom Teru'a* as a means of promoting repentance, though it is unclear whether he believed that this was required by Leviticus 23:24, or merely advisable to stir people to repent. See *Royal Attire*, p. 185, n. xxvii.

⁷⁸ A verb from the same root as the noun *teru'a*.

וּבְקָשׁוֹת, עִם קְרִיאַת פָּרִשַׁת "וַיַּחַל מֹשֶׁה" (שְׁמוֹת ל"א), כְּאִשֵּׁר
יָדוּעַ סֵדֶרִם בְּסִדּוּר הַתְּפִלוֹת חֶלֶק שְׁנִי. וּבְזֶמֶן בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ,
הַשְּׁמֹטוֹת וְהַיּוֹבֵלִים הָיוּ מִתְחִילִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, וְהָיוּ תּוֹקְעִים
בְּשׁוֹפְרוֹת, לְקִרְוֹא דְרוֹר לְהָשִׁיב כָּל דָּבָר לְבַעֲלָיו.

[*vidduyim*], penitential prayers [*seliḥoth*], petitions [*baqqashoth*], and the reading of the passage *And Moses besought* (Exodus 32:11), which can be found in the second part of the prayer book. During the time of the Temple, the Sabbatical Year [*shemittoth*] and the Jubilees [*yovelim*] used to start during this month, and they would blow *shofaroth* [animal horns] to proclaim freedom and to return all things to their owners.

בְּעֵנִין וּמִנְהַג יוֹם כְּפוֹר, וְהַעֲסֵק שֶׁהָיָה בּוֹ

בְּעֵנִין זֶה הַיּוֹם מִצָּאֵנוּ שֶׁהָיָה בּוֹ עֵסֶק כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל; דְּהֵינּוּ שֶׁהָיָה נִכְנָס לִפְנֵי הָאָרוֹן אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ אַחַת בַּשָּׁנָה לְכַפֵּר בַּעֲדוֹ וּבַעֲדֵי בֵיתוֹ וּבַעֲדֵי כָּל קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּאֲשֶׁר יָדוּעַ וּמִבְּאֵר הָעֵנִין בַּפְּרָשָׁת אַחֲרֵי מוֹת.

וְהִנֵּה בַּפְּרָשָׁת אֲמַר בָּאוּ בְּעֵנִין זֶה הַיּוֹם שְׁתֵּי אֲזֵה־רוֹת: הָא' עֲנוּי הַנֶּפֶשׁ, שֶׁהוּא הַצּוּם, (י"ד) וְהַב' שְׁבִיתַת מְלָאכָה; וְנִקְרָא "מוֹעֵד" ו"מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ". וְלִהְיוֹת כִּי עֲתָה בְּגָלוּת בְּטִלָּה עֲבוֹדַת הַקֹּרְבָּן, וְאִין לָנוּ כֹּהֵן מְשֻׁחַ מִזֶּרַע אַהֲרֹן, עִם כָּל זֶה, מִמָּאֲמַר חֻקַּת עוֹלָם (ויקרא כג:לא) אֲשֶׁר נֶאֱמַר בְּעֵנִין זֶה, חִיבִים אֲנִיחֵנוּ לְשִׁמּוֹר וְלַעֲשׂוֹת מִנְהַגֵּי זֶה הַמוֹעֵד: בְּעֲנוּי הַנֶּפֶשׁ, שֶׁהוּא הַצּוּם; וּבִמְקוֹם הַקֹּרְבָּן, לַעֲמוֹד מִעֶרֶב עַד עֶרֶב בַּתְּפִלָּה וְתַחֲנוּנִים; וּשְׁבִיתַת מְלָאכָה. וְזֶה הַיּוֹם, שֶׁהוּא בַּעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי, יוֹתֵר נִכְבָּד מִהַשְּׁבִיתָה, שֶׁאִין בּוֹ שׁוּם עֵסֶק גּוֹפִי, רַק מַעֲשֵׂה הַשִּׁכָּל בַּתְּפִלָּה וּבִקְשָׁה, כַּנִּלְכָּד. וְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִכְתּוֹב יָדוֹ לֵאמֹר חֵיב לְהַתְעַנּוֹת בַּזֶּה הַיּוֹם, חוּץ מִהַקְטָנִים וְהַשְּׂרוּיִים בַּתְּחִלּוּאִים מְסַכְּנִים, שֶׁהֵם פְּטוּרִים מִהַמְצוֹת.

Chapter 10

Regarding the Matter and Practice of Yom Kippur, and the Ceremony During It

Concerning this day, we find that there was the ceremony of the High Priest; that is, the High Priest used to enter in front of the ark into the *qodesh*⁷⁹ once a year, to make *atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel* (Leviticus 16:17), as the matter is known and explained in *Parashath Aḥaré Moth*.

In *Parashath Emor* there are two admonitions concerning this day: the first is the affliction of the soul, which means fasting,^{14} and the second is the cessation of work; and [the day] is called “an appointed time” and “a holy convocation.” Now given that during the Exile, the sacrificial service has ceased to exist, and we do not have an anointed priest from the seed of Aaron, nevertheless, because Scripture says *a statute for ever* (Leviticus 23:31) in reference to this matter, we are required to observe and to follow the customs of this appointed time: afflicting our souls, which is fasting; and, instead of the sacrifice, to stand from evening to evening in prayer and supplications; and to cease all work. And this day, which falls on the tenth day of the seventh month, is more honored than the Sabbath, for during it there is no bodily activity, only activity of the mind in prayer and supplications, as mentioned above. And everyone who is able is required to fast, except for minors and those suffering from dangerous illnesses, who are exempt from the commandments.

79 The Holy of Holies, the holiest place in the Temple.

בְּעִינֵי חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת, שֶׁהוּא בֵּט"ו לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי

זֶה הַמוֹעֵד סוּף הַג' רָגֳלִים, וְהוּא לְזָכֹר יְצִיאת מִצְרַיִם, כְּאֲשֶׁר
יָשְׁבוּ בַּסֻּכּוֹת בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם וְסַכְכֶם בְּעִנְיָנִים בַּמִּדְבָּר. וְרוֹמֵז
לְהַשְׁפִּיעַת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ עַל אֲמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְעַל כֵּן הוּא שְׁבַעַת
יָמִים כְּמוֹ הַפֶּסַח. וּמֵהַקְבֵּלָה יִדְעֵנוּ שֶׁנִּרְחַק זֶה הַמוֹעֵד מִחַג
הַמִּצּוֹת כְּדִי לַחֲבֹב הַמִּצְוָה. וְהַמְנִיחַ בּוֹ לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבָנוֹת
סֻכּוֹת מֵעֵץ פָּרִי הָדָר וּלְיִפּוֹת הַסֻּכָּה בְּפָרִי עֵץ וְעֶרְבֵי נָחַל כְּפִי
הַיִּכְלָת, וְלָדוֹר בָּהּ בְּמִשְׁךְ הַז' יָמִים כְּמוֹ בַּבַּיִת, כְּדִי לְזָכוֹר מַעֲשֵׂה
ה' כִּי נֹרָא הוּא, אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ. וְקִדּוּשׁ הַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן
וּשְׁבִיתַת מְלָאכָה בְּזֶה הַמוֹעֵד כְּמוֹ בַּפֶּסַח וּשְׁאֵר הַמוֹעֲדִים. וַיּוֹם
הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצָרַת, שֶׁהוּא בִּכ"ב לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה, מוֹעֵד בְּפָנֵי עֲצָמוֹ,
וְאֵינוֹ מְכַלֵּל יְמֵי סֻכּוֹת; רַק הוּא תַּשְׁלוּם הַמוֹעֲדִים וּמִקְרָאֵי
קֹדֶשׁ. וּבּוֹ מְשַׁלְּמִים הַתּוֹרָה לְפִי תְּקוּן הַתַּאֲנִים הַטּוֹבוֹת עוֹלֵי

Chapter II

Regarding the Festival of Sukkoth, which is on the Fifteenth Day of the Seventh Month

This holiday, the last of the three pilgrimage festivals, is in remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt, when the Israelites sat in booths [*sukkoth*], after having left Egypt, and [God] gave them shelter⁸⁰ through [His miraculous] clouds in the Wilderness. [The festival] alludes to God's influence,⁸¹ blessed be He, over the people of Israel and therefore is seven days long, like Passover. We know from tradition that this festival was kept far from the Festival of Unleavened Bread, in order to make the commandment dear [to us]. It is the custom for all Jews to build booths from the wood of goodly trees, and to decorate the booth with fruit from trees, and willow branches, as best they can, and to live in it as a house during the seven days, in order to remember God's deeds, which were tremendous, which He did for our ancestors. The sanctification of the first day and the cessation of work during this appointed time is the same as on Passover and the other holidays. And the day of Shemini 'Azereth, which is on the twenty-second day of this month, is a holiday in its own right, not included in the days of Sukkoth; rather, it is the completion of the appointed times and the sacred occasions. And it is when we complete the

80 Hebrew *sikkekham*, a verb from the same root as the noun *sukka*.

81 The Hebrew word for "influence," *hashpa'a*, comes from a root meaning "outpouring;" the author seems to be alluding to the outpouring of blessing that God gave the Israelites in the Wilderness, both physically through protection and spiritually through the influence of the Torah. He may also be alluding to the outpouring of blessing that God gives every year in the harvest, which is celebrated on Sukkoth.

בבֿל. וְנִקְרָא זֶה הַמוֹעֵד שְׁמִינִי גַעֲצָרֶת, שֶׁהָיוּ נֶעְצְרִים לַמִּקְדָּשׁ
לְהַעֲלוֹת עֹלוֹת, וּלְהוֹדוֹת לַה' עַל כָּל הַחֲסָדִים, שֶׁהֶעֱבִירוּ
הַיָּמִים הַמִּקְדָּשִׁים בְּאַפֵּן שָׁלֵם וְנִכּוֹן; וְהָיוּ שְׂמִיחִים בְּהַשְׁלֵמָתָם.

[reading of] the Torah, according to the institution of the Good Figs, who came up from Babylon [to the Land of Israel, at the time of the building of the Second Temple].⁸² This holiday is called Shemini 'Azereth [that is, “the eighth day, the time of being restrained inside”], because [the people] would remain restrained [*ne'ezarim*] inside the Temple [rather than going home], to offer burnt offerings, and to give thanks to God for all the acts of mercy [that He had given them, in allowing them to] get through all the holy days in a state of health and safety; and they rejoiced in completing [all the holidays].

82 The expression ‘the Good Figs’ is a reference to the vision in Jeremiah 24, where God shows the prophet *two baskets of figs* (verse 1); *One basket had very good figs, like the figs that are first-ripe; and the other basket had very bad figs* [...] (verse 2). God explains to Jeremiah the significance of this vision: *Like these good figs, so will I regard the captives of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans, for good. And I will set Mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them back to this land* [...] (verses 5–6); whereas *the bad figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad; surely thus saith the LORD: So will I make Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem* (verse 8). The identification of this group of righteous exiles with Karaites or proto-Karaites is made by the eleventh-century Karaite author Elijah ben Abraham, in his work *The Split of the Karaites and Rabbanites* [*Hilluq Ha-qara'im Ve-ha-rabbanim*], printed in Pinsker, *Liqqutē Qadmoniyyoṯ*, volume 2, p. 101. See Fred Astren, “Karaite Historiography and Historical Consciousness,” in Meira Polliack, ed., *Karaite Judaism: History and Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), p. 32.

בְּמִנְהַג הַתְּחִלַּת הַתּוֹרָה בְּשַׁבַּת הָרֵאשׁוֹן שִׁיְהִיָּה אַחֵר מוֹעֵד שְׁמִינִי עֶצְרַת

מִתְחִילִים הַתּוֹרָה, רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר פְּרִשְׁת בְּרֵאשִׁית, בְּאֲשׁוּרִים
מִפְּסוּקִים נְאִים לַעֲנִין, וּבִנְגִּין נְאֶה, כְּפִי הַמִּנְהַג הַנִּשְׁאָר מִתְקוֹן
עֲזָרָא הַכֹּהֵן, וְזֶה סֵדֶר תְּקוֹן הַתּוֹרָה לַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת. כִּי בְּרֵאשִׁית עֲזָרָא
הַכֹּהֵן שִׁישְׂרָאֵל עֲתִידִים לְגָלוּת גְּלוּת אֶרֶץ, וְהַתּוֹרָה תִּשְׁתַּכַּח
בִּינֵיהֶם, נִתְנַעֵץ עִם סִיעָתוֹ, אֲנָשִׁי כְּנֶסֶת הַגְּדוּלָּה, וְחָלַק אֶת
כָּל הַתּוֹרָה לַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת, כְּמִסְפַּר שַׁבָּתוֹת הַשָּׁנָה, כְּדִי שֶׁתִּשְׁלַם
קְרִיאַת הַתּוֹרָה כְּלָה לְשָׁנָה תְּמִימָה. וְתִקְנוּ גַם הַפְּטָרוֹת, רוֹצֶה
לוֹמַר עֲנִינִים דּוֹמִים לַעֲנִינֵי הַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת מֵהַנִּבָּאִים. וְיַעַן כִּי
בְּקֶצֶת פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת נִתְבָּאֲרוּ עֲנִינֵי הַמוֹעֲדִים, עַל־כֵּן תִּקְנוּ לְקִרְאָה
גַּם בְּמוֹעֲדִים פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת, כְּאֲשֶׁר נִתְבָּאֲרוּ בְּמִנְהַגֵּי הַתְּפִלָּה. וּמִשּׁוּם
שֶׁאֵין שַׁבָּתוֹת ^{טו} הַשָּׁנִים שׁוּיִם, עַל־כֵּן תִּקְנוּ בְּשָׁנָה פְּשׁוּטָה
לְכַפּוֹל קֶצֶת פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת דּוֹמוֹת בְּעִנִּין, כְּגוֹן וִיקָהָל עִם פְּקוּדֵי,
תִּזְרִיעַ עִם מִצְרַע, וְכֵן הַשָּׂאֵר, שֶׁיִּבּוֹא אֶל נֶכּוֹן תִּשְׁלֹם הַתּוֹרָה
וְהַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת בְּזִמְנָם. וְכֵן בְּשָׁנָה הַמְּעַבְּרַת הוֹלָכִים בְּסֵדֶר הַמִּתְקָן,
שֶׁקוֹרְאִים פְּרָשָׁה אַחַת בְּשִׁתֵּי שַׁבָּתוֹת, כְּדִי שֶׁתִּסְפָּקָה הַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת
לְכָלִּל הַשָּׁנָה. כִּי בְּשָׁנָה פְּשׁוּטָה מִנִּין הַשַּׁבָּתוֹת פָּחוֹת מֵהַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת,

Chapter 12

Regarding the Custom to Begin the Torah on the First Sabbath after the Holiday of Shemini 'Azereth

We begin the Torah, that is, *Parashath Bereshith*, with declarations of happiness from verses that are appropriate for the situation, and with a beautiful tune, following a custom that goes back to the institutions of Ezra the Priest, namely the establishment of the [division of] the Torah into *parashiyyoth* [weekly portions]. For when Ezra the Priest saw that the Israelites would be in a long exile, and the Torah would be forgotten among them, he consulted with his party, the Men of the Great Assembly, and divided the whole Torah into *parashiyyoth*, according to the number of Sabbaths in a year, so that the reading of the whole Torah could be completed in a full year. They also established *haftaroth*, that is, texts from the [books of the] Prophets with similar subjects to those of the *parashiyyoth*. And since some of the *parashiyyoth* deal with matters of the holidays, they also established to read *parashiyyoth* on the holidays, as is specified in [the books of] liturgical customs. Since there is not an equal number of Sabbaths ^{15} in every year, they established that in a non-leap year, we combine a few *parashiyyoth* that are similar in subject matter, such as *Vayyaqhel* with *Pequdé*, *Tazria* with *Mezora*, and others, so that the completion of the Torah and the *parashiyyoth* will be at the right time. Similarly, in a leap year we follow the established order, and read one *parasha* over the course of two Sabbaths, so that there will be enough *parashiyyoth* for the whole year. For in a simple year, the number of Sabbaths is smaller than that of

וּבִשְׁנֵה מַעֲבַרְת הַשְּׁבֻתוֹת מְרֻבּוֹת מֵהַפְּרָשִׁיּוֹת, וְעַל־כֵּן נִהְגוּ
זֶה הַמִּנְהָג.

הַרְבֵּנִים נוֹהֲגִים בְּכ"ה לְחֹדֶשׁ כְּסֵל מִנְהָג יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה. אֲמָנָם
הַקְּרָאִים לֹא קִבְּלוּ זֶה הַמִּנְהָג, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁלֹּא בָּא סְפּוּר זֶה הָעֲנִין
בְּכַתְּבֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֵינוֹ מִתְקוּן וְהַסְכָּמַת כָּלל יִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּאֲשֶׁר עָנִין
הַפּוּרִים שָׁכַל יִשְׂרָאֵל קִיָּמוֹ וְקִבְּלוּ עֲלֵיהֶם וְעַל זֶרַעַם וְעַל כָּל הַנְּלוּיִם
עֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יַעֲבֹר (אסתר ט:כז).

parashiyyoth; and in a leap year there are more Sabbaths than *parashiyyoth*; therefore, we follow this practice.

The Rabbanites have the custom to observe the days of Ḥanukka, [starting] on the twenty-fifth of Kislev. However, the Karaites do not accept this custom, because the story of this event is not in Scripture, and [the holiday] is not accepted and established by all Israel, unlike Purim, which all Israel *ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail* (Esther 9:27).

בְּמִנְהֲגֵי חֹדֶשׁ טִבֵּת

בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה בְּעֶשְׂרָה בּוֹ נוֹהֲגִים תַּעֲנִית לְזֵכֶר שְׁסֻמּוֹ מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל
עַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, כְּאֲשֶׁר נִתְבָּאֵר לְמַעַלָּה בְּפֶרֶק שְׁמִינִי. וּמִתְקַנֵּת
הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים, נוֹהֲגִים אֲבִלוֹת גַּם בְּזֶה הַחֹדֶשׁ מִיּוֹם הַתַּעֲנִית עַד
רֵאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ שְׁבָט; וּבְכָל יוֹם שְׁנֵי וַחֲמִישֵׁי מִשְׁכִּימִים קֹדֶם עֲלוֹת
הַשָּׁחַר וּמִתְפַּלְלִים תְּפִלוֹת יְמֵי רַחֲמִים, עִם תְּחִנוּת וּסְלִיחוֹת
וּפְרָשֵׁת "וַיַּחַל מֹשֶׁה" (שְׁמוֹת ל"א), כְּפִי הַמִּנְהֶג.

Chapter 13

Regarding the Customs of the Month of Ṭeveth

In this month, on the tenth [day], it is customary to fast in memory of the siege that the Baylonian king laid on Jerusalem, as explained above in the eighth chapter. From the institution of the early ones [i.e., earlier Jewish sages] it is customary to mourn also [in the remainder of] this month, from the fast day until the New Moon of Shevat; and on every Monday and Thursday, we get up before dawn to say the prayers of the Days of Mercy, with supplications [*teḥinnoth*] and penitential prayers [*seliḥoth*], and the reading of the passage *And Moses besought* (Exodus 32:11), according to the custom.

בְּמִנְהֲגֵי חֹדֶשׁ אֶדָר

בְּזֶה הַחֹדֶשׁ נַעֲשֶׂתָה תְּשׁוּעָה גְדוֹלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמַלְכוּת בָּבֶל, בְּיוֹם
י"ד וּבְיוֹם ט"ו בּוֹ, וְעַל־כֵּן קִבְּעוּ אוֹתָם מֶרְדֵּכִי וְאַסָּתֵר בִּהְיוֹת
מִמִּנְהֲגֵי הָאָמָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם יְמֵי מִשְׁתָּה וְשִׁמְחָה, וּלְשִׁבְחָה
לְמַלְךְ שְׂמִיָּא עַל הַנָּסִים וְהַנִּפְלְאוֹת אֲשֶׁר הִגְדִּיל לַעֲמֹד לַעֲשׂוֹת.
וְהִנֵּה בַּיָּמִים הָאֵלּוּ קוֹרְאִים מְגִלַּת אֶסְתֵּר בְּבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת אַחֵר
הַתְּפִלָּה. וְכִדִּי לְהַרְבוֹת הַשִּׁמְחָה, מִתְחִילִים קְרִיאַת הַמְּגִלָּה
בְּמוֹצָאֵי שַׁבָּת אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי הַפּוֹרִים עֶצְמָם. קוֹרְאִים הַמְּגִלָּה

Chapter 14

Regarding the Customs for the Month of Adar

In this month, great rescue came to Israel in the kingdom of Babylonia on the fourteenth and fifteenth day of the month, and for this reason, Mordecai and Esther established it to be among the people's customs that they make [these days] days of feasting and joy, and to praise the King of Heaven for the miracles and wonders that He did greatly for his people. Now, in these days we read the Book of Esther in the synagogue after the prayers; and [moreover,] in order to increase joy, we begin reading this book on the evening after the Sabbath that precedes the actual [days of] Purim; [thus,] we read the book three times.⁸³ Also, during

83 Once on the Saturday night before Purim, once on the first day of Purim, and once on the second day of Purim. Indeed, the traditional Karaite view is that two days of Purim are to be celebrated by all Jews, regardless of whether one lives in a walled or an unwalled city. See James Walker, editor and translator, *Esther Explained: Megillat Esther with Commentary by Hakham Ya'akov ben Re'uvén*, Daly City: The Karaite Press, 2016, comment to Esther 9:26. Rabbanite halakha requires the reading of the Book of Esther only on one of the two days; Jews in cities that were walled in antiquity read it on the fourteenth of Adar, while Jews in cities that were unwalled (or not yet in existence) in antiquity read it on the fifteenth of Adar. See *Shulḥan 'Arukh* volume *Orah Ḥayyim* §688 (and at paragraph 4, where it states the Jews in a city that whose walled status in antiquity is uncertain must read on both days). Nonetheless, even according to Rabbanite halakha, both of the two days are considered Purim everywhere in the world, and are celebrated as joyous days (*Shulḥan 'Arukh* volume *Orah Ḥayyim* §696:3, and R. Moses Isserles's gloss on §695:3). There were also Rabbanite communities that had the custom of reading the Book of Esther on the two Saturday nights preceding Purim, although this is not required by Rabbanite halakha. See Tractate Sofrim, 14:15–16 (ed. Michael Higger, New York, 1937, pp. 269 f.). This is quite similar to the Karaite practice of reading it on the Saturday night immediately before Purim.

שְׁלֹשָׁה פְּעָמִים. וְכֵן בְּתַפְלַת אֱלֹהֵי הַבַּיִת מוֹסִיפִים מִזְמוֹרִים
 גְּאוּתִים לְעִנְיֵן הַשְׁפָּלַת הָאוֹיְבִים וּלְעִנְיֵן חֲמַלַת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ
 עַל עֲנֵי וְאַבְיוֹן מְשֻׁעַ. וְגַם מְנַגְּנִים פְּסוּקִים גְּאוּתִים וְחֲבוּרִים
 הַלְצִיִּים בְּתוֹךְ קְרִיאַת הַמִּגְלָה, כְּמוֹ פְּסוּקֵי מִי כְּמֹכָה בְּאַלִּים ה'
 (שְׁמוֹת טו:יא) דְּשִׁירָה, וְהַשְׁאָר. וּמִזְמוֹרִים בְּמִזְמוֹרִים גְּאוּתִים בְּבֵית
 הַכְּנֶסֶת. וְגַם בְּבִתְיָהֶם סוּעָדִים בְּתַעֲנוּגִים וּמִרְבִּים הַשְׁבָּחוֹת
 וְהַרְנָנִים. וְאִין בּוֹ שְׁבִיתַת מְלָאכָה, רַק שְׁמִיחָה וְשִׁשׁוֹן וִיקָר
 וּמִשְׁלֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרַעְהוֹ.

the prayers of these two days, [we read] Psalms suitable to the subject of the enemies' humiliation and God's mercy to the poor and indigent who cry out [to Him], blessed be He. We also sing appropriate verses and satirical [i.e., lighthearted] compositions, in the middle of the reading of the Book [of Esther], such as the verse *Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the mighty*, from the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15:11), and others; and beautiful psalms [are sung] in the synagogue. In people's homes, too, they eat a delicious meal and sing many praises and songs. There is no cessation of work; only happiness, joy and glory, and the sending of portions to one another.

בְּעֵינַי מִנְהֲגֵי עֲבוֹדַת הָאֱלֹהִית

מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה מִן הַתּוֹרָה עֲבוֹדַת הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרֵךְ, כְּמוֹ שְׁאָמַר
הַכֹּתוּב: וְעֲבַדְתֶּם אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם (שמות כג:כה), וְכֵן: אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ
תִּירָא אֹתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וגו' (דברים י:ב). וְזֹאת הָעֲבוֹדָה - בְּזִמְנֵי בֵּית קֹדֶשְׁנוֹ
וְתַפְאֲרָתָנוּ הִיְתָה עַל-יְדֵי הַקֶּרֶבֶת הַקְּרָבָן בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ; וּבְזִמְנֵי הַגָּלוּת,
הַתְּפִלָּה הִיא בַּמָּקוֹם הַקְּרָבָן. וְהִרְאִיָּה מִמָּאֲמַר שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ
עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם בְּסֵפֶר מְלָכִים סִימָן ח' פָּסוּק מ"ח: וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֵלַיךְ
דֶּרֶךְ אֲרָצָם; וְכֵן בְּהוֹשֵׁעַ סִימָן י"ד פָּסוּק ג': וְנִשְׁלַמָּה פָּרִים שְׁפָתֵינוּ.
וְהִנֵּה הָעֲבוֹדָה עַל שְׁנֵי דִרְכִּים: עֲבוֹדַת חוּב וְעֲבוֹדַת נְדָבָה.
וְאִמְנָם עֲבוֹדַת חוּב הִיא פְּעָמִים בַּיּוֹם, עָרֵב וּבִבְקָרִים, בְּרֹאֲיָה
מִהַקֶּרֶבֶת עוֹלֹת תָּמִיד שְׁנֵי פְעָמִים בַּיּוֹם; וְזֶה הַמִּנְהָג בַּיָּמִי הַחֹל,
אֲבָל בַּיָּמִי שִׁבְתוֹת וּמוֹעֲדִים יֵשְׁנָם מוֹסָפִים. וְעֲבוֹדַת נְדָבָה לְפִי
כּוֹנֵנֶת כָּל אִישׁ וְאִישׁ, כְּאֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה דְּבִקּוּתוֹ לִשְׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ.
וְאֶפְיָנִי אֵלּוּ הָעֲבוֹדוֹת יְדוּעִים בְּסִדּוּרֵי הַתְּפִלּוֹת. וּבְדֶרֶךְ כָּלֵל,
תְּפִלַּת הַחוּב לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים צְרִיכָה שְׁתֵּהִיָּה כּוֹלֶלֶת
שְׁבַעַת תְּנָאִים, וְהֵם: שְׁבָחִים, הוֹדָאָה, וְדוּי, בְּקִשָּׁה, תְּחִנָּה, צַעֲקָה,

Chapter 15

Regarding the Customs of Divine Service

A positive commandment from the Torah is the service of the Creator, blessed be He, as it is written: *And ye shall serve the Lord your God* (Exodus 23:25), and similarly, *Thou shalt fear the Lord* ^{16} *thy God; Him shalt thou serve* (Deuteronomy 10:20). During the time of our glorious Temple, this service was done by offering sacrifices on the altar; during the time of the Exile, prayer takes the place of sacrifice. The proof is that King Solomon, may he rest in peace, said, in the Book of [I] Kings, chapter 8, verse 48: *and pray unto Thee toward their land*; ⁸⁴ and similarly in Hosea, chapter 14, verse 3: *so will we render for bullocks the offering of our lips*.

Now the service comes in two forms, obligatory service and voluntary service. The obligatory service is twice a day, in the evening and in the morning, as is evident from the daily burnt offering, which was brought twice a day; this is the custom on weekdays, but on Sabbaths and festivals, there are additional [*musaf*] prayers. Voluntary service depends on the devotion of each individual person, whenever they are [experiencing] clinging to God, blessed be He.

The forms of these prayers can be found in the prayer books. In general, the obligatory prayer, according to the opinion of the Karaite sages, needs to include seven conditions, which are: praise [*shevaḥim*], thanks [*hoda'a*], confession [*viddui*], petition [*baqqasha*], supplication [*teḥina*], crying out [*ze'aqa*], calling out

⁸⁴ The context is: *If they sin against Thee [. . .] and Thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captive unto the land of the enemy; [. . .] yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, [. . .] and pray unto Thee toward their land [. . .] then hear Thou their prayer and their supplication [. . .]* (I Kings 8:46–49).

קריאה. ואין חשש בין שתהיה מסדרת באריכות בין בקצרה, רק צריך שתהיה כוללת בעצמה התנאים הנ"ל ועקרי הדת. והחזן, הנקרא בפי הכל "שליח צבור", שהוא במקום הכהן אשר היה בזמן בית המקדש, צריך שיהיה קולו ערב, ונהוג ומלמד בעניני התפלות, כדי שיבין מוצא שפתיו, ולא יחטא בלשונו ויחטיא את הרבים - כי זכות כל הקהל תלוי עליו. וחיב שיהיה יודע האמונה ידיעה אמיתית במופת במשכל, לא לבד במקבל; ושיעשה פעלתו בכונה שלמה, לא כתפלת עמי הארץ, שהן לבד בצפצוף כעופות. ויש עבודות אחרות, והן כמו ענפים לזאת העבודה; דרך משל: ברכות הנהגין, ברכת המזון לפניה ולאחריה. ובדרך כלל, בכל מה שישגח האדם מהבורא יתברך, ברע או בטוב, חיב לברך בשמו, כמו שאמר דוד המלך עליו השלום: צִדָּה וַיְגֹז אֲמִצָּא וּבָשִׁים ה' אֶקְרָא (תהלים טז:טז), בֹּשֶׁם יִשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא וּבָשִׁים ה' אֶקְרָא (שם, פסוק יג). וכן לכל מצוה ומצוה, בעת קיומה ועשייתה חיב לברך לגותן התורה, כי טוב וישר ה' על בן יורה חטאים בדרך (תהלים כה:נ).

[*qeri'a*]. It does not matter whether [the prayer] is formulated in a long manner, or a short one, as long as it includes these conditions and the principles of the religion [*dath*]. The cantor [*hazzan*], whom everyone calls the “emissary of the community” [*sheliaḥ zibbur*], takes the place of the priest, who [would serve] at the time of the Temple; he needs to have a pleasant and acceptable voice, and to be trained and knowledgeable about the matters of the prayers, so that he can understand what he is saying, and not sin through his tongue, and thus bring sin upon the congregation – for the merit of the whole congregation depends on him. He also needs to truly have an exemplary and intelligent understanding of the faith, and not merely what is usual.⁸⁵ He should do his work with complete devotion, and not pray like the simple people, whose prayer is like the chirping of birds. There are other forms of service, which are like branches of this service; for example: blessings made upon items from which we derive enjoyment [*birkhoth ha-nehenin*], and blessings on food before and after [the meal]. In general, for anything that people receive from the Creator's providence, blessed be He, whether it be bad or good, they must bless His Name; as King David, may he rest in peace, said: *I found trouble and sorrow, but I called upon the name of the Lord* (Psalms 116:3–4); *I will lift up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord* (Psalms 116:13). Some say that for every commandment, when one performs and does it, one must give blessing to the Giver of the Torah, for *Good and upright is the Lord; therefore doth He instruct sinners in the way* (Psalms 25:8).

85 “What is usual” – Hebrew *mequbbal*, i.e., “accepted” (for people in the general populace). Alternatively, the word might mean “what is received,” that is, understandings of the religion that have been received in teachings from previous generations; if so, the author would be saying that a cantor must not rely on this, but give independent thought to the matters of the religion.

אודות עֲשָׂרָה עֶקְרֵי הָאֱמוּנָה לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים

עֶקְרֵי אֱמוּנַת הַדָּת הָעֵבְרִית הֵם עֲשָׂרָה:

עֶקֶר הָא'. לְהֶאֱמִין לְמִצִּיאוֹת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרֵךְ, שֶׁהוּא אֶחָד וְאֵין אַחֲדוֹת כְּמוֹהוּ בְּכָל הַנִּמְצָאִים הָעֲלִיוֹנִים, כָּל־שָׁכֵן בְּשִׁפְלִים, כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוֹב: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה' אֶחָד (דברים ו:ד).

עֶקֶר הֵב'. שֶׁהוּא אֵינוֹ גּוֹף וְלֹא כָח בְּגוֹף, וְלֹא יְשִׁיגוּהוּ מְשִׁיגֵי הַגּוֹף, כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוֹב: וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד לִנְפְשֵׁיכֶם כִּי לֹא רְאִיתֶם כָּל תְּמוּנָה (דברים י:ט); וְנֶאֱמַר: קוֹל דְּבָרִים אֲתֶם שֹׁמְעִים וְתְמוּנָה אֵינְכֶם רוֹאִים וְגו' (דברים י:ז); וְנֶאֱמַר: וְאַל מִי תִדְמִינִי וְאַשּׁוּהָ יֹאמַר קְדוֹשׁ (ישעיהו מ:כה).

עֶקֶר הַג'. שֶׁהוּא לְבַדּוֹ בָּרָא אֶת הָעוֹלָם מֵאֵין לֵישׁ, וּמִנְהִיגוֹ {יז} בְּחִסְדּוֹ. הוּא הָרֵאשׁוֹן וְהוּא הָאַחֲרוֹן, כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוֹב: בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ (בראשית א:א); וְכָתוֹב בִּישְׁעִיָּא: אֲנֹכִי עֲשִׂיתִי אָרֶץ וְאָדָם עָלֶיהָ בְּרֵאשִׁיתִי וְגו' (ישעיהו מה:יב).

עֶקֶר הַד'. לוֹ לְבַדּוֹ רָאוּי לְהִתְפַּלֵּל וּלְעֲבוֹד, כְּמוֹ שְׁכָתוֹב: אֵת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִירָא אֹתוֹ תַעֲבֹד (דברים י:כ). וְאֵין רָאוּי לְהִתְפַּלֵּל לְשׁוֹם נִבְרָא

Chapter 16

Regarding the Principles of Faith according to the Opinion of the Karaite Sages

There are ten principles of faith of the Hebrew religion:

The first principle is to believe in the existence of God, blessed be He, that He is One and there is no oneness like His in all supernal beings, and certainly in the lower beings, as it is written: *Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4).

The second principle is that He is not a body, nor any power of a body, and nothing that can happen to a body can happen to Him, as it is written: *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves – for ye saw no manner of form* (Deuteronomy 4:15); and it is said: *ye heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only a voice* (Deuteronomy 4:12). And it is said: *To whom then will ye liken Me, that I should be equal? saith the Holy One* (Isaiah 40:25).

The third principle is that He alone created the world out of nothingness into being, and He guides it ^{17} in His kindness. He is the first and He is the last, as it is written: *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth* [Genesis 1:1]; and it is written in Isaiah [45:12]: *I, even I, have made the earth, and created man upon it [. . .]*

The fourth principle is that it is fitting to pray to Him alone and serve Him alone, as it is written: *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; Him shalt thou serve* (Deuteronomy 10:20). It is not fitting to pray

מִהַנְּבָרָאִים, לֹא לְמִלְאָךְ וְלֹא לְגִלְגֵּל וְלֹא לְקַדוּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר בְּאַרְץ,
כְּמוֹ שְׁעוֹשִׁים הַרְבֵּנִים וְשָׂאֵר הַכְּתוּת, הַמְצַטְרֵכִים לְמִלִּיצִים
לְפָנֵי הָאֵל. וְשִׁכְחוּ מֵאֲמַר קְרוֹב ה' לְכָל קְדָאִיו לְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵהוּ
בְּאַמֶּת (תהלים קסח:יח); וְנֶאֱמַר: מִי יָקוּם לִי עִם מְרַעִים וְגו' ... לֹאִי
ה' עֲזָרְתָה לִי וְגו' (תהלים צד:טו-יז); וְנֶאֱמַר: הַמְשִׁפִּילִי לְרֹאשׁוֹת בְּשָׁמַיִם
וּבְאָרֶץ (תהלים קיג:א).

עֲקָר הַחֲמִישִׁי. לְהֶאֱמִין בְּדַבְרֵי נְבִיאֵי צֶדֶק, עָלֵיהֶם הַשָּׁלוֹם,
כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: אִם יִהְיֶה נְבִיאֲכֶם ה' בְּמִרְאָה אֱלֹוֹ אֲתוֹדַע וְגו' (במדבר
יב:א); וְנֶאֱמַר: נְבִיא אֲקִים לָהֶם מִקְרָב אַחֵיהֶם כְּמוֹךְ וְנִתַּתִּי דְבָרִי בְּפִיו
וְגו' (דברים יח:יח); וְנֶאֱמַר: הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּנְבִיאָיו וְהִצֵּלְחֻו (דברי־הימים ב כ:כ).
עֲקָר הו'. נְבוֹאֵת מֹשֶׁה רַבְּנוֹ אֲמַתִּית, וְהוּא אֵב וְרֹאשׁ כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים,
כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: לֹא בֶן עַבְדִּי מֹשֶׁה בָּכָל בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמָן הוּא, פֶּה אֶל פֶּה אֲדַבֵּר
בּוֹ וְגו' (במדבר יב:ז-ח).

עֲקָר הַז'. תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה רַבְּנוֹ עָלִיו הַשָּׁלוֹם אֲמַתִּית וְקִיַּמְתָּ לְעוֹלָם
וְעַד; לֹא תִהְיֶה מַחְלָפֶת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁם מֹשֶׁה
לְפָנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (דברים ד:מד); וְנֶאֱמַר: לֹא תוֹסִיפוּ עַל הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר
אֲנִי מִצְוֶה אֶתְכֶם וְלֹא תִגְרְעוּ מִמֶּנּוּ (דברים ד:ב); וְנֶאֱמַר: לֹא תִסּוּרוּ
יָמִין וּשְׂמָאל (דברים ה:כט); וְנֶאֱמַר: זָכְרוּ תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה וְגו' (מלאכי
ג:כב). וּבִזְזָה הָעֶקֶר נִכְלָל שְׁחִיב הַמֶּאֱמִין לְדַעַת לְשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ

to any created being: not to an angel, nor to a heavenly sphere,⁸⁶ nor to holy people on earth – as do the Rabbanites and other sects, who need intermediaries to God. They forget what is said: *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth* [Psalms 145:18]; and: *Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers?* [. . .] *Unless the LORD had been my help* [. . .] (Psalms 94:16–17); and: *[It is God] that looketh down low upon heaven and upon the earth* (Psalms 113:6).

The fifth principle is to believe in the words of the righteous prophets, may they rest in peace, as it is written: *if there be a prophet among you, I the LORD do make Myself known unto him in a vision* [. . .] (Numbers 12:6); and: *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put My words in his mouth* [. . .] (Deuteronomy 18:18); and: *believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper* (11 Chronicles 20:20).

The sixth principle is that the prophecy of Moses our Teacher is true, and that he is the father and head of all the prophets, as it is written: *My servant Moses is not so; he is trusted in all My house. With him do I speak mouth to mouth* [. . .] (Numbers 12:7–8).

The seventh principle is that the Torah of Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace, is true and in effect forever; it will not be changed, as it is said: *And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel* (Deuteronomy 4:44); and: *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it* (Deuteronomy 4:2); and: *ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left* (Deuteronomy 5:28); and: *Remember ye the law of Moses* [. . .] (Malachi 3:22). This principle includes the requirement for the

86 Hebrew *galgal*, corresponding to the Latin *sphaera*; according to late antique and medieval astronomical understanding, these are enormous clear spherical containers, which cause the motion of the planets and other celestial bodies.

על־פִּי דְרָכוֹ, שְׂיַדַּע לְתַרְץ תְּאָרֵי הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ, מֶה שְׁבָאוֹ
בַּתּוֹרָה, שֶׁהֵם שְׁלִישִׁים: לַעֲצָם, לַעֲלָה, וְחוּץ מִשְׁנֵיהֶם. וְכֵן מֶה
שֶׁנִּתְיַחֲסוּ לַבּוֹרָא תְּכוּנוֹת גְּשָׁמִיּוֹת, כְּגוֹן יְרִידָה, עֲלִיָּה, דְּבוּר,
הַלִּיכָה, שְׁנָה, יְקִיצָה, הַתְּעַלְמוֹת, רְאִיָּה, רְחוּק וְקְרוֹב, וְאַבְרִים
גְּשָׁמִים - שְׂיַבִּין לְהַשִּׁיב אוֹתָם לְאַפִּיקוֹרוֹס, כִּי הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַךְ
מְשַׁלֵּל מִכָּל אֵלָה; רַק דְּבָרָה תּוֹרָה כָּלשׁוֹן בְּנֵי אָדָם, כְּדִי שְׂיוֹכְלוּ
לְהַבִּין הַשּׁוֹמְעִים; עַל־כֵּן יַחֲסֹם כָּפִי תְּכוּנַת הָאָדָם לְמֶה שֶׁנִּתְיַחֲד
וְנִסְגַּל בְּכַח הַדְּבוּר מִשְׁאָר הַגְּבֻרָאִים.

עֲקָר הַח'. שְׂיֵאֲמִין שֶׁהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ יוֹדַע מַחֲשָׁבוֹת בְּנֵי אָדָם וְכָל
מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם, וְגוֹמֵל טוֹב לְטוֹבִים וּמַעֲנִישׁ לְרָשָׁעִים, שְׁנֹאֲמַר: גָּדַל
הָעֵצָה וְרַב הָעֲלִילָה אֲשֶׁר עֵינֶיךָ פָּקְחוֹת וְגו' (יִרְמִיָּהוּ לִב:ט); וְנֹאֲמַר:
עִם חֲסִיד תִּתְחַפֵּד עִם גִּבּוֹר תִּמָּס תִּתְמָס, עִם נָבִיר תִּתְבָּרַר וְעִם עֲקֹשׁ
תִּתְפַּתֵּל (תְּהִלִּים יח:כז-כח).

עֲקָר הַט'. שְׂיֵאֲמִין בְּבִיאת הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ, לְהִיּוֹת רוּעָה נֶאֱמָן
בִּיעֲקֹב עַמּוֹ וּבִישְׂרָאֵל שֶׁבֶט נִחְלָתוֹ, כְּמוֹ שְׁנֹאֲמַר בְּנִבְיֹאת יִרְמְיָה
הַנָּבִיא, עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם, סִימָן כ"ג; וְכֵן שֵׁם מְסִימָן ל"ג עַד סִימָן
ל"ד. וְכֵן נֹאֲמַר עָלָיו: וַיֵּצֵא חֲטָר מִגִּזְעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ יא:א), כִּי יִהְיֶה
מִזְרַע דָּוִד הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם. וְנֹאֲמַר: וְבֹא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל (יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ)

believer to know the Holy Language [Hebrew], with its features, in order to be able to reconcile the descriptions of the Creator, blessed be He, that are threefold in the Torah: existential, causal, and otherwise; likewise, [to reconcile] the physical attributes ascribed to the Creator, such as descent, ascent, speech, walking, sleeping, waking up, hiding, sight, distance, nearness, and physical limbs – so that one will understand how to respond to a heretic, [and explain] that the Creator, blessed be He, is lacking all these [physical attributes]; [the Torah seems to describe God as having all these attributes] only because the Torah is formulated in the way people speak, so that those who hear may understand; for that reason, human attributes are used [to describe the Creator], for it is the power of speech that makes humanity unique and special among creatures.

The eighth principle is to believe that God, blessed be He, knows people's thoughts, and all their deeds, and that He pays back the good with good, and punishes the evil, as it is said: *Great in counsel, and mighty in work; whose eyes are open [upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings]* (Jeremiah 32:19); and: *With the merciful Thou dost show Thyself merciful, with the upright man Thou dost show Thyself upright; With the pure Thou dost show Thyself pure; and with the crooked Thou dost show Thyself subtle* (Psalms 18:26–27).

The ninth principle is to believe in the coming of the King Messiah, [who will] be a devoted shepherd for Jacob, [God's] people, and Israel, the tribe of [God's] inheritance, as it is said in the prophecy of Jeremiah the Prophet, may he rest in peace, in chapter 23, and also in chapters 33–34. And moreover, it is about [the King Messiah]: *And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse* (Isaiah 11:1), for he will be from the seed of King David, may he rest in peace. And it is said: *And a redeemer will come to*

נ:ט). וְהוּא יוֹצִיא אֶת אֶמֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הַגָּלוּת, וְיִלְחֶם מִלְחָמוֹת הַשֵּׁם, וְיִהְיֶה מְנַהִיג אֶת הָאָמָה עַל־פִּי תוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה, בְּלִי יִיחַ שׁוֹם מִגֶּרֶעַת. וְיֵשׁ יַעֲוִדִים רַבִּים כְּדַבְּרֵי נְבוּאָה עַל בִּיאַת הַמָּשִׁיחַ וְעַל גְּאֻלַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִזֹּז הַגָּלוּת, כְּמוֹ בְּנְבוּאָת יְרֵמְיָה סוּף סִימָן מ"ו, וְהַשָּׂאָר; הַמְבַקֵּשׁ אוֹתָם יִמָּצָא אִישׁ עַל דְּגֻלּוֹ בְּאוֹתוֹת.

עֵקֶר הִי'. שְׂיֶאֱמִין בְּתַחֲתֵת הַמַּתִּים, שְׂיִהְיֶה בָּעֵת בּוֹא רְצוֹנוֹ יִתְבַּרֵּךְ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: יַחֲיוּ מִתֵּיךְ נְבִלָתִי יְקוֹמוּן וְגו' (ישעיהו כו:ט); וְרַבִּים מִיִּשְׁנֵי אֲדֻמַּת עֶפְרָיִם יִקְיָצוּ (דְּנִיאל יב:ב); וְנֶאֱמַר: הִנֵּה אֲנִי פֹתַח אֶת קְבֻרֹתֶיכֶם [...] וְנִתְּנִי רוּחִי בְּכֶם וְחַיִּיתֶם וְהִנַּחְתִּי אֶתְכֶם עַל אֲדֻמַּתְכֶם וְיִדְעֶתֶם כִּי אֲנִי ה' דְּבַרְתִּי וְעָשִׂיתִי נֶאֱמַר ה' (יחזקאל לז:יב-יד). וְאַף־עַל־פִּי שֶׁנֶּאֱמָרוּ בְּכַתְּבֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ מֵאֲמָרִים סוֹתָרִים לְזֶה הָעֵקֶר, כְּגוֹן אִם יָמוּת גִּבּוֹר הַיַּחֲיָה וְגו' (אִיוב יד:יד); כִּלָּה עֲנֵן וַיִּלָּךְ וְגו' (אִיוב ז:ט); כִּי מוֹת נָמוּת וְכַמּוֹס הַנִּגְרִים אֲרֻצָּה אֲשֶׁר לֹא יֵאֲסָפוּ וְגו' (שְׁמוּאֵל ב יד:יד) - חֵיב כָּל מֵאֲמִין לְדַעַת תְּרוּץ אֱלֹהֵי הַמֵּאֲמָרִים, לֹא כְּפִי הַנִּגְלָה מִפְּשׁוּטִם; כִּי נֶאֱמָרוּ עַל־פִּי הַטֶּבַע, כִּי כֵן דֶּרֶךְ הַתּוֹלְדֹת שֶׁהַנִּפְרָד לֹא יֵאֲסֹף מֵעֲצָמוֹ וְהַהֲרוּס לֹא יִבְנֶה; וּבְדֶרֶךְ כָּלֵל, כָּל דָּבָר לֹא יִפְעַל עֲצָמוֹ אִם

Zion (Isaiah 59:20). And he will bring the nation of Israel out of the Exile, and he will wage God's wars, and he will lead the nation according to the Torah of Moses, without ^{18} taking anything away from it. There are many promises in the words⁸⁷ of the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah and the deliverance of Israel from this Exile, such as in the prophecy of Jeremiah at the end of chapter 46. And whoever investigates the rest will find them, each in their place [in Scripture].⁸⁸

The tenth principle is to believe in the resurrection of the dead, which will occur at the time when God, blessed be He, wants, as it is written: *Thy dead shall live, my dead bodies shall arise* [. . .] (Isaiah 26:19); *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake* (Daniel 12:2); and it is said: *Behold, I will open your graves* [. . .] *And I will put My spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land; and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken, and performed it, saith the Lord* (Ezekiel 37:12–14). Even though contradictory statements to this principle are made in the Holy Scriptures, such as *If a man die, may he live again?* [. . .] (Job 14:14); *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, [so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more]* [Job 7:9]; *For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again* [. . .] (II Samuel 14:14) – [nonetheless,] every believer is required to know the explanation to these statements, which is not as it appears from their plain meaning; for they are said according to the ways of nature, for it is the normal course of events that what has been separated will not be gathered again by itself, and what has been destroyed will not

87 "In the words" – ed. Neubauer reads "according to the words" (*ke-divré*), and we have followed this in our Hebrew text; but it is likely to be a typographical or scribal error for "in the words" (*be-divré*).

88 Literally, "every man with his own standard, according to the ensigns," using the language of Numbers 2:2.

לֹא יִהְיֶה עֶזֶר וְהִכָּנָה בְּדֶרֶךְ נֶס מִהֲפֹעֵל הָאֲמִתִּי, עַל־תְּהַעֲלוֹת, שֶׁהוּא הַבּוֹרָא יִתְבָּרַר, וְיִתְבָּרַר שְׁמוֹ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. וְיֵשׁ אֲפֹן לְהֶאֱמִין זֶה הָעֶקֶר מִדֶּרֶךְ הַשֶּׁכֶּל, כִּי אִם לֹא קֶצֶרָה יָד ה' לְבִרּוֹא הַנִּבְרָאִים מֵאִין לִישׁ בְּתַחֲלֵת הַבְּרִיאָה, עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה יָמִין ה' רוֹמְמָה לְהַשִּׁיב הַנִּשְׁמָה אֶל אֲשֶׁר יֵלֶךְ הָרוּחַ שְׁמָה.

בְּעֵינֵי תַחֲיִית הַמֵּתִים דִּקְדָּקוּ הַיֵּטֵב חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים, וְהִשְׁתַּדְּלוּ לְהַשְׁוֹת עֵינֵי שְׁכֻלָם עִם מֵאֲמָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה וְהַנְּבוּאָה, כְּדִי שִׁיֵּאִירוּ שְׁתֵּי הַנֵּרוֹת בְּיַחַד, נֵר הַתּוֹרָה וְנֵר הַדַּעַת. וְזֶה בְּרֹאֲתָם שְׁמִדְרָגוֹת בְּנֵי אָדָם בְּעֵינֵי הַשְׁגַּת שְׁלֵמוֹת הַגּוּף וּשְׁלֵמוֹת הַנֶּפֶשׁ הֵם עַל ד' אֲפָנִים, דְּהֵינּוּ: צְדִיק וְחָכָם, צְדִיק וְסָכָל, רָשָׁע וְחָכָם, רָשָׁע וְסָכָל. וְהֵנָּה הַב' מִדְרָגוֹת, שֶׁהֵן הָרֵאשׁוֹנָה וְהָאַחֲרוֹנָה, אֵין בָּהֶם חִיּוּב לְתַחֲיָה. הָרֵאשׁוֹנָה וּשְׁלֵמוֹתָהּ, כִּי כָּבֵד הִגִּיעַ לְתַכְלִית הַשְׁלֵמוֹת בְּמָה שֶׁאֶפְשָׁר בְּטִבֵּעַ הָאֲנוּשִׁי, כְּמִדְרָגַת מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ עָלָיו הַשְּׁלֹם, וְחֲנוּךְ, וְשֹׂאֵר הַקְּדוּשִׁים; וְהָאַחֲרוֹנָה לְחִסְרוֹנָה, שֶׁלֹא נִשְׂאָר בָּהּ שׁוֹם רָשָׁע יַחֲיִיב הַתַּחֲיָה, רוֹצֵה לֹמֵר, לֹא חָכְמָה וְלֹא מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים; עַל־כֵּן יֵלְכוּ לְאַבְדּוֹן עוֹלָם. וְאֵלוֹ הַמִּדְרָגוֹת עַל הַמַּעַט, אֶחָד מִנֵּי אֵלֶּף. אֲמֵנָּה רַב בְּנֵי אָדָם הֵם עַל שְׁנֵי

be rebuilt, and a thing will not act by itself if it has no miraculous help and preparation from the true Actor, the prime mover, who is the Creator, blessed be He and blessed be His Name from now to all eternity. There is a way to believe this principle through rational explanation, for if God was powerful⁸⁹ enough to create the created beings out of nothing at the beginning of creation, then how much more so is God able⁹⁰ to bring the soul back to the place where the spirit has gone.⁹¹

Concerning the resurrection of the dead, the Karaite sages made precise investigation, and put in great efforts to align their rational considerations with the statements of the Torah and the prophecies, so that both lights together may illuminate – the light of the Torah and the light of reason. They saw that there are four kinds of levels of people in terms of attainment of perfection of the mind and perfection of the soul: [1] the righteous person who is also wise, [2] the righteous person who is a fool, [3] the evil person who is wise, and [4] the evil person who is a fool. Now, for the first and the last level there is no need for resurrection. The person on the first level is already perfect,⁹² for this person has already attained the highest degree of perfection that human nature can achieve, like the level of Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace, and Enoch, and the other holy people. The person on the last level has such shortcomings that they have nothing left that requires resurrection, that is, no wisdom and no good deeds; therefore they will go to eternal destruction. But these

89 Literally, “the Lord’s hand is not too short,” using the language of Isaiah 59:1.

90 Literally, “is the Lord’s right hand lifted high,” using the language of Psalms 118:16.

91 Using the language of Ezekiel 1:12.

92 Hebrew syntax somewhat difficult, literally: “The first one, and its perfection.” This reading, *ha-rishona ushlemuthah*, is probably a typographical error for *ha-rishona lishlemuthah*; but we have kept the text as in ed. Neubauer.

הַמְדַּרְגּוֹת הָאֲמֻצָּעִיּוֹת, רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר, בְּעֲלֵי מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים וְעַם שֶׁלֹּא הִגִּיעוּ לְחֻכְמָה, וְאֵלּוּ עַל הָרֹב; וְהַמְדַּרְגָּה הַשְּׁנִיּוֹת, שֶׁהֵם מְלַמְּדִים בְּחֻכְמוֹת וְאֵינָם מְשַׁתְּדָּלִים בְּקִנְיָן מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים, וְהֵם עַל הַמַּעַט. וְאֵלּוּ הֵב' מְדַרְגּוֹת יַחֲיוּ בְּתַחֲתֵית הַמַּתִּים. וְרָאִיָּה לָזֶה מִדְּבַרֵי הַנְּבוּאָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: וְרַבִּים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֲדַמַּת עֶפְרַיִם יִקְיִצוּ וְגו' (דְּנִיאל יב:ב), שֶׁלֹּא אָמַר "וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל" אוֹ "וְקִצַּת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל", רַק וְרַבִּים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, {יט} שֶׁרָמַז עַל שְׁתֵּי הַמְדַּרְגּוֹת אֲמֻצָּעִיּוֹת: אֵלֶּה לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם - שֶׁהֵם בְּעֲלֵי מַעֲשִׂים, וְאֵף שֶׁלֹּא הִגִּיעוּ לְמְדִרְגַּת הַלְמוּד; וְאֵלֶּה לְחַרְפוֹת וְגו' - שֶׁהֵם מְלַמְּדִים בְּחֻכְמוֹת, וְלֹא הִשְׁתַּדְּלוּ בְּקִנְיָן מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים.

וְעִנִּין הַגִּלְגּוֹל, אֲשֶׁר הוֹדוּ בּוֹ הַפְּלִטוֹנִים וְרַב חֲכָמֵי הַקְּבָלָה, כְּבָר דָּחוּ חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים זֶה הָעִנִּין בְּשְׁתֵּי יָדַיִם בְּרָאִיוֹת עֲצוּמוֹת כְּאֲרִיּוֹת. וְעַמָּהֶם הַסֵּכִים גַּם הַחֲכָם רַבִּי יִצְחָק אַבְרָהָמֶיִל, מִחֲכָמֵי הָרַבָּנִים הַסְּפָרָדִים, בְּסֶפֶר מַעֲיָנֵי יִשׁוּעָה ע"ב.

levels are in the minority; only one out of a thousand people [is on the highest or lowest level]. Most people are on the two middle levels, that is to say, people with good deeds, who did not attain wisdom, are the majority; and the second level, those who are learned in wisdom and do not put in the effort to do good deeds, are the minority. These two levels will come back to life in the resurrection of the dead. Evidence for this is in the words of prophecy, as it is said: *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake* [. . .] (Daniel 12:2); it does not say that all of those that sleep, or a few of those that sleep, but rather that most of those that sleep [in the dust shall awake];^{19} this alludes to the two middle levels; [as the verse continues:] *some to everlasting life* – these are the people with good deeds, who did not attain the level of learning [wisdom]; *and some to reproaches* [. . .] – these are the ones learned in wisdom, who did not put in the effort to acquire good deeds.

And the theory of transmigration of the soul, to which the Platonists and most sages of Kabbalah subscribe, has been categorically rejected by the Karaite sages, with both hands, and with arguments as formidable as lions. The sage R. Isaac Abravanel, one of the Spanish Rabbanite sages, also agrees with this [rejection] in his book *Ma'ayané Ha-yeshu'a*.⁹³

93 *Wellsprings of Rescue*, a commentary on the Book of Daniel. The reference in Neubauer reads ע"ב, either "side 2" or "72"; but something seems to be missing, for "side 2" would need a reference also to folio number, and "72" cannot refer to a chapter, for there are not 72 chapters in the book; it could refer to a folio number, but we would need to know the specific edition in order for this number to be meaningful. In any event, the reference is evidently to Wellspring 6, Palm 5, s.v. והרביעית, commenting on the story of Nebuchadnezzar's experience living among the wild animals in Daniel 4:21–25; Abravanel there rejects the idea that humans can be reincarnated into animals. However, in Abravanel's commentary on Deuteronomy 25:5–10, he enthusiastically advocates the idea that humans are reincarnated into other humans.

בְּעֵינֵי מִצּוֹת צִיצִית וּתְנַאי הַמַּלְבוּשִׁים

הִנֵּה כָּתוּב בְּסוֹף פָּרָשַׁת שְׁלַח לָךְ: וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל בְּנֵי־
בְּגָדֵיהֶם (במדבר טו:לח). חֲכָמֵינוּ הִקְרָאִים פֶּרֶשׁוֹ מִלַּת צִיצִית עֵינֵי
רְאִיָּה וְהִבְטָה, כְּעֵינֵי מִצִּיץ מִן הַחֲרָכִים (שִׁיר־הַשִּׁירִים ב:ט); וְהִטָּעַם,
לַעֲשׂוֹת סִימָן בַּבֶּגֶד כְּדִי שִׁיזְכוֹר בְּרֵאִיתוֹ אֶת מִצְוֹת ה', וְלֹא
יִחָטֵא בַּמָּשָׂאוֹ וּבַמִּתְנֵנוֹ וּבְכָל שְׂמוּשָׁיו. וְזֶה הַמִּנְהָג הָיָה בְּזִמְנֵן
הַמַּלְכוּת בְּאֶרֶץ הַקְדוּשָׁה, אֲמָנָם עָתָה בְּהִיוֹתָנוּ בַּגְלוּת מְפֹזְרִים
בְּכָל פָּאָה, תִּקְנֵנוּ הַחֲכָמִים וַעֲשׂוּ גֵדֵר שֶׁלֹּא תִתְבַּטֵּל הַמִּצְוָה
לְגַמְרִי: לְלַבּוֹשׁ אַרְבַּע כְּנָפוֹת אוֹ טָלִית עֲשׂוּי בְּצִיצִית בְּשַׁעַת
הַתְּפִלָּה, וְכֵן בְּשַׁעַת קִיּוּם הַמִּצְוָה, כְּגוֹן הַמִּילָה. וּמִן הַהֶעָתֶקָה
יִדְעֵנוּ שֶׁזֹּאת הַמִּצְוָה חוֹבָה לְזָכָרִים וְלֹא לְנָקְבוֹת, וְהִיא מִצְוָה

Chapter 17

Regarding the Commandment of *Zizith* (Fringes) and the Conditions of Dressing

At the end of *Parashath Shelah Lekha* it is written: *bid them that they make them throughout their generations fringes [zizith] in the corners of their garments* [Numbers 15:38]. Our sages interpreted the word *zizith* as [being associated with] the concept of seeing and looking, as [we find a related word in a verse,] *he peereth [meziz] through the lattice* [Song of Songs 2:9]. The meaning [of the verse on *zizith*] is to make a sign on one's garment, so that when one sees it, one will remember the commandments of God, and not sin in one's business dealings or other activities. This was the custom during the time of the Monarchy, in the Holy Land; but today, when we are dispersed to all corners of the exile, the sages have established a fence, so that this commandment not fall into complete disuse, that we should wear a four-cornered garment or *ṭalleth*, with *zizith*, during the times of prayer, and when fulfilling a commandment, such as circumcision. From tradition, we know that this commandment is for men, and not for women;⁹⁴ and that this commandment is to be fulfilled during the day, and

94 Many early Karaite sages, held that women were indeed obligated to wear *ziziyioth*. This was the position of Ḥakham Ya'aqov Qirqisani (tenth century), Ḥakham Levi ben Yefeth (eleventh century), and Ḥakham Judah Hadassi (twelfth century). In contrast, both Ḥakham Aaron ben Elijah (fourteenth century) and Ḥakham Elijah Bašyachi (late fifteenth century) write that the commandment is limited to men. See *Royal Attire*, pp. 187–189, n. xxx.

נוֹהֶגֶת בַּיּוֹם וְלֹא בַלַּיְלָה; עַל־כֵּן בָּעֵת תַּפְלֹת עֲרֵבִית לֹא נִהְגוּ
לְלָבוֹשׁ צִיצִית. וְהַצִּיצִיּוֹת שֶׁבָּעָה בַּמִּסְפָּר, כְּנֶגֶד יְמֵי בְּרֵאשִׁית;
וְהַשָּׂשָׁה לְבָנִים, כְּנֶגֶד יְמֵי הַחֹל, וְאַחַד תְּכֵלֶת, כְּנֶגֶד יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת,
כְּדַמוֹת הָרָקִיעַ. וְרָמַז לְדָבָר: בְּכָל עֵת יִהְיוּ בְּגָדֶיךָ לְבָנִים (קהלת ט:ו).
הָרַבָּנִים נִתְּנוּ בַּצִּיצִית סְכּוּם אַחֵר, מִמֶּה שֶׁבָּדָה שְׂמֵעוֹן בֶּן שָׁטֹחַ,
וְאֵינָם נוֹהֲגִים פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת - וְלֹא הוֹדוּ לָהֶם חֻכְמִינוּ.

וַיֵּשׁ עוֹד מְנַהֵג לְרַבָּנִים, כִּי בַשָּׁעַת הַתַּפְלָה שָׁמַיִם בְּרֹאשָׁם
קָשֶׁר אַרְבַּע פָּרָשִׁיּוֹת, וְעַל יְדֵיהֶם כְּמוֹ כֵּן קוֹשְׁרִים אוֹתוֹת, מִמֶּה
שֶׁכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה: וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ (דְּבָרִים
ו:ו). וְאוֹמְרִים שֶׁהַקְּבֵלָה לַמָּדָה לָהֶם זֶה הָאָפֶן. אֲמַנָם חֻכְמֵי
הַקְּרָאִים סָתְרוּ לְאַלֶּה הַסִּבְרוֹת, וּפִרְשׁוּ הָעֵנִין הַנֶּאֱמָר לְמַעַלָּה
עַל דֶּרֶךְ מָשָׁל וּמְלִיצָה, כִּי אָמְרוּ עַל מֵאֲמָר וּקְשַׁרְתֶּם לְאוֹת עַל
יָדְךָ הָרָצוֹן בּוֹ עַל עֲשֻׁרֵת הַדְּבָרִים, וְעֵשֶׂר אֲצַבְּעוֹת בִּידֵי הָאָדָם,
שֶׁחַיֵּב לְשִׁקּוֹד וּלְהַתְמִיד עַל זְכוֹרֹן הַדְּבָרִים תְּמִיד, כָּאֱלוֹ הֵם
קְשׁוּרִים עַל יָדָיו, וְכֵן טֹטְפֹת הָרָמַז בּוֹ עַל כָּל הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁתִּהְיֶה
תְּמִיד עַל לְבֹ, כָּאֱלוֹ הִיא מְנַחֶת בֵּין עֵינָיו. וְאֵלוֹ שְׁנֵי הַמֵּאֲמָרִים,
גַּם מֵאֲמָר שְׁלִישִׁי וּכְתֻבָּתָם עַל מְזֻזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ (דְּבָרִים ו:ט), כָּלֶם הֵם

not at night.⁹⁵ Therefore, we are not accustomed to wear *zizith* during the evening prayer. The *ziziyyoth*⁹⁶ are seven in number,⁹⁷ to symbolize the seven days of creation. Six of them are white, corresponding to the weekdays; and one is blue, the color of the firmament, corresponding to the Sabbath. There is a hint to this in [the verse]: *Let thy garments be always white* [Ecclesiastes 9:8]. The Rabbanites have a different number, following what Simeon ben Shataḥ fabricated; and do they not use a strand of blue – but our sages do not agree with them.

The Rabbanites also have another custom: during prayer, they place on their heads a knot with four passages [from the Torah]; and they also tie signs onto their arms, [basing themselves] on what is written in the Torah: *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes* (Deuteronomy 6:8). They say that the Oral Law has taught them this way, but the Karaite sages reject these understandings, and explain the matter mentioned [in the verse] as proverbial and metaphorical; they said that the words *bind them for a sign upon your hand* refer to the Ten Commandments, and the ten fingers of the human hand, for one must diligently and persistently remember these matters constantly, as if they were bound to one's hands. The same is true of the *frontlets*, which are a reference to the whole Torah, which should always be in one's heart, as if it were placed between one's eyes. These two statements, as well as a third – *And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy*

95 Ḥakham Judah Hadassi (twelfth century) writes that fringes should be worn both day and night. See *Eshkol Ha-kofer*, alphabet #241, letter gimmel (ed. Eupatoria 1836, folio 92 column b). In contrast, Ḥakham Elijah Bašyachi (fifteenth century) writes that one is only obligated to wear *ziziyyoth* during the day. See *Addereth Eliyahu*, *Tnyan Tefila*, Ch. 7 (ed. Eupatoria 1835, folio 60 column b).

96 Plural of *zizith*.

97 That is, seven strands in the fringe on each of the four corners of the garment.

בְּדֶרֶךְ מִשָּׁל עַל הַהִתְמַד וְהַשְׁקִידָה בָּהֶם, כְּמֵאֲמַר שְׁלֹמֹה הַמֶּלֶךְ
עָלָיו הַשָּׁלוֹם: כְּתִיב עַל לֵוִי לִבְךָ (משלי א:ג) עֲנִידָם עַל גְּרוֹרוּתֶיךָ וְגו'
(משלי ו:כא), {כ} שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה תִּמְיֵד תִּהְיֶה בְּזִכְרוֹנוֹ בְּכָל שְׁמוֹשָׁיו
וּבְכָל תְּנוּעוֹתָיו, עַל־דֶּרֶךְ מֵאֲמַר הַנֶּחֱכָם: בְּכָל דְּרָכֶיךָ דַּעְהוּ וְהוּא
יִישַׁר אֲרוֹחֶיךָ (משלי ו:ג).

וְרֵאִיתִי לְהַכְלִיל בְּזֶה הַפָּרָק אֲסוּר לְבִישֵׁת שַׁעֲטָנִז, וְהַטָּעַם
בּוֹ מִלְבוּשׁ הַנַּעֲשָׂה מִשְׁנֵי מִינִים, רוּצָה לֹאֲמַר צֶמֶר וּפְשָׁתִים יִחָדּוּ
(דברים כב:יא). וְעַל־כֵּן אֵין תּוֹפְרִים בְּגָדֵי צֶמֶר בְּחוּטֵי פְשָׁתִים,
וְאֵין אוֹרָגִים שְׁנֵי הַמִּינִים בְּיַחַד, וְלֹא כוֹפְלִים שְׁנֵי הַמִּינִים
בְּמִלְבוּשׁ אֶחָד, מִמֶּה שֶׁכָּתוּב בַּפָּרָשָׁה כִּי תֵצֵא. וְכֵן אֲסוּר לְגַבֵּר
לְלָבוֹשׁ שְׁמֵלֶת אִשָּׁה, וְלֹא לְאִשָּׁה לְנָשׂוֹא כְּלֵי גֶבֶר, כְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא
לְהִתְנַהֵג בְּמַעֲשֵׂה רָע וּבִזְמָה. וְכֵן אֲסוּר לְהַקִּיף פָּאת הָרֹאשׁ,
וְלֹא לְגַלֵּחַ פָּאת הַזָּקֵן, כְּדֶרֶךְ מֶה שֶׁעוֹשִׂים הָאֻמוֹת. אֲבָל לְתַקֵּן
שְׁעַר הָרֹאשׁ וּפְאוֹת הַזָּקֵן בְּמַסְפְּרֵיהֶם מִסְבִּיב, אוֹ בְּתַעַר, רַק
שֶׁלֹּא יִשְׁחָתוּ הַפְּאוֹת - הַדָּבָר עוֹבֵר, כִּי זֶה הַמִּנְהָג כְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא
יִכָּבֵד רֹב הַשְּׁעָר וּגְדָלוֹ עַל הָאָדָם. מִנְהָג הַמִּלְבוּשִׁים יִכָּשֵׁר לְפִי
מִנְהָג כָּל מְקוֹם וּמִדִּינָה, רַק שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה מַעֲשֵׂה שַׁעֲטָנִז. וְכֵן
בְּבַחֲיִנַת הַיּוֹתֵנוּ בְּגָלוֹת, לֹא יִכָּשֵׁר לְלָבוֹשׁ מִלְבוּשִׁים בְּהִירִים,
רַק שִׁיְהִיו קְרוֹבוֹים אֶל צַבֵּעַ הַשְּׁחֵרוֹת, כְּדֶרֶךְ הָאֲבֵלִים אֲבִלוֹת
צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם, תִּבְנֶה וְתִכּוֹנֶנּוּ בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּמַהֲרָה.

house (Deuteronomy 6:9) – are all meant as a metaphor for the diligence and persistence [that one must have] in [remembering and observing the Torah], just as King Solomon, may he rest in peace, said: *Write them upon the tablet of thy heart* (Proverbs 3:3), [and] *bind them about thy neck* (Proverbs 6:21). This means ^{20} that the Torah should always be on a person's mind, in all one's activities and movements, as it is said: *In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths* (Proverbs 3:6).

I have decided to include in this chapter the prohibition to wear *sha'atnez*, meaning a garment that is made of two species, that is, *wool and linen together* (Deuteronomy 22:11). For this reason, we may not sew woolen garments with linen threads, and we may not weave the two species together, and we may not fold the two species into one garment, [all in accordance with the prohibition that] is written in *Parashath Ki Thezé*. It is also forbidden for a man to wear women's clothing, and for a woman to put on men's gear, in order not to engage in bad, lecherous activity. It is also forbidden to round off the side-growth of the head, and to shave the side-growth of the beard, in the way that the nations do. But it is permitted to trim the hair on the head and the corners of the beard with scissors around the side, or with a razor, as long as they are not damaged; for this is acceptable, and this is the custom, so that the person's hair will not become too heavy and massive. [Any] custom of dressing is acceptable, in accordance with the custom of each place and region, as long as it not be made of *sha'atnez*. Moreover, because of the aspect of our being in Exile, it is not fitting to wear bright-colored clothes; rather, they should be close to the color black, as is the custom of the Mourners of Zion and Jerusalem,⁹⁸ may it be rebuilt and established speedily in our days.

98 A Karaite group from the ninth to eleventh centuries, who emphasized mourning for Jerusalem.

בְּעֵינֵי טִמְאָה וְטִהָרָה

בהיות שֶׁבַחַר הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ לְאַמֵּת יִשְׂרָאֵל עִם קְרוֹבוֹ, עַל-כֵּן
נָתַן לָהֶם חֻקִּים וּגְדֵרִים לְהִתְנַהֵג בְּקִדְשָׁה, וּלְהִזָּהֵר מִן הַטִּמְאוֹת,
כִּי הַשְׂכִּינָה מְתַהַלֶּכֶת בֵּינֵיהֶם, כְּעֵינֵן שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּמִתֵּן תּוֹרָה:
וְהִתְקַדְּשְׁתֶּם וְהִיִּיתֶם לִי קְדוּשִׁים (הַכְּלָאָה בֵּין וִיקְרָא כ"ז וְכ"ח); וְכֵן: כִּי ה'
אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֶיךָ (דְּבָרִים כ"ט); וּבְפֶרֶשֶׁת אַחֲרֵי מוֹת: אֵל
תִּטְמָאוּ בְּכָל אֱלֹה וְגו' (וִיקְרָא יח:כד). וְהִנֵּה אֶפְנֵי הַטִּמְאוֹת בְּפָנִים
שׁוֹנִים. טִמְאַת הָאָדָם פְּנִימִית וְחִיצוֹנָה. הַפְּנִימִית הִיא מֵצַד
עֲצָמוֹ, כְּגוֹן הַזֵּב וְהַמְצָרַע וְשִׁכְבַּת זָרַע, לִזְכֹּר וּלְנִקְבָּה. מִנְּהַג
טִמְאַת הַמְצָרַע שֶׁבָּעָה יָמִים. וּבְטִמְאַת הַזֵּב, מֵעֵת שֶׁפָּסַק
הַזִּיבוֹת יִסְפּוֹר ז' יָמִים נְקִים, וְיִטְהַר בְּעֶרְב, וְגַם יִכָּבֵס בְּגָדָיו.
וְטִמְאַת שִׁכְבַּת זָרַע טִמְאַת יוֹם לְבַד, וְהַנוֹגֵעַ בְּטִמְאִים טָעוֹן
כְּבוֹס בְּגָדִים וְטִמְאַת יוֹם לְבַד.

וַיֵּשׁ לְנִקְבָּה טִמְאָה אַחֲרֵת מֵצַד עֲצָמָה, וְהִיא טִמְאַת הַנְּדוּת.

Chapter 18

Regarding Matters of Impurity and Purity

Since God, blessed be He, chose the people of Israel, the nation that is close to Him, He gave them laws and fences, to behave in holiness and keep away from impurity, because the Divine Presence [*shekhina*] travels among them, as it is said [regarding the time of] the Giving of the Torah: *Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy unto Me*;⁹⁹ and similarly: *For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp* (Deuteronomy 23:15) and, in *Parashath Aḥaré Moth*: *Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things* [. . .] (Leviticus 18:24). Now there are different kinds of impurity. The impurity of a person can come from the inside or from the outside. The impurity from the inside comes from [the person] themselves, such as a *zav* [one who has had a genital secretion], or a leper [suffering from the mysterious *zara'ath* affliction], or the impurity of a seminal emission, for a man [who has experienced the emission] or a woman [into whose body the semen has entered]. The impurity of *zara'ath* lasts seven days. The impurity of the *zav* is [such that] from the time that the discharge ceases, the must person count seven clean days, and then be pure in the evening [following the seventh day]; and [the *zav*] must also wash his clothes. The impurity of a seminal emission lasts only one day. A person who touches someone impure needs to wash their clothes, and has an impurity that lasts for only one day.

A female has another kind of impurity from herself, namely

99 Our author appears to have merged two verses: *Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy* (Leviticus 20:7), and *And ye shall be holy unto Me* (ibid., verse 26). When our author says “at the Giving of the Torah,” he is presumably referring to a verse such as Exodus 19:10: *Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow*.

וּבְזֶה יֵשׁ חִלְקָה בֵּינֵינוּ וּבֵין הָרַבָּנִים, כִּי הָרַבָּנִים יִסְפְּרוּ לַנֶּדֶה ז' יָמִים נָקִים מֵעַת הַפֶּסֶק הַדֵּם; אָבֵל חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים בָּאָרוּ לְפִי הַכְּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה, וְחִיבוּ לֵהִיּוֹת בְּטָמְאָת הַנֶּדֶה מֵעַת הָרְאוֹת הַדֵּם הָרְאוּנוּ ז' יָמִים. וְאֶפְלוּ אִם יֵרָאֶה בְּכָל הַשְּׁבָעָה, אִין חֲשַׁשׁ, כִּי זֶה הַדָּבָר נוֹהֵג לְפִי הַטָּבַע; וְאִם אַחֵר טַהֲרָתָהּ בַּשְּׁבִיעִי יֵרָאֶה הַדֵּם בַּשְּׁמִינִי, אִזִּי נִקְרָאת זָבָה, וְצָרִיף לְהַפִּיל הַיָּמִים כָּל עוֹד שִׁירָאֶה הַדֵּם, וּמֵעַת הַהֶפֶסֶק תִּסְפּוֹר ז' יָמִים נָקִים, וְתִטְהַר בְּעָרֵב. אָבֵל אִם לֹא יֵרָאֶה הַדֵּם בְּכָל חֻלְקֵי יוֹם ^(כא) הַשְּׁמִינִי, וְיֵרָאֶה בַּתְּשִׁיעִי אוֹ אַחֵר כֵּן, אִזִּי הִיא צְרִיכָה לְהַתְנַהֵג כְּמִנְהַג הַנֶּדֶה. וְגַם בָּזֶה הַדְּרוּשׁ הַחֲלִיפּוֹ הָרַבָּנִים דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה, כִּי אֵינָם נוֹהֲגִים טָמְאָת הַנֶּדֶה כְּרָאוּי וּכְפִי דִין הַתּוֹרָה, רַק כְּפִי רְצוֹנָם קִבְּעוּ חֲקִים לְבַד, לְפָרוֹשׁ הָאִשָּׁה מִבַּעֲלָהּ בְּעַת נִדְתָּהּ, וּמִלְבַּד זֶה מִשְׁתַּמְשׁוֹת בַּבֵּית כְּטַהוּרוֹת, וְגַם אוֹכְלוֹת בְּשִׁלְחוֹן אֶחָד, וְזֶה הַפֶּן הַכּוֹנֶנָה הָאֱלֹהִית. וּלְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים חִיבַת הָאִשָּׁה לְהִזָּהֵר בְּטָמְאָה עַל צַד הַיּוֹתֵר טוֹב, דִּהְיִינוּ שְׁלֹא תִגַּע לְשׁוּם דָּבָר טָהוֹר, לֹא לְכָלִּים וְלֹא לַמָּטָה, וְשִׁיּהִיוּ לָהּ כָּלִים מִיַּחַדִּים לְהִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בִּימֵי נִדְתָּהּ לְמֵאֵכֶל וּלְמִשְׁתָּהּ וּלְשִׁאֵר שְׁמוּשֵׁיהָ. וְאִם תִּגַּע לְדָבָר טָהוֹר מִקְבֵּל טָמְאָה, אִזִּי צָרִיף לְטַהֵר הַדָּבָר הַמְטָמָא לְפִי טָבַע חֲמָרוֹ, כְּאֲשֶׁר יִתְבָּאֵר אַחֵר כֵּן. וְכִמוֹ כֵּן מִנְהַג הַיּוֹלָדֶת

menstrual impurity [*nidda*]. In this matter there is a difference of opinion between us and the Rabbanites. For the Rabbanites count seven clean days for the menstruant from the time when the blood stops flowing; but the Karaite sages explain [the matter] as it is written in the Torah, requiring [her] to be in menstrual impurity for seven days from the moment when she sees the first blood. Even if she sees blood during all seven days, there is no concern, for this follows the way of nature; but if, after she becomes pure [at the end of] the seventh day, she sees blood on the eighth day, then she is called a *zava*, and she must disregard days [from the count toward purity] as long as she sees blood, and [only] when [the blood flow] ends, she must count seven clean days, and she will be clean in the evening [at the end of the seventh clean day]. On the other hand, if she does not see any blood throughout ^{21} the eighth day, but she sees on the ninth day or later, then she must treat herself as a menstruant. In this requirement, too, the Rabbanites changed Torah's words, for they do not observe the impurity of a menstruant as required by the laws of the Torah, but rather according to their own wishes they made laws only to separate the woman from her husband during the time of her menstruation – but apart from this, the [Rabbanite] women use the house as if they were pure, and also eat at the same table [as pure people], which is the opposite of the divine intention. According to the opinion of the Karaite sages, the woman must be careful about impurity, in the best way; that is, she should not touch anything pure, neither implements nor the bed, but she should have her own implements for eating and drinking, and for all other uses, during the time of her menstrual impurity. If she touches a pure object, it contracts impurity, and then it is necessary to purify the defiled item in accordance with the nature of its material, as will be explained later. A woman after childbirth follows the same rules as a menstruant, for forty

כַּמְנַהֵג הַנִּדָּה, לִזְכֹּר אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְלִנְקָבָה כָּפֶל, שְׁמוֹנִים יוֹם.
הַטְּמָאָה הַחִיצוֹנִית הִיא טְמֵאָת מֵת מִן הָאָדָם, וּמִטְמֵא בְּמַגֵּעַ
וּבִאֲהִילָה שְׁבַעַת יָמִים, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּפָרָשַׁת חֻקַּת הַתּוֹרָה:
אָדָם כִּי יָמוּת בְּאֵהָל וְגו' (במדבר יט:יד). וְכֵן הַנוֹגֵעַ בְּטְמֵאוֹת הַנִּ"ל,
כְּגוֹן בְּנִדָּה, בִּיּוֹלָדָת, בְּזָב וְזָבָה, וּבְמִשְׁכָּבָם, טְעוֹן כְּבוֹס בְּגָדִים
וְטְמֵאָת יוֹם. וּבָאֵם יִקְרָה שְׁיִמּוֹת הַמֵּת בְּפֶתַע בְּבִית, וְלֹא יִרְגִישׁ
בְּעָלָיו לְהוֹצִיא הַמִּטְלָטֶלִין שֶׁלֹּא יִטְמָאוּ, אֲזִי בְּמֵאֲרָע כָּזֶה
צָרִיד לְטַהֵר הַדְּבָרִים הַמִּטְמָאִים, לְפִי מִינָם - אִם מִמַּתְּכוֹת,
אִם צִמְחִים, אִם כָּלִי דוֹמָם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה: הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר
יָבֹא בָאֵשׁ תַּעֲבִירוּ בָאֵשׁ (במדבר לא:כג), וְאֲשֶׁר יָבֹא בַּמַּיִם תַּעֲבִירוּ
בַּמַּיִם, וְטָהַר. וְזֶמֶן הַטְּהָרָה עִם עֲרֵבַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בָּעֶרֶב. וּבְזוֹלַת זֶה
הָאָפֶן, לֹא יֵצְאוּ לִידֵי טְהָרָה. וְגַם זֶה בְּתַנָּאִי אִם יֵהִיו הַמִּטְלָטֶלִין
דְּבָרִים נֶעְתָּקִים מִמָּקוֹם לְמָקוֹם; אֲבָל אִם הֵם דְּבָרִים קִיָּמִים,
כְּגוֹן הַבֵּית, וְחֻלְקֵי הַקְּבוּעִים וּמִסְמָרִים בְּמִסְמָרִים בַּל יִמוּט,
וְכֵן הַכִּדִּים וְהַתְּעָלוֹת הַחִפּוּרוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ בְּלָתִי מִתְנוֹעָעוֹת - אֲזִי
לֹא יִקְבְּלוּ טְמָאָה; וְאִף אִם יִקְרָה הַמְּקָרָה הַנִּ"ל לֹא יִטְמָאוּ. וְכֵן
הַפְּרִדָּסִים וְהַצִּמְחִים וְהַפְּרוֹת, בְּהִיּוֹתָם עַל הָאֵילָנוֹת בְּלָתִי
תְּלוּשִׁים, וְהַמַּיִם הַנוֹבְעִים בְּנְהָרוֹת וּמַעְיָנוֹת וּבְבוֹרוֹת; וּבְכָלֵל,

days for a male [child], and for twice as many, that is eighty days, for a female [child].

Outside impurity [includes] the impurity from a corpse, which contaminates a person impure for seven days, whether by touching or by being in the same tent, as it is written in *Parashath Hūqqath Ha-tora: When a man dieth in a tent* [. . .] (Numbers 19:14). Also, someone who touches any of the above-mentioned impure persons – such as a menstruant, a woman after childbirth, a *zav*, or a *zava* – or their bedding, needs to wash their clothes, and will be impure for a day. If a person dies suddenly in a house, and the owner of the house does not notice it in time to remove the movable objects so that they not become impure, then one must purify the objects that have become contaminated, in accordance with their kind, whether they are of metal, plant material or inanimate¹⁰⁰ material, as it is written in the Torah: *every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make to go through the fire* (Numbers 31:23), and anything that can abide the water, make to go through water, and they will be pure. The time when the article becomes pure is sunset in the evening. There is no other way that [these objects] can become pure. This is the case for objects that are moveable, which can be brought from place to place. On the other hand, if the objects are not movable, such as a house and its fixed parts, and parts attached with nails so that they do not fall, and also jugs¹⁰¹ and ditches that are dug in the ground, such that they are not movable, then they do not contract impurity; even if the above-mentioned incident [death of a person] occurs, they do not become impure. The same is true for orchards, plants,

100 Hebrew *domem*, literally “silent, dumb.” This word is often used in medieval and modern Hebrew to refer to inanimate substances such as rocks; however, here it might mean specifically items that will not react to fire by burning or shriveling up.

101 The author is evidently referring to some type of jug that is welded into the ground; it is unclear exactly what this is.

כָּל דְּבַר הַבִּלְתִּי נֶעֱתַק מִמְּקוֹמוֹ לֹא יִטְמָא, מִמָּאֲמַר בְּמִים יוֹבָא
(ויקרא יא:לב).

וְכֵן בְּנִפּוּל שְׁרָץ וְאִיזָה נִבְלָה מִהַבְּעֵלִי־חַיִּים הַמְטַמְּאִים,
כְּאֲשֶׁר מִבְּאֵר בְּפִרְשֵׁת שְׁמִינִי, עַל הַדְּבָרִים הַמְקַבְּלִים טְמָאָה,
כְּגוֹן אֲכָלִין וּמִשְׁקִין וְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא בְּשֵׁם "כְּלִי", מֵעַץ אוֹ מֵעוֹר
אוֹ מִלְּבוּשִׁים וּמִצְעוֹת, וְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בּוֹ הָאָדָם - אֲזִי
אֲנַחֲנוּ הַקְּרָאִים נוֹהֲגִים בָּהֶם טְמָאָה, וְנִשְׁמָרִים בָּהֶם מְאֹד.
אֲבָל הַרְבֵּנִים מְקַלִּים מְאֹד בְּאֵלוֹ הָעֲנִינִים, וּבְנִפּוּל שְׁרָץ טְמָא
בְּמִאֲכָלִים וּמִשְׁקִין, <מִשְׁעָרִים אִם יֵשׁ בּוֹ נ"ט חֲלָקִים כְּשֶׁר
וְחֲלָק שְׁשִׁים טְמָא, אֲזִי מִתִּירִים הַמִּשְׁקָה אוֹ הַמֵּאֲכָל הַהִיא>;
וְאוֹמְרִים בְּקַבְּלָתָם כִּי הַטְּמָאָה בְּטִלָּה בְּשִׁשִּׁים. ^{כב} <וּלְפִי זֶה,
אִם יִבְשְׁלוּ נ"ט גְּדִים וְחִזִּיר אֶחָד קָטָן בְּסִיר, הַכֹּל כְּשֶׁר.>*
וְזֶה מֶרֶד גָּדוֹל בַּתּוֹרָה. הַתְּבוּאוֹת בִּהְיוֹתָם יִבְשִׁים לֹא יִקַּבְּלוּ
טְמָאָת אֶהֱיָה בְּמַת; רַק אִם יִהְיוּ טְחוּנִים, אוֹ קְלוּיִם בְּאֵשׁ, אוֹ
נְשְׂרוּיִם בְּמִים, אֲזִי הֵם נְטֻמָּאִים. כִּי לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ, חֲמִשָּׁה
דְּבָרִים הֵם מְכַשְׂרֵי טְמָאָה, וְרֵאשֵׁי תִיבוֹתָם מִמִּטְמָ"א, רוֹצָה
לֹאמֹר: מִים, מֶלַח, טְחִינָה, מֵאֲכָלָת, אֵשׁ; וְהֵם עֲצָמָם הַמְּסַבְּבִים
גַּם לְקַבֵּל הַטְּמָאָה, כִּי הַדְּבָרִים הַשְּׁחוּטִים וְהַמְּלוּחִים כְּמוֹ כֵּן

* הַמְּלוּת בַּתּוֹרָה חֲצָאֵי עֲגָלָה נִמְצְאִים עַל הַגְּלִיזוֹן. וּבִפְנֵי: "שׁוֹפְכִין מֵהֶם שְׁשִׁים
חֲלָקִים, וְהִשָּׂאָר מִתִּירִים."

unpicked fruit that is still on the tree, and water that flows in the river or is in springs or pits. In general, anything that cannot be detached from its place does not become impure, for it is said: *it must be put in water* (Leviticus 11:32).¹⁰²

If any vermin or carcass of a contaminating animal, as explained in *Parashath Shemini* [Leviticus 11:29 ff.], falls on objects that can contract impurity, such as foods; drinks; anything called an implement, whether of wood or of hide; clothes; blankets; or anything that people use – then, we, the Karaites, treat them as impure, and take great care. On the other hand, the Rabbanites are very lenient in these matters: if impure vermin falls into food or a beverage, <they estimate if there are fifty-nine kosher parts, and the sixtieth part impure, and [if so], they permit that food or beverage>;¹⁰³ they say in their Oral Torah that the impurity is nullified in sixty parts. ^{22} <According to this, if 59 young goats and one little pig are cooked in one pot, everything is kosher.>¹⁰⁴ This is a great rebellion against the Torah. Dry grains do not contract impurity from a person dying in the tent; but if they are ground up, or roasted over fire, or soaked in water, then they become impure. For according to the opinion of our sages, five things render items susceptible to contract impurity, for which the acronym is MMTM? – water [*mayim*], salt [*melah*], grinding [*teḥina*], knife [*ma'akheleth*], *esh* [fire]; they themselves also bring about impurity,¹⁰⁵ for slaughtered and salted items also contract

102 The argument is apparently that because anything immovable cannot be “put in water,” therefore it does not contract impurity.

103 Neubauer indicates these words in brackets; presumably, as in the next bracketed clause, they appeared in his manuscript in the margin.

104 Neubauer writes that these words appear in his manuscript in the margin, to replace the following words, which are found in the inside of the text: “They pour out sixty portions, and permit the rest.”

105 It is unclear how these items bring about impurity, beyond the fact that they render food susceptible to contracting impurity from contaminating causes.

אַפְרִיזוֹן עֲשֶׂה לּוֹ ❖ פָּרָק י"ח

יִקְבְּלוּ הַטְּמֵאָה. יֵשׁ מֵהֶם שֶׁלֹּא יֵצְאוּ לְעוֹלָם לְיַד טְהוֹרָה, וַיֵּשׁ
מֵהֶם שְׂיוֹצְאִים, כְּאֲשֶׁר נִתְבָּאֵר לְמַעַלָּה.

impurity. Some of them can never leave [their impurity] for a state of purity, but others can, as has been explained above.

בענין השחיטה

זה הענין יסודתו מזמן נח הצדיק, עליו השלום, ממה שנאמר: **אך בשר בנפשו דמו לא תאכלו** (בראשית ט:ד). והטעם בו שלא לכוות אבר מן החי בעוד נפשו בו, כאשר היו נוהגים בזמן ההוא, וזה היה אכזריות גדולה, וגם מאכל גס, עד שהזהרו ממנו נח ובניו והדורות הבאים אחריהם, עד זמן משה רבנו, עליו השלום, ועל ידו באה המצוה שנית, כמו שכתוב בפרשת ראה: **וזבחתי מבקרך ומצאנך אשר נתן ה' לך כאשר צויתך** (דברים יב:כא). ואם נעין בזה הענין בדרך ההקש השכלי, ממה שנאסר לנח אכילת החי בעוד נפשו בו, ועל ידי משה רבנו, עליו השלום, באה אזהרת אכילת המת מיתת עצמו או המת זולת ענין השחיטה, כמו שכתוב בפרשת אחרי מות: **וכל נפש אשר תאכל נבלה וטרפה וגו'** (ויקרא יז:יו), וכן בפרשת ראה **לא תאכלו כל נבלה וגו'** (דברים יד:כא) – אם כן יצאה לנו תולדה, שאכילת החי צריך שיהיה באופן אחר, חוץ משניהם, והוא ענין השחיטה בצואר, כאשר נודעה לאמת ישראל בהעתקה המשתלשלת דור אחר דור. ועל-כל-פנים יש לה ראייה מן התורה ברמז, ממאמר וּשְׁפַךְ אֶת דָּמוֹ (ויקרא יז:א), כמו שכתוב בפרשת אחרי מות, כי לא יתכן יציאת הדם מכלל הגוף רק על-דרך כריתת הד' גידים אשר

Chapter 19

Regarding *Sheḥita* (Kosher Slaughter)

The foundation for this matter comes from the time of Noah the Righteous, may he rest in peace, as it is said: *Only flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat* (Genesis 9:4). This means not to cut a limb from an animal that is still alive, as they used to do at that time, which was [an act of] great cruelty and also a coarse way of eating, to the extent that Noah, his sons, and the generations coming after them were adjured to keep away from it; [this was the situation] until the time of Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace, through whom there came a second commandment, as it is written in *Parashath Re'ê: then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the Lord hath given thee, as I have commanded thee* (Deuteronomy 12:21). If we examine the issue by means of logical Analogy [*heqqesh*], [we see that] it was forbidden to Noah to eat animals that were still alive, and from Moses our Teacher, may he rest in peace, we were adjured not to eat animals that died by themselves or animals that died without slaughter, as is written in *Parashath Aharé Moth: And every soul that eateth that which dieth of itself, or that which is torn of beasts* (Leviticus 17:15), and also in *Parashath Re'ê: Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself [. . .]* (Deuteronomy 14:21) – then the consequence is that animals must be eaten in a way different from these two, which is slaughter [*sheḥita*] at the throat, as known to the people of Israel from the transmission that has been passed down from generation to generation. In any event, there is evidence from the Torah in a hint, when it says: *he shall pour out the blood thereof*, in *Parashath Aharé Moth* (Leviticus 17:13), for it is possible to drain the blood from the whole body only by cutting

בְּצֹאֵר הַבַּעַל־חִי, שֶׁהֵם מְקוֹרֵי הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל הַגּוֹף.
וְהִנֵּה הַשְּׁחִיטָה הַנְּהוּגָה בְּאֶמֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְשִׁתֵּי סְבוֹת: הָא'
כְּדִי לְהַרְיֵק רֹב הַדָּם מִגּוֹף הַבַּעַל־חִיִּים; הַב' לְנִהוּג רַחֲמָנוּת
בַּבַּעַל־חִיִּים לְהַסִּיר חַיּוֹתָם בְּאִפּוֹ נֶקֶל עַל צַד הַחֲמָלָה - לֹא
כְּמוֹ שֶׁהָיוּ נוֹהֲגִים בְּזִמְנָן לְכַרוֹת אֶבֶר מִן הַחִי, וְהָיָה הַבַּעַל־חִי
מִתְעַנֶּה כְּמָה יָמִים, וְלֹא כְּמוֹ שֶׁעוֹשִׂים עֵתָה הָאֲמוֹת, שֶׁמְכִים
בְּמַעַצֵּד וּבְמַקְבּוֹת, בְּכַשִּׁיל וְכַלְפוֹת יְהִלּוּמוֹן, וְנוֹחֲרִים בְּסַכְיָנִים.
וְזֶה הָעֲנִין בְּכָלֵל בְּשֵׁם "טִרְפָּה". וְהִנֵּה כָּפִי תִקּוֹן הַחֲכָמִים
הַקְּדֻמוֹנִים, עֲנִין הַשְּׁחִיטָה בְּזֶה הַמִּנְהָג: צָרִיךְ ^{כֵּג} שֶׁתַּעֲשֶׂה
עַל־יְדֵי אִישׁ הַגּוֹן, בְּהַקְשׁ מִן הַכֹּהֲנִים שֶׁהָיוּ שׁוֹחֲטִים בְּזִמְנָן
הַמַּלְכוּת. וְשִׁיְהִיָּה הָאִישׁ בֶּעַל אֲמוּנָה וּמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים וְלוֹמֵד
תּוֹרַת ה', שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה בְּמַדְרֵגָה אַחַת עִם הַבְּהֵמָה; כְּמֵאֲמַר דָּוִד
הַמֶּלֶךְ, עָלְיוֹ הַשְּׁלוֹם: אָדָם בִּיקָר בַּל יִבִּין נִמְשָׁל בְּבִהֵמוֹת נִדְמוֹ (הַשּׁוֹוֹ
תְּהִלִּים מִטִּיג, שֵׁם פֶּסוּק כ"א). וְאִין רָאוּי שֶׁיִּפְסִיד הַדּוֹמָה בְּדוֹמִיָּה;
כִּי הִרְדֵּיָה וְהִמְמַשְׁלָה הַנִּתּוֹנָה לְאָדָם עַל הַבַּעַל־חִיִּים מִצַּד
מַעֲלַת נַפְשׁוֹ הַשְּׁכָלִית, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב: וְתַחֲסֹדְהוּ מֵעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים וְגו'
תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדָךְ וְגו' (תְּהִלִּים ת:ח). וּפְעֻלַת הַשְּׁחִיטָה צָרִיךְ
שֶׁתִּהְיֶה בְּמֵאֲכָלֶת הַבְּרָזֵל, מוֹכֵן לִכְף, בְּכָל תַּנְאִיָּה, דְּהִינוּ שֶׁתִּהְיֶה
חֲרִיפָה וְחֻדָּה וּבִלְתִּי פְגוּמָה, וְשֶׁאֵר הַתְּנָאִים. וְשֶׁתַּעֲשֶׂה בְּהוֹלָכָה

the four main blood vessels in the animal's throat, which are the sources of the blood in the whole body.

Now *sheḥiṭa*, as practiced among the Jewish people, has two reasons: the first is to drain most of the blood from the body of the animals; the second is to act compassionately with the animals, to take their life in the lightest way, mercifully – not as they used to do in Noah's time, to cut a limb from the living animal and have the animal suffer for several days, and not as the gentiles do it now, by hitting with a draw-knife and a hammer, they strike down with hatchet and hammers,¹⁰⁶ and stab with knives. This [kind of slaughtering] is included in the definition of *terefa* ["torn flesh", which is forbidden]. Now, according to a ruling of the early sages, slaughtering according to the [proper Jewish] practice needs ^[23] to be carried out by a seemly person;¹⁰⁷ [this is derived by] Analogy from the priests, who would do the slaughtering during the time of the Monarchy. The person also must be a believer, a person of good deeds and learned in God's Torah, so as not to be on the same level as the animal; as King David, may he rest in peace, said: *Man that is in honour understandeth not; he is like the beasts that perish* [cf. Psalms 49:13, *ibid.* verse 19]. For it is not right for someone to cause the death of something on their own level; for humanity was given dominion and rule over the animals because of the great level of the [human's] intelligent soul, as it is said: *Yet Thou hast made him but little lower than the angels* [. . .] *Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands* [. . .] (Psalms 8:6–7). The slaughtering needs to be performed with an iron knife that is designated for the purpose, with all its conditions, that is, the knife must be sharp and honed, and with no nick, and the other conditions. [And the slaughtering] must be

¹⁰⁶ Using the language of Psalms 74:6.

¹⁰⁷ The word used here is *ish*, which can mean either "man" or "person" in general. It is not clear what the author's position is regarding female slaughterers.

וּבְהוֹבָאָה, עַל-צֶדֶד הַיּוֹתֵר נָקַל, שֶׁלֹּא תִצְטָעֵר הַבְּהֵמָה. וְצָרִיךְ לִפְעוֹל הַפְּעָלָה בְּזִיזוֹת. וְכֵן צָרִיךְ לַחְקוֹר וּלְשַׁעַר שֶׁלֹּא יִקְרוּ בַּעַת הַשְּׁחִיטָה דְּבָרִים הַמִּפְסִידִים אוֹתָהּ, שֶׁהֵם עֲשׂוּרָה בַּמִּסְפָּר, וְהֵם: אֶל הַשְּׂאֲרָה, שְׁהִיָּה, חֲלָדָה, עֲקוּר, דְּרָסָה, הַגְרָמָה, הַגְבָּהָה, הַשְּׁפָלָה, הַתָּזָה, הַפְּסָקָה; וּבִאֲוָרִם יָדוּעַ בַּסִּפּוּר הַמִּצּוֹת וּבַסִּפּוּר הַשְּׁחִיטוֹת שֶׁל חֲכָמֵינוּ.

וְאָסוּר לְשַׁחוּט עֶקֶר וּפְרָח בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד, וְכֵן הֶהָרָה, מִמֶּאֱמַר אֱתוּ וְאֵת בָּנֵי לֹא תִשְׁחֲטוּ בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד (ויקרא כב:כח), וּמִמֶּאֱמַר פִּי יִקְרָא קֶן צִפּוֹר וגו' (דברים כב:ו). וְאָסוּר לְשַׁחוּט בְּהֵמָה, אוֹ אֵיזָה בְּעַל-חֵי מִמִּינֵי הַטְּהוֹרִים, שְׁהִיָּה חוֹלָה, בֵּין בְּחֹלִי טְבָעִי, בֵּין בְּהִכָּאָה וּבְשִׂאָר הַמִּקְרִים, כְּגוֹן שְׁבוּרָה אוֹ טְרוּפַת הַחַיּוֹת הַדּוֹרְסוֹת, מִמֶּאֱמַר כָּל רֶמֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר הוּא חַי לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ (בראשית ט:ג), וּמִמֶּאֱמַר זֹאת הַחֵיהָ אֲשֶׁר תֹּאכְלוּ (ויקרא יא:ב); כִּי לְשׁוֹן "חַיּוֹת" לִפְעָמִים נּוֹפֵל עַל הַבְּרִיאוֹת, כְּמוֹ כִּי חַיּוֹת הֵנָּה בְּפָרֶשֶׁת שְׁמוֹת

performed in a forward-and-backward motion, in the lightest way, so that the animal will not suffer. The slaughtering needs to be carried out with dexterity. Moreover, it is necessary to investigate and to estimate that nothing happens during the slaughtering that will render it unfit. There are ten such [disqualifying conditions]:¹⁰⁸ “leaving over” [*hash’ara*]; “waiting” [*shehiyya*]; “digging” [*halada*]; “uprooting” [*iqqur*]; “pushing” [*derasa*]; “slaughtering at the bone” [*hagrama*]; “lifting up” [*hagbaha*]; “pulling down” [*hashpala*]; “beheading” [*hattaza*]; and “cutting off” [*hafsaga*].¹⁰⁹ Their explanation can be found in *Sefer Ha-mizvoth*,¹¹⁰ and in the books about slaughtering [written] by our sages.

It is forbidden to slaughter a parent and child on the same day, and this applies also to a pregnant animal. As it is written: *ye shall not kill it and its young both in one day* (Leviticus 22:28); and it is written: *If a bird’s nest chance to be before thee in the way* [. . . *thou shalt not take the dam with the young*] (Deuteronomy 22:6). It is forbidden to slaughter a mammal, or any animal of the permitted species, if it is sick, whether it is from a natural disease or from having been hit or from any other mishap, such as broken [in its limb], or torn by a predator, as it is said: *Every moving thing that liveth shall be for food for you* (Genesis 9:3), and: *These are the living things which ye may eat* (Leviticus 11:2); for the word “living” sometimes refers to health, as in: *for they are lively*, in *Parashath*

108 The list of conditions is preceded in ed. Neubauer by the word *el*, “to;” this word makes no sense in context, and is probably an error, but we have nonetheless included it in our Hebrew text.

109 These conditions are highly technical, and an explanation of them goes beyond the scope of this work. For more information, see Shemuel Haken, *Ritual Slaughter: A Modern Guide to Karaite Jewish Practice*, translated by Isaac Sardar Ha-levy (Daly City: Karaite Jews of America, 2017).

110 There are various books of this title; it is unclear which one our author means.

(שמות א:ט). וְנִסְיוֹן הַבְּרִיאוֹת, לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵי הַקְּרָאִים, צָרִיךְ שִׁיְהִי קֶדֶם הַשְׁחִיטָה - לְבַחוֹן מִמָּאכְלוֹ וּמִמַּשְׁקָהוּ, וְכֵן מִשְׁאָר תְּנוּעוֹתָיו - כְּדִי שֶׁלֹּא תִהְיֶה הַשְׁחִיטָה לְרִיק וּלְבִטּוֹלָה, לְהַפְסִיד בְּעַל־חַי לֹא צָרָה; כִּי כָל הַסִּימָנִים הַמַּתִּירִים אֶת הַבְּעַל־חַיִּים לֶאֱכִילָה, לְפִי דִין הַתּוֹרָה, הֵם נִכְרִים בְּחִיּוֹתָם, כֹּאֲשֶׁר יִתְבָּאֵר בַּפָּרָק הַבָּא. אָבֵל הָרִבְנִים טוֹעִים בָּזֶה, כִּי הֵם בּוֹדְקִים אַחֵר הַשְׁחִיטָה הִיכָשֵׁר לֶאֱכִילָה, וְעַל הָרֵב מִתְבַּטֵּלֶת שְׁחִיטָתָם. וְכֵן אָסוּר לְשַׁחוּט הַבְּעַל־חַיִּים שְׂדִינָם לְשִׁלוֹחַ חַיִּים, אוֹ שְׂדִינָם בְּסָקִילָה אוֹ בְּשֶׁרֶפֶה, וּבִשְׂאָר מִיתוֹת. וְכֵן הַבְּהֵמָה הַבָּאָה מִן הַכִּלָּאִים. וְכֵן אָסוּר לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְסַרֵּס הַבְּהֵמוֹת, מִמָּאֵמֶר וּבִאֲדִצָּכָם לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ כְמֹהוּ (ויקרא כב:כד). וְאִם יִסְרֵס הַגּוֹי בְּלִי רְשׁוּתָנוּ, מֵתָר

Shemoth (Exodus 1:19).¹¹¹ According to the opinion of the Karaite sages, animals need to be checked before one slaughters them – to investigate their eating and drinking [habits], as well as the rest of their movements – so that the slaughtering will not be in vain, for naught, and the life of the animal be lost needlessly; for all the signs that render an animal permissible for consumption according to the laws of the Torah can be recognized while the animal is still alive, as will be explained in the following chapter. On the other hand, the Rabbanites are wrong in this matter, for only after the act of slaughter do they check if the animal is fit for consumption – and thus, most of the time, their slaughter ends up being in vain.¹¹² It is also forbidden to slaughter an animal that [the Torah] rules to be sent away alive,¹¹³ or to be stoned,¹¹⁴ or burned,¹¹⁵ or put to death in any other way.¹¹⁶ [It is also forbidden to slaughter] an animal that is the result of crossbreeding.¹¹⁷ It is also forbidden for a Jew to castrate animals, as it is said: [*That which hath its stones bruised, or crushed, or torn, or cut, ye shall not offer unto the Lord;*] *neither shall ye do thus in your land* like so (Leviticus 22:24). But if a gentile castrates [animals]

111 The verse is saying that the Hebrew women, when giving birth, are different from Egyptian women, *for they are lively*. Obviously, the Egyptian women are not dead; so the “life” of the Hebrew women must refer to health.

112 For it turns out, retroactively, that the animal was not healthy, and thus they are unable to eat the meat.

113 Such as the leper’s bird, in Leviticus 14:7.

114 Such as the ox that gores, in Exodus 21:28 (which specifically states: *its flesh shall not be eaten*).

115 This may refer to an animal that was in a city that is declared under the ban (*herem*), such as Jericho at the time of Joshua; the Israelites *burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein* (Joshua 6:24).

116 Such as an animal that is in a city that has been led astray to idolatry (*‘ir niddaḥath*); the Torah commands: *Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword* (Deuteronomy 13:16).

117 For Scripture forbids crossbreeding animals (Leviticus 19:19).

לָנוּ לִהְיוֹת בָּהֶם. וְאִם תַּעֲשֶׂה הַשְּׁחִיטָה חוּץ מִהַתְּנָאִים הַנִּ"ל,
אֲזִי הַנִּשְׁחָט יִקְרָא נִבְלָה, וְלֹא יִכָּשֶׁר לְהֶאֱכֹל. וַיַּעַן כִּי שְׁחִיטֹת
הָרִבָּנִים בְּחִלּוּף מִשְׁחִיטָתָנוּ, עַל־כֵּן אֶנְחֶנוּ אוֹסְרִים שְׁחִיטָתָם,
כְּאֲשֶׁר כָּל זֶה מִבְּאֵר בְּסִפְרֵי חֻמְרֵינוּ, עֲלֵיהֶם הַשְּׁלוֹם. וּמִתְקוֹן
הַחֻמְרִים לְבַרְרֵךְ אֶת הַשֵּׁם בְּעֵת הַשְּׁחִיטָה, שֶׁהַתִּיר לְהַפְסִיד
הַבְּעַל־חַי לְצִדֵּק הָאָדָם.

without our permission, it is permitted for us to derive benefit from them. If the slaughter is performed without observing the above-mentioned conditions, then the slaughtered animal is called a carcass [*nevela*], and is not fit for consumption. Since the Rabbanites have a different way of slaughtering from ours, we do not allow [the consumption of] their slaughter, as all explained in the books of our sages, may they rest in peace. It was instituted by our sages to bless God at the time of the slaughter, for His permission to take an animal's life for the needs of humans.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ The modern Karaite blessing is thus: "Blessed are you Y·H·W·H our God, eternal king, who has sanctified us through His commandments, and permitted us to slaughter a pure domestic mammal," or "a pure bird," or "a pure wild mammal." See *Ritual Slaughter*, p. 21.

{כד} פָּרָק כ'

בְּמֵאכָלִים וּמִשְׁקִים וְאֶפְנֵי הַנְּהָגָתָם

זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדוֹת הָאָדָם. מְחִיב שְׂיִהְיֶה מְזוֹנוֹ מִמִּינִים קְרוֹבִים לְטִבְעוֹ, וְהֵם חֲמִשָּׁה: צִמְחִים, אֲרֻבָּעָה מִיָּד בְּעַל־חַיִּים, וְהֵם: בְּהֵמוֹת, חַיּוֹת, עוֹפוֹת, וְדָגִים. וְהַחֲכָמָה הָאֱלֹהִית דִּקְדָּקָה לְגִדּוֹר שְׂתִיָּהּ בְּחִינָה בְּאֵלוֹ הַמִּינִים, אֵיזָה מֵהֶם נְאוּתִים לְמִזּוֹן הָאָדָם לְפִי טִבְעוֹ, לְהַחֲלִיף מֵה שֶׁיִּתֵּן, וְאֵיזָה מֵהֶם קָשִׁים וּבִלְתִּי נְאוּתִים. וְעַל־כֵּן נִתְּנָה סִמְנִים בַּתּוֹרָה מְבָרָרִים. בְּבִהֲמוֹת וְחַיּוֹת שְׁנֵי סִמְנִים: מַעֲלַת גֵּרָה וּפְרָסָה שְׂסוּעָה. בְּעוֹפוֹת לֹא נִתְּנָה סִמֵּן טִבְעִי, אֲבָל הוֹצִיָּאָה הָאֲסוּרוֹת אוֹ הַטְּמְאוֹת שֶׁנִּזְכְּרוּ בְּשִׁמּוֹן בַּתּוֹרָה בְּפָרָשַׁת שְׁמִינִי וּבְפָרָשַׁת רֵאָה; וְהַשָּׂאֵר הֵן טְהוֹרוֹת, וּמִתְּרוֹת לְמִזּוֹן הָאָדָם. בְּדָגִים שְׁנֵי סִמְנִים, וְהֵם סִנְפִּיר וְקִשְׁקִשׁוֹת.

וְעַנִּין הַכֶּשֶׁת אֵלֶּה הַמִּינִים לְמֵאכֹל הָאָדָם: הַבְּהֵמוֹת, שֶׁהֵן שְׁלֵשָׁה מִינִים - שׁוֹר, שֶׁה כְּשָׁבִים, וְשֶׁה עֲזִים - עַל־יָדֵי שְׁחִיטָה וּשְׁפִיכַת דָּמָם עַל הָאָרֶץ. הַחַיּוֹת וְהָעוֹפוֹת כְּמוֹ כֵּן עַל־יָדֵי שְׁחִיטָה, וְכִסּוּי הָדָם בְּעֶפֶר. הַדָּגִים עַל־יָדֵי אֲסִיפָה, שֶׁהִיא צִידָה

^{24} Chapter 20

Regarding Food, Drink and the Ways of Conduct regarding Them

This is the book of human development:¹¹⁹ it is necessary¹²⁰ that people's food should be of types that are similar to their nature. There are five [such types]: plants, and four types of animals, namely: domestic mammals, wild mammals, birds and fish. The divine wisdom makes a specific fence, that there must be criteria among these species [to determine] which [ones] are fit for human consumption, according to their [human] nature, to replenish that which is excreted [from the chemicals that compose humans], and which are hard and not suitable [for human food]. Therefore, [divine wisdom] put clear signs in the Torah. For mammals, whether domestic or wild, there are two signs: chewing the cud and split hooves. For birds, it gives no signs about their nature, but it excludes [specific] forbidden or impure ones by name, in the Torah, in *Parashath Shemini* and *Parashath Re'é*; the remaining [birds] are pure, permitted for human consumption. Fish have two signs, namely fins and scales.

[This is] the way of rendering these species fit for human consumption. The domestic mammals – which are of three species, namely cattle, sheep, and goats – [are rendered fit] by means of slaughter and pouring out their blood onto the ground. Wild

¹¹⁹ Using the language of Genesis 5:1. JPS translates: *This is the book of the generations of Adam*; but here, the author is using it to mean: "In this chapter, I will discuss what is necessary for humans to consume, in order to live."

¹²⁰ Literally "it requires;" this is probably just an impersonal construction, meaning "it is necessary;" but it is faintly possible that the author means that the verse Genesis 5:1 somehow requires people's food to be similar to their nature.

מִן הַמֵּיִם. וְאַחֵר שֶׁתַּעֲשֶׂה הַשְּׁחִיטָה כָּרְאוּי, עַל־פִּי הַתְּנָאִים
הַנִּ"ל בְּפָרָק י"ט, עוֹד מְשׁוּם אֲסוּר אֲכִילַת הַדָּם יֵשׁ מְנַהֵג לְנִקּוֹר
הַבָּשָׂר, רוֹצֶה לֹמַר לְהוֹצִיא הָעוֹרָקִים וְהַגִּידִים דְּמִיִּים מִכָּל
אִיבָרֵי גּוֹף הַנֶּשְׁחָט, וְלִרְחוֹץ הַבָּשָׂר בְּמֵיִם שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים, עִם
מְלִיחָה מְעֻט בְּמַלַּח אֲמָצְעֵי שְׁלֹא יִהְיֶה עָב וְלֹא דַק בְּיוֹתֵר, כְּדִי
שְׁיִמָּצֶה הַדָּם הַנֶּשְׁאָר מִן הַנִּקּוּר אֶל נֶכוֹן. אַחֲרֵכֶּן לְבַשֵּׁל בְּמֵיִם
בַּהֲסָרַת הַקָּצָף וְהַלְכָלוֹף.

עוֹד יֵשׁ תְּנָאִים אֲחֵרִים בַּהֲסָבַת הַנֶּשְׁחָט לְמַאֲכָל. שֶׁהַחֲלָבִים
חֲמֻשָּׁה - שֶׁהֵם הַחֲלָב הַמְכֻסָּה אֶת הַקָּרֶב, וְאֲשֶׁר עַל הַקָּרֶב,
וְאֲשֶׁר עַל הַכְּלִיּוֹת, וְהַכְּלִיּוֹת עֲצָמוֹ, וְיוֹתֶרֶת הַכֶּבֶד, וְהָאֵלֶּיָּה
בַּכֶּבֶשׂ - נֶאֱסָרוּ לְאֲכִילָה, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהֵיוּ נִתְּנִים עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְאִשָּׁה
רִיחַ נִיחּוֹחַ. וְגִיד הַנֶּשֶׁה וְשֶׁאֵר הַחֲלָקִים הָאֲסוּרִים הִידוּעִים
בְּסֶבֶל הִירָשָׁה בְּנִקּוּר הַבָּשָׂר הֵם אֲסוּרִים וְנִבְדָּלִים מֵהַבָּשָׂר
הַנֶּשְׁחָט. וּמִמָּאֹמֶר לֹא תִבְשֹׁל גִּיד בְּחֲלָב אִמּוֹ (שְׁמוֹת כג:ט), אֲסוּר
לְאָכּוֹל הַבָּשָׂר עִם הַחֲמָאָה וְחֲלָב. לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ הַבָּשָׂר שִׁישׁ
לוֹ חֲלָב, כְּגוֹן שְׁלֹשָׁה מִיָּנִים הַבִּיתִּיִּים וְחִיּוֹת בָּרָא; אֲבָל לֹא בָּשָׂר
הָעוֹפוֹת וְדֹגִים, שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם חֲלָב. וְהַרְבָּנִים, לְפִי דִין חֲכָמֵיהֶם,
מוֹסִיפִים לְאֲסוּר בָּשָׂר עוֹף עִם חֲמָאָה וְחֲלָב; וְנוֹהֲגִים חֲמָרָא
גְּדוֹלָה, וְנִזְהָרִים בְּשִׁמְרָה גְּדוֹלָה שְׁלֹא יִתְעַרְבוּ כָּלִי הַבָּשָׂר

mammals and birds, too, [are rendered fit] by slaughter, and by covering their blood with dirt. Fish [are rendered fit] by being collected, that is, hunted [i.e., fished] from the water. After the slaughter is appropriately performed, according to the conditions stated in chapter 19 [of this work], there is also a further practice, [in order to avoid] the prohibition to eat blood, namely, porging the meat, that is, removing the arteries and veins from all parts of the slaughtered carcass, and washing the flesh three times in water, and salting it a bit with medium-[grade] salt, that is, not too coarse and not too fine, so that the blood that remained from the porging will be drawn out. Afterwards, it is appropriate to boil the meat in water, so that the foam and filth will be removed.

There are still other conditions for turning the carcass into food. The forbidden fats [*ḥalavim*] – which are of five kinds, namely, the fat that covers the innards, the fat that is on the innards, the fat that is on the kidneys, the kidneys themselves, and the lobe above the liver; [plus,] in sheep, [a sixth fat, namely] the tail fat – are forbidden to eat, because they were brought on the altar as a fire-offering, a sweet savor. And the sciatic nerve [*gid ha-nashé*] and the other forbidden parts that are known from the Burden of the Inheritance to be porged from the meat are forbidden, and must be removed from the flesh of the carcass. From the statement *Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk* (Exodus 23:19), it is forbidden to eat meat with butter and milk. According to the opinion of our sages, [this prohibition applies only to] the meat [of species that have] milk, such as the three species of domestic mammals, and the meat of wild mammals; but not the meat of birds or fish, for they do not have milk. But the Rabbanites, following the ruling of their sages, add further, prohibiting bird-meat with butter or milk; and they are very careful in observing this, so that no meat utensils get mixed up with dairy utensils; for they have utensils for meat alone, and for dairy alone; they use special dishes for each one. They are careful about this as if it

עם כְּלֵי הַחֶלֶב, שֶׁהֵם מְנִיחִים כָּלִים לַבֶּשֶׁר לַחֹד וְלַחֶלֶב לַחֹד,
וּמִשְׁתַּמְשִׁים בְּכָלִים מִיַּחָדִים לְכָל אֶחָד. וְהֵם נִזְהָרִים בָּהֶם כְּדִין
טִמְאָה וְטִהָרָה. וְזֶה הוֹסְפָה עַל הַכְּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה; וּבְעֵינַיִן טִמְאָה
וְטִהָרָה הֵם מְקַלִּים, כְּאֲשֶׁר נִתְּבָאָר לְמַעַלָּה.

בַּהֲכַנַּת הַדָּגִים אֵין שׁוּם תְּנָאִי וְגִדָּר אַחֵר, רַק שְׁלֹא יִהְיוּ
מֵתִים בְּמַיִם, וְלֹא מְכִים אַחֲרֵי הָאֲסִיפָה, אֶלָּא שִׁיְגֹעוּ גּוֹיְעָה
טְבָעִית אַחֲרֵי צֵאתָם מִן הַמַּיִם. וְצָרִיף ^(כֵּה) לְהִזְהָר שְׁלֹא יִגְעוּ
וְלֹא יִתְעַרְבוּ בַּדָּגִים טִמְאִים בְּמוֹתָם. כָּל דָּבָר הַיּוֹצֵא מִבְּעַל־חַי
טְהוֹר מִתֵּר לֹאכִילָה, כְּגוֹן בָּצִים וְחֶלֶב; וְגַם הַדְּבִשׁ, מִפְּנֵי שְׁאִינוֹ
מְקַבֵּל טִמְאָה, בִּרְאִיָּה מְכַתוּב. וְכָל הַיּוֹצֵא מִן הַטִּמְאָה אֲסוּר. אֱלוֹ
הַמֵּאֲכָלִים וְהַמְשָׁקִים, אִם יִגַּע אוֹ יִפּוֹל בַּמִּקְרָה אֲלֵיהֶם דָּבָר
טִמָּא, כְּגוֹן בֶּשֶׂר נִבְלָה וְטִרְפָּה וְהַשְׂרָצִים הַטִּמְאִים, אוֹ שִׁיּוּכְנוּ
בְּכָלִים מְגֻאָלִים וְטִמְאִים, אֲזִי יִתְטַמְּאוּ לְעוֹלָם, וְאֵין לָהֶם טִהָרָה.

were a matter of impurity and purity. This is an addition to what is written in the Torah; whereas regarding [actual] impurity and purity, they are lenient, as we have explained above.

For the preparation of fish, there is no other condition or fence, only that they cannot be dead in the water, nor beaten [to death] after being collected [i.e., fished], but rather they must die a natural death [as a result of] being removed from the water. Also, one must ^{25} be careful after their death that they not touch or be mixed with unclean species of fish. Anything that issues from a clean animal is permissible for consumption, such as eggs and milk; and also honey, for it is not susceptible to contracting impurity, as one can demonstrate from Scripture. Anything that issues from an unclean [animal] is forbidden. If an impure thing, such as the meat from a carcass or a torn animal, or unclean vermin, touches or falls by chance into one of these [pure] foods or drinks, or if [the pure foods or drinks] have been prepared in contaminated or impure vessels, then they become forever impure, and cannot be rendered pure.

בְּעֵינֵי הַזֶּנוּג וּלְקִיחַת הָאִשָּׁה

מִנְהַג הָאָרוּשִׁין בְּעֵדַת הַקָּרָאִים עַל־יְדֵי פְּקִידִים - שֶׁהָאִישׁ
הַמֵּאָרֶשׁ שׁוֹלַח פְּקִיד בְּמִקוֹמוֹ; וּמִצַּד הַנֶּעֱרָה, אָבִיָּה אוֹ אֶחָד
מִקְרוֹבֶיהָ. וְעוֹשִׂים קִנְיָן עַל תְּנָאִים יְדוּעִים, כְּפִי מֶה שִׁסְכְּמוּ
שְׁנֵי הַצָּדָדִים. וּמֵאָרְשִׁים בְּשִׁלְשָׁה דְּבָרִים, וְהֵם מֶהֱרָ, כֶּתֶב, וְרִצּוֹן.
וּבְהִיּוֹת אֵלּוּ הַשְּׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים בְּיַחַד, אִזִּי הַקִּנְיָן קַיָּם; וּבְהֶעָדָר
אֶחָד מֵהֶם, הַקִּנְיָן בָּטֹל. וְשׁוֹיֹן הַמֶּהֱרָ לְפִי מִנְהַג כָּל מְקוֹם, כִּי
לֹא נִתְבָּאֵר בַּתּוֹרָה; אֲבָל הָרַבָּנִים נִתְנוּ שְׁעוֹר וְקָצֵב לַמֶּהֱרָ,
מִדִּין חֻכְמִיהֶם. וּמֶה שִׁסְכְּמוּ בַּתְּנָאֵי הָאָרוּשִׁין יִכְתְּבוּ וְיַחֲתִמוּ
הַפְּקִידִים וְהָעֵדִים, וְיִקְרָא "תְּנָאֵי הָאָרוּשִׁין". וּמִזֶּה הַזְּמַן יִקְרָא
הָאִישׁ "חֲתָן" וְהַמֵּאָרֶשֶׁה "כֻּלָּה".

מִנְהַג הַחֲתָנָה: עוֹשֶׂה הַחֲתָן סְעוּדָה, וְהוֹלֵךְ עִם מֵרְעִיו,

Chapter 21

Regarding Conjugal Union, and Taking a Wife

It is the custom in the Karaite community for the betrothal¹²¹ to be performed by emissaries – the man who is betrothing sends an emissary to represent him; and, from the young woman's side, her father or one of her relatives [serves as the emissary]. They make a binding agreement about known conditions, to which the two sides agree. The betrothal is performed through three acts; these [acts] are: [payment of] the bridal price [*mohar*], [signing of a] written document [*kethav*], and [giving of] consent [*razon*].¹²² If all three acts are performed, then the agreement is binding; but if any one of them is missing, the agreement is invalid. The value of the bridal price is in accordance with the custom of each place, for it is not specified in the Torah. On the other hand, the Rabbanites have a fixed rate for the bridal price, from the rulings of their sages. The emissaries and witnesses write and sign the conditions of betrothal, [to which the parties] have agreed, and this is called “the conditions of betrothal” [*tena'ê ha-'erusin*]. From this time on, the man is called the groom [*hathan*], and the betrothed woman, the bride [*kalla*].

The custom for the wedding [is as follows]: the groom makes

¹²¹ Betrothal (*erusin*) in Jewish law is not equivalent to “engagement” in contemporary English, but is a binding legal status, a kind of incomplete marriage.

¹²² The earlier Karaite halakhic work *Addereth Eliyyahu*, by R' Elijah ben Moses Bašyachi, also requires consent; though it refers to consent with the word *bi'a* (*Addereth Eliyyahu*, Seder Nashim, chapter 1, folio 90a). This use of the word *bi'a*, literally “coming,” is in contrast to rabbinic use of the word to mean sexual intercourse (e.g. Mishna Qiddushin 1:1.)

הַנִּקְרָאִים "שְׁשִׁבְיָנִים", וְעַם כָּל סִיעָתוֹ, הַמְּחַתְּנִים וְהַמְּחַתְּנוֹת, לְבֵית חוֹתְנוֹ; וּמִלּוֹיִן אוֹתוֹ עִם שִׁירִים וְזִמְרֹת וְכָלִי נְגוּן, וּמוֹלִיכִים מְנוֹתָיו לְפָנָיו. וּבְבוֹאָם, הַחֲזִן אוֹ הַמְּעַלָּה מִכֶּסֶה רֹאשׁ הַכֶּלֶה בַּמֶּפֶה הַגּוֹנֶה עִם פְּסוּקִים גְּאוּתִים לְעֵנִין, כְּגוֹן יִרְאֵה אֶל עַבְדֶּיךָ פְּעִלֶיךָ וְגו' וַיְהִי נֶעַם ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ וְגו' בַּמִּזְמוֹר צ', וְאַחֲרֵכֶּךָ אוֹמְרִים שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת שֶׁל קכ"ו. וּמִלְבִּישִׁים הַכֶּלֶה בַּמִּלְבוּשׁ הַנִּדּוֹר מִהַחֲתָן, וְהוּא הַנִּקְרָא "מֹהֵר הַבְּתוּלִים". וְאַחֲרֵכֶּךָ סוֹעֲדִים וּמְטִיבִים לָבָם, וְרַעֲי הַחֲתָן, דִּהְיִנוּ הַשְּׁשִׁבְיָנִים, שְׂמֵחִים וְטוֹבֵי לֵב, וּמְרַקְדִּים בַּמַּחֲלוֹת עִם הַשְּׁשִׁבְיָנוֹת עַד עֵת מִנְחַת עֶרֶב. וְהַחֲתָן גַּם הַכֶּלֶה, כָּל אֶחָד בְּבֵיתוֹ, מִזְמָנִים וּמְכִינִים עֲצָמָם לְכָרוֹת בְּרִית בְּשִׁבוּעָה. וּמִלּוֹיִן הַחֲתָן עִם שִׁירִים גָּאִים, וְנֶאֱסָפִים לְבֵית הַמְּחַתָּן לַעֲשׂוֹת חֲפָה. וַיּוֹשְׁבִים הַזְּקֵנִים וְהַגּוֹנִים וְכוֹתְבִים בְּשֵׁטֶר כְּתָבָה עֵינֵי הַנְּשׂוּאִין, וְגַם הַנְּדָנִיּוֹת מֵה שֶׁהִבִּיֵּאָה הַכֶּלֶה מִבֵּית אָבִיהָ אֶל בֵּית בַּעֲלָהּ. וְחוֹתְמִים בְּמֹהֵר הַמֶּאָחֵר, וְהוּא מֵה שֶׁמִּתְחַיֵּב הַבָּעַל לְאַשְׁתּוֹ לְהַתְּפָרֵס בִּימֵי אֱלֻמְנוּתָהּ חֹס וְשָׁלוֹם, אוֹ גְּרֻשׁוּתָהּ; כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יִקַּל בְּעֵינָיו הַקִּנְיָן וְהַבְּרִית וְלֹא יִבְטֹל אוֹתָהּ. וְעַל כָּל זֶה חוֹתְמִים הַזְּקֵנִים לְפָחוֹת עֲשָׂרָה בַּהֶקֶשׁ מֵעֵינֵן בְּעֵז דְּרוֹת. וְאַחֲרֵכֶּךָ מַעֲמִידִים הַחֲתָן עִם הַכֶּלֶה לְפָנֵי הַזְּקֵנִים, תַּחַת מִכְסָּה עֲשׂוֹי מְטִלִית, וְהַחֲזִן עוֹשֶׂה חֲפָה

a [festive] meal, and goes to his father-in-law's house with his friends, who are called "groomsmen" [*shushbinin*], and with his whole party; they accompany him with songs and hymns, and musical instruments, and they carry his portions in front of him. When they arrive, the cantor or the most noble person covers the head of the bride with a nice cloth, with verses appropriate for the occasion,¹²³ such as *Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants* [...] *And let the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us*, from Psalms 90 [verses 16–17]; afterwards, they say *A Song of Ascents*, [Psalms] 126. They dress the bride in a garment that the groom has vowed to her, which is called "the bridal-price of virginity" [*mohar ha-bethulim*]. Afterwards, [the people all] feast and make their hearts merry, and the friends of the groom, that is, the groomsmen, rejoice with merry heart, and dance with the bridesmaids until the afternoon. The groom and the bride, each one in their own house, prepare themselves for the oath affirming the contract. [The guests] accompany the groom with beautiful songs, and they gather at the house of the [father]-in-law to make the bridal canopy. The elders and the dignitaries sit and write in the written document [*sheṭar kethubba*] the fact of the marriage and the dowry that the bride is bringing in from her father's house to her husband's. And they sign on the later bridal price [*mohar ha-me'uḥar*], which is what the husband obligates himself to [give] to his wife, so that she can provide for herself during the days of her widowhood, God forbid, or if she gets divorced; [this is] so that he will not take the agreement and the contract lightly and annul it. At least ten elders sign on all this; [this is derived] by Analogy from the story of Boaz and Ruth.¹²⁴ Afterwards, they have the groom and the bride stand in front of the elders, under a

¹²³ It seems that these verses are sung by the cantor, not embroidered on the cloth.

¹²⁴ Cf. Ruth 4:2: *And he took ten men of the elders of the city* [...]

על־פי שְׁבַע בְּרָכוֹת הַמְסַדְרוֹת בְּסִדּוּר {כו} תַּפְלוֹת חֶלֶק שְׁנֵי, וְעַם פְּסוּקִים גְּאוּתִים לְעִנְיָן. וְסוּעֲדִים סְעוּדַת עָרֵב, וּמְטִיבִים לָבֶם עַד תְּשֻׁלוֹם הַחֲתָנָה, לְפִי הַשְּׁגַת יְדֵי הַמְזַדְּוֹגִים. וְהַשְּׁבַת הַקָּרוֹב לְתִשְׁלוֹם זֶה הָעֶסֶק קוֹרְאִים "שְׁבַת חֲתָנִים", וּמִנְהֻגָּה יָדוּעַ בְּסִדּוּר תַּפְלוֹת הַג' ל.

דִּין טַעֲנַת הַבְּתוּלִים. לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ צָרִיךְ שְׂיִהְיֶה לְמַחֲרַת הַחֲפָה, וְדִינוֹ יָדוּעַ בְּסִפְרֵי הַמִּצְוֹת דְּרַבְּנֵנוּ אֶהְרֹן בֶּר אֱלִיָּהוּ אוֹ בְּסִפְרֵי הָאֲדָרָת. וְכֵן חֵיב הָאָדָם מִדִּין תּוֹרָה לְקַנֵּא אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ אִם יֵרָאֶה עָלֶיהָ סִמְנֵים מוֹרִים לְגֵאוֹף. וּבְזֶמֶן הַמַּלְכוּת הָיוּ בּוֹדְקִים בְּמִי שׁוֹטֵה עַל־יְדֵי הַכֹּהֵן; אֲבָל בְּזֶמֶן הַגָּלוּת אִם יֵרָאֶה סִמֵּן זֹאת הָעֵבֶרָה צָרִיךְ שְׁלֹא יִקְרַב הָאָדָם אֶל אִשְׁתּוֹ עַד שֶׁתִּנָּסֶה בְּדִין, לְפִי הָרְאִיּוֹת וְהַעֲדוּת; וְעַד אֶחָד נֶאֱמָן בְּעִנְיָן זֶה, וְאִפְלוּ עֲדוּת

cover made from a *ṭalleth*, and the cantor performs the [ceremony of the] bridal canopy, by saying the Seven Blessings, which are presented in the ^[26] second volume of the prayer book, and with Biblical verses that are appropriate for the situation. Then [the guests all] eat their evening meal, and make their hearts merry, until the end of the wedding, in accordance with the couple's [financial] means. The Sabbath closest to the conclusion of this business is called the Matrimonial Sabbath [*shabbath ḥathanim*]; its customs can be found in the prayer book mentioned above.

The rules of a lawsuit concerning virginity:¹²⁵ According to the opinion of our sages, [such a lawsuit] must be on the morning after the [ceremony of the] bridal canopy, and its laws can be found in *Sefer Ha-mizvoth* by Rabbenu Aaron bar Elijah, or in the book *Addereth*.¹²⁶ Moreover, according to the Torah's law, a husband must suspect his wife of infidelity¹²⁷ if he sees telltale signs of adultery in her. During the time of the Monarchy, they used to examine [the suspected wife] through [the ordeal of] the water of the unfaithful woman [*mé soṭa*], [which would be conducted] by a priest; but during the time of the Exile, if [the husband] sees a sign of this transgression, he must not approach his wife [sexually] until she is tried by law, with evidence and testimony; but a single witness is acceptable for such testimony, and even a woman's testimony is acceptable. The signs that are indicative of the deed [of adultery], and the laws regarding them, can be

¹²⁵ See Deuteronomy 22:13 ff.: *If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, and lay wanton charges against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say: 'I took this woman, and when I came nigh to her, I found not in her the tokens of virginity' [. . .]*

¹²⁶ *The Book of Commandments* of R' Aaron ben Elijah is formally titled (and better known in Karaite circles as) *Gan 'Eden*. The second work referenced in this sentence is *Addereth Eliyyahu*, by R' Elijah Bašyachi.

¹²⁷ "Suspect his wife of infidelity" – literally, "be jealous of his wife," using the language of Numbers 5:14.

אִשָּׁה נֶאֱמָנָה. וְהִסִּימָנִים הַמּוֹרִים עַל זֶה הַמַּעֲשֶׂה, וְגַם דִּינָם, יִדּוּעַ בְּסִפְרֵים הַנִּ"ל. וְאִם תִּתְחַיֵּב הָאִשָּׁה בְּדִין, אֲזִי מֵצֵד עֲרוֹת דָּבָר כָּזֶה תִּתְגַּרֵּשׁ וְתִפְסֵיד כְּתִבְתָּהּ וּמִהֶרָה הַמֶּאֱחָר. וְזֶה הַדִּין גַּם לְאִשָּׁר לֹא יִמָּצְאוּ לָהּ בְּתוּלִים. דִּין הַנוֹאֵף בְּזִמָּן הַמְּלָכוֹת הָיָה בְּמִיתָה, כְּדַכְתִּיב בְּפָרָשַׁת קְדוֹשִׁים; וּבְזִמָּן הַגְּלוֹת מְלָכוֹת וּשְׂאֵר עֲנָשִׁים כְּפִי אֱמֻד בֵּית דִּין, עַל־יְדֵי סְגוּפִים וְעֲנוּיִם. וּשְׂאֵר הַדִּינִים הַנוֹגְעִים לְעֻנְיָן זֶה מְבָרָרִים בַּתּוֹרָה בְּגָלוּי.

found in the above-mentioned books. If the woman is found guilty, then she must be divorced, because of the unseemly thing,¹²⁸ and she forfeits her *kethubba* and her later bridal price. This law applies also to a woman who is found not to be a virgin [on her wedding night]. The sentence for adultery during the time of the Monarchy was death, as written in *Parashath Qedoshim* [Leviticus 20:10]; and during the time of the Exile, [the sentence is] lashes and other punishments, as court estimates [to be appropriate], through penitential suffering and afflictions.¹²⁹ The remaining laws pertaining to this matter are clearly explained in the Torah.

¹²⁸ Using the language of Deuteronomy 24:1.

¹²⁹ That is, the court rules that the guilty parties must engage in religious penances to atone for their act.

בְּעֵינַי אֲסוּרֵי הָעֲרִיּוֹת

אֲזַהֲרָה גְדוֹלָה לְכָל בֶּר יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁלֹּא יִנָּשְׂאוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּמְּשׁוּ עִם
הַגּוֹפִים הַנִּכְלָלִים בִּי"א פְּסוּקִים אֲשֶׁר בָּאוּ בַּפְּרָשָׁת אַחֲרֵי מוֹת,
סִימָן י"ח פְּסוּק ז', לְזוּוג, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁכָּתוּב בְּסוֹף הַפְּרָשָׁה: וְנִכְדָּתוֹ
הַנִּפְשׁוֹת הָעֲשׂוֹת מִקָּרֵב עִמָּם. וּמֵצֵד עִמָּךְ הָעֵינַי נִפְלָה חֻלְקָה בֵּין
חֻכְמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַקְּרָאִים וְהַתְּלֻמוּדִיִּים. וְגַם בֵּין חֻכְמֵי הַקְּרָאִים
הַיִּתֵּה הַחֻלְקָה; כִּי הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים, הַנִּקְרָאִים כֶּת הַמֶּרְכָּבִים, אֲסוּרֵי
גּוֹפִים רַבִּים הַבִּלְתִּי נִכְלָלִים בַּפְּרָשָׁה הַזֶּה"ל, וְלֹא הַיּוֹצְאִים בְּהֶקֶשׁ;
רַק עָשׂוּ הֶקֶשׁ עַל הֶקֶשׁ - לָמָּה שֶׁלֹּא הִסְכִּימוּ הָאַחֲרוֹנִים. עַד
שֶׁקָּם הַחֻכָּם רַבִּי יוֹסֵף הַרְוָאָה, וְתִלְמִידוֹ הָרַב רַבֵּנוּ יִשׁוּעָה,
וְטַעְנוּ עַל הַמֶּרְכָּבִים, וְהוֹצִיאוּ הַדִּין לְאַמְתָּתוֹ. וְכָפִי מֶה שֶׁדִּיקוּ
בִּישׁוּר שְׁכֵלָם מִהַפְּסוּקִים הַזֶּה"ל, הָעֵמִידוֹ הָעֵינַי שֶׁהִדְרִכִּים אֲשֶׁר

Chapter 22

Regarding Forbidden Sexual Relationships (*‘Arayoth*)

Every Jew is severely warned not to marry nor have sexual relations with the persons included in the eleven verses that appear in *Parashath Aḥaré Moth*, [starting with] chapter 18, verse 7, for at the end of the passage it is written: *even the souls that do them shall be cut off from among their people* [Leviticus 18:29]. Due to the depth [and difficulty] of the matter, there is a disagreement among the Jewish sages, the Karaites and Rabbanites. Moreover, there is disagreement even within the Karaite sages; for the earlier ones, who were called the *merakkevim*,¹³⁰ prohibited many persons who are not included in the above-mentioned [Biblical] passage, who cannot be derived through Analogy; rather, [these sages] derived Analogy upon Analogy – and the later sages did not agree to this. [The opinion of the *merakkevim* survived] until the sage R. Joseph the Seer and his student R. Yeshu’a came, and argued with the *merakkevim*, and brought out the law in its true meaning. In accordance with what they carefully derived, with their intellectual honesty, from the above-mentioned verses, they

¹³⁰ This epithet is from the verb *le-harkiv*, “to graft” (here used in the *pi’el* conjugation, *le-rakkev*). Under the system of the *merakkavim*, a husband and wife were deemed as one person or one flesh, based on the verse: *Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh* (Genesis 2:24). As an example, the wife’s sister is considered to be the husband’s own sister and all the sister’s relatives are considered to be relatives of the husband’s own sister. Thus, if one pictures a family tree, it is like grafting the groom’s and bride’s family trees together at a single point: the bride and groom who are now one person. Cf. Ḥakham Toviyya Babovich, *Rosh Pinna* (English edition forthcoming from the Karaite Jews of America), paragraphs 2.18 and 3.42.

נִלְמֹד מֵהֶם אִסּוּר וְהִתֵּר הָעֲרִיּוֹת הֵם שְׂשֵׁה, כְּפִי דַעַת הָרַב
רַבְּנֵנוּ יִשְׁוּעָה הַגָּל:

הָא' אִסּוּר הָאִישׁ עַל שְׂשֵׁה שְׂאֲרִיו, שְׂהֵם: אָב, אֵם, אָח, אָחוֹת,
בֶּן, וּבֵת. וְהָאִסּוּר בְּנִקְבוֹת בָּהֶן בְּעֶצְמָן, כְּמוֹ בָּאֵם, אָחוֹת, וּבֵת;
אֲבָל בְּזָכָרִים יִצְעַד לְנִשְׁיָהּ, שֶׁהֵן אִשְׁתְּ הָאָב, אִשְׁתְּ הָאָח, אִשְׁתְּ
הַבֶּן, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהֵן דְּבָקִי הַשְּׂאֵר.

הַב' אִסּוּר הָאִישׁ עַל שְׂאֲרִיו, שְׂהֵם: אָחִי אָבִיו וְאָחוֹתוֹ, אָחִי אִמּוֹ
וְאָחוֹתָהּ, בֶּן אָחִיו ^(כז) וּבֵת אָחִיו, בֶּן אָחוֹתוֹ וּבֵת אָחוֹתוֹ, בֶּן בְּנוֹ
וּבֵת בְּנוֹ, בֶּן בִּתּוֹ וּבֵת בִּתּוֹ. זֶה הָאִסּוּר יוֹצֵא מִפְּסוּק עֲרֻת אָחוֹת
אָבִיךָ וְגו' - בְּנִקְבוֹת בְּעֶצְמָן, וּבְזָכָרִים יִצְעַד הָאִסּוּר לְנִשְׁיָהּ.

הַג' אִסּוּר הָאִישׁ עַל שְׁנֵי שְׂאֲרִים שְׂאִינָם קְרוֹבָיו, מִמֶּה שְׂכָתוֹב:
עֲרֻת אִשָּׁה וּבִתָּה לֹא תִגְלֶה. וַיֹּאסְרוּ מִזֶּה הַדֶּרֶךְ לְאִישׁ: אִשָּׁה
וְאָבִיָּה, אִשָּׁה וְאִמָּה, אִשָּׁה וְאָחִיָּה, אִשָּׁה וְאָחוֹתָהּ, אִשָּׁה וּבִנָּה,

established that there are six ways to learn about forbidden and permitted sexual relationships, according to the opinion of the above-mentioned R. Yeshu'a:

- 1) A man is forbidden to six kinds of nuclear relatives [*she'erim*], namely his father, mother, brother, sister, son, and daughter. The prohibition on the female relatives [is that he must not have relations] with them, such as the mother, sister, and daughter; but [the prohibition] on the male relatives applies to their wives, namely the father's wife, brother's wife, and son's wife, for they are in [conjugal] clinging to the nuclear relatives.
- 2) A man is forbidden to [further] relatives,¹³¹ namely his father's brother and sister, his mother's brother and sister, his brother's son {²⁷} and daughter, his sister's son and daughter, his son's son and daughter, and his daughter's son and daughter. This prohibition is derived from the verse: [*Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister* [. . .] [Leviticus 18:12]. [The prohibition] on the females [is that he must not have relations] with them; and the prohibition on the males applies to their wives.
- 3) There is a prohibition on a man [against having relations] with two people who are relatives of each other, but not related to him, as it is written: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter* [Leviticus 18:17]. Accordingly, a man is prohibited [to have relations with] a woman and her father, a woman and her mother, a woman and her brother, a woman and her sister, a woman and her son, a woman and her daughter. The prohibition on the females [is that he must not have relations]

¹³¹ The same word is used as above, *she'erim*, but here it clearly does not refer to nuclear relatives, but to more distant relatives. It is possible that the text is corrupt, and should actually say: "relatives of *she'erim*" or "*she'erim* of *she'erim*."

אִשָּׁה וּבִתָּה. וְהָאִסּוּר בְּנִקְבוֹת בְּעֶצְמוֹ, וּבִזְכָּרִים יִצְעַד לְנִשְׁיָהּ.

הַד' אִסּוּר הָאִישׁ עַל גּוֹף וְשָׂאֵר שְׂאֵרוֹ, מִמָּה שְׁכָתוּב: עֲרוֹת
אִשָּׁה וּבִתָּה לֹא תִגְלֶה, אֵת בֵּת בְּנָה וְאֵת בֵּת בָּתָּה לֹא תִקַּח לְגִלוֹת
עֲרוֹתָהּ, שְׂאֵרָה הִנֵּה זִמָּה הִיא. וַיֵּאָסְרוּ מִזֶּה הַמֶּאֱמָר לְאִישׁ: אִשָּׁה
וּבֵת בָּתָּהּ, אִשָּׁה וּבֵת אַחוֹתָהּ, אִשָּׁה וּבֵן בְּנָהּ, אִשָּׁה וְאָב אֲבִיהָ,
אִשָּׁה וְאִם אִמָּהּ, אִשָּׁה וּבֵת אָחִיהָ. וְהַשָּׂאֵר בְּנִקְבוֹת בְּעֶצְמוֹ,
וּבִזְכָּרִים בְּנִשְׁיָהּ.

הַה' אִסּוּר שְׁנֵי שְׂאֵרִים עַל שְׁנֵי שְׂאֵרִים, מִמָּה שְׁכָתוּב: עֲרוֹת
בֵּת אִשָּׁתְךָ אָבִיךָ וגו' - שֶׁהָאִישׁ עִם בְּנוֹ שְׁנֵי שְׂאֵרִים, וְהָאִשָּׁה עִם
בָּתָּהּ שְׁנֵי שְׂאֵרִים. וּמִזֶּה הָאָפֶן, בְּדֶרֶךְ הַהֶקֶשׁ, יֵאָסְרוּ שְׁנֵי אַחִים
לִקַּח שְׁתֵּי אַחִיוֹת, וְאִשָּׁה וּבִתָּה לְשְׁנֵי אַחִים. וְהַכֹּלֶל: כָּל שְׁנֵי
שְׂאֵרִים לְשְׁנֵי שְׂאֵרִים, בְּעֶקְרִים וּבַפְּרָחִים וּבַכִּנְפִים.

הו' אִסּוּר שְׁנֵי שְׂאֵרִים עַל גּוֹף וְשָׂאֵר שְׂאֵרוֹ, מִמֶּאֱמָר עֲרוֹת אָחִי
אָבִיךָ לֹא תִגְלֶה. וְזֶה בְּדֶרֶךְ הַהֶגְבְּרָה שֶׁהֶגְבִּיר הָרַב רַבֵּנוּ יְשׁוּעָה

with them; and [the prohibition] on the males applies to their wives.

4) There is a prohibition on a man [against having relations] with a person and their relatives by one step of removal, as it is written: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter; thou shalt not take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness: they are near kinswomen; it is lewdness* [Leviticus 18:17]. Based on this statement, a man is prohibited [to have relations with] a woman and her daughter's daughter, a woman and her sister's daughter, a woman and her son's son, a woman and her father's father, a woman and her mother's mother, a woman and her brother's daughter. The [prohibition on such] relatives, on the females, [is that he must not have relations] with them; and [the prohibition] on the males applies to their wives.

5) There is a prohibition on two relatives [against having relations] with two relatives, as it is written: *The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter* [...] [Leviticus 18:11] – for the man and his son are two relatives, and the woman and her daughter are two relatives. By Analogy from this, two brothers are forbidden to marry two sisters, and two brothers are forbidden to marry a woman and her daughter. In general, any two relatives are forbidden to any two-relatives, whether they are parent and child, or siblings.

6) There is a prohibition on two nuclear relatives [to have relations with] a person and their relative by one step of removal, as it is written: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's*

הַנִּל, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁלֹא נִזְכָּר פֶּה מִלֶּת "שָׂאֵר" כְּמוֹ בַּפְּסוּקִים הַקּוֹדְמִים;
וּמִזֶּה יֵרָאֶה שֶׁזֶּה אַחֵי הָאֵב אֵינוֹ שָׂאֵר הָאֵב, רַק אָחִיו הַמַּעֲבֵר
שֶׁל אָבִיו, דִּהְיָנוּ בֶן אִשְׁת׃ אָבִי אָבִיו עִם אִישׁ אַחֵר. וְהִנֵּה הָאִישׁ
עִם אָבִי אָבִיו גּוֹף וְשָׂאֵר שָׂאֵרוֹ, וְאִשְׁת׃ אֵב הָאֵב עִם בְּנֵה שְׁנֵי
שָׂאֵרִים. וּבִאֲשֶׁר לָקַח אֵב הָאֵב אֶת אִם הָאֵח׃ הַמַּעֲבֵר שֶׁל אָבִיו,
הִנֵּה לֹא יִכָּשֶׁר לָזֶה הָאִישׁ, שֶׁהוּא בֶן הַבֵּן, לָקַחַת אֶת דּוֹדוֹ
הַמַּעֲבֵר - וּמִפְּנֵי שֶׁבֶּא זָכָר עַל זָכָר, יִצְעֵד הָאִסּוּר לְאִשְׁת׃ הַדּוֹד
הַמַּעֲבֵר. וְזֶה הַמִּשְׁפָּט בְּעֵקָרִים וּבִפְרָחִים, לֹא בַּכֹּנָפִים, כְּאֲשֶׁר
כָּל זֶה מִבְּאֵר בְּאֵר הֵיטֵב בְּסִפְר׃ הָאֲדָרֶת, הַנִּקְרָא סִפְר׃ הַמִּצּוֹת;
הַמַּעֲיֵן יִמָּצֵא.

וְאִם יִזְדַּמֵּן שִׁיקְרָה זֶה בְּשִׁגְגָה, דִּהְיָנוּ שִׁינֵּשׂאוֹ וְיִזְדַּוְּגוֹ
הַגּוֹפִים הָאִסּוּרִים לְפִי הַדְּרָכִים הַנִּל - אֲזִי, בְּהוֹדַע הַדְּבָר
לְבֵית דִּין, יִפְרִידוּ הַמִּתְחַבְּרִים בְּלִי גֵט, כִּי אֵין הַקְדוּשִׁין תּוֹפְסִין
בְּעֲרִיזוֹת, וְהַקְדוּשִׁין כֹּלֵא הֵיוּ.

brother [Leviticus 18:14]. And this is an act of mighty exegesis,¹³² which the above-mentioned R. Yeshu'a derived mightily: for here [in this verse], the word "relative" [*she'er*] is not mentioned, as it is in the preceding verses; [so,] from that fact, we see that the father's "brother" is not actually the father's relative, but [the father's] stepbrother, that is, the son of the man's paternal grandfather's wife from another man. Now, the man and his grandfather are a person and a relative by one step of removal, and the grandfather's wife and her son are two [nuclear] relatives. And because the grandfather has married the mother of the father's stepbrother, therefore, it is not acceptable for the man, who is the grandson, to marry his step-uncle – and since both of them are males, the prohibition applies to the step-uncle's wife. This rule applies to [pairs of relative that are related through] ancestry and descent, but not [to pairs related] through sibling relations, as is all very well explained in the book *Addereth*, which is [also] called *Sefer Ha-mizvot*, as the reader will find.

And if it happens accidentally, that is, that people who are forbidden in [any of] the above ways get married and have sexual relations, then, when the matter becomes known to the court, they must separate the couple without a writ of divorce [*get*], for the marriage is not valid with a forbidden partner, and the marriage is considered as if it did not happen.

¹³² "Mighty exegesis" – Hebrew *hagbara*, literally "making mighty". This is a term in Karaite exegesis that refers to items that may not be proven unequivocally. In such instances, the early Karaite sages (including R. Yeshu'a) "strengthen" (or "accept") the interpretation that has the most evidence (or least doubt), even though the interpretation cannot be derived with certainty. For this linguistic usage, compare *Addereth Eliyyahu*, 'Inyan Sheḥiṭa, chapter 5, folio 62d, where *higbir be-da'to*, "he had it mighty in his mind," means "he believed that this was most likely."

{כח} פרק כ"ג

בעניני הירשות והחלוקין

ענין הירשה היה נוהג קדם מתן תורה, כי זה סדר ומנהג מדיניי, כמו שנמצא באברהם אבינו עליו השלום: ולבני הפילגשים אשר לאברהם (בראשית כה:ו) וגו' והנה בן ביתי יורש (בראשית 15:10). ועל-כן לא הניחה התורה מלבאר מהערת ענין בנות צלפחד בפרשת פינחס, סימן כ"ז. ובדרך הכלל בארה כי השאירות ונחלת העקרים יירשו הפרחים, ולעולם הזכרים קודמים מהנקבות. ובאפס השארים, נוחלים הקרובים לשאר המשפחה, בזה האפן: איש כי ימות ובן אין לו, יזכה לירשה בן הבן. אין לו בן הבן, יירשו אביו או אמו, אם הם חיים. אין לו אב ואם, יירשו האחים או האחיות. אין לו אחים או אחיות, יירשו עקרי העקרים, דהינו אב האב ואמו, או אב האם ואמה, אם הם חיים. אין לו אחד מאלה, זוכים אחי האב או האם, או אחיותיהם. וחיב האדם לסדר נחלתו בזה הדרך בחיים; ואם לא יוכל, יעשה פקידים על השאירותיו, או הדין יפקד פקידים אם ימות בלא צואה, והפקידים ינחילו היורשים לפי הדרך הנ"ל, שהבנים ינחלו בירשה, וישתדלו להשיא הבנות. הבכור נוטל פי שנים בנכסי אביו, וטעם "פי שנים" כפל בערך נטילת כל

{28} Chapter 23

Regarding Inheritance and Its Distribution

Inheritance was customary before the giving of the Torah, for it is a social arrangement and custom, as we find regarding Abraham our Father, may he rest in peace: *But unto the sons of the concubines, that Abraham had, [Abraham gave gifts]* (Genesis 25:6); *lo, one born in my house is to be mine heir* (Genesis 15:3). Therefore, the Torah did not leave this matter unexplained, [as we see] from its note on the matter of Zelophehad's daughters, in *Parashath Pinhas*, [Numbers] chapter 27, [verses 6–11]. In general, it explains that the children inherit the land-inheritance and other [things] left over from their parents, and the males always come before the females. In the absence of nuclear relatives, the more distant relatives in the clan inherit, in the following manner: if a man dies has no son, then his son's son will receive the inheritance. If he has no grandson, then his father or mother will inherit, if they are still alive. If he has no [living] father or mother, then his brothers or sisters inherit. If he has no brothers or sisters, then his grandparents will inherit, that is, his father's father and mother, or his mother's father and mother, if they are alive. If he has none of these, then the brothers of his father or mother, or their sisters, inherit. A man is obligated to arrange [the] inheritance [of his estate] in this way; and if he is unable, then he must appoint executors for his estate, or, if he dies without a will, then the court¹³³ must appoint executors to distribute the inheritance according to the above-mentioned way, that is, the sons inherit the estate, and strive to marry off the daughters. The firstborn son receives a double portion of his father's property; the meaning

¹³³ Hebrew *ha-din*, apparently short for *beth ha-din*.

אֶחָד מֵהַבָּנִים. רוֹצֶה לוֹמַר: אִם יִהְיוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָּנִים, וְאֶחָד מֵהֶם בָּכוֹר, יִחַלְקוּ הִירָשָׁה לְאַרְבָּעָה חֻלְקִים, וְהַבָּכוֹר יִקַּח פִּי שְׁנַיִם; וְלַעֲוֹלָם כָּכָה, בְּהוֹסֶפֶת חֵלֶק אֶחָד תַּעֲבוֹר הַבָּכוֹרָה.

וְכֵן בִּירֵשֶׁת הָאִישׁ אֶת הַשְּׁאֲרִיּוֹת אֲשֶׁתּוֹ - לְפִי דַעַת חֲכָמֵינוּ הָאִישׁ אֵינוֹ יוֹרֵשׁ אֶת אֲשֶׁתּוֹ; רַק בְּנֵיהֶ עוֹמְדִים בְּמִקְוָמָה, וּבִאֲפֹס הַבָּנִים, שְׁאִרְיָהּ הַקְּרוֹבִים אֵלֶיהָ מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתָּהּ. אֲבָל לְפִי דַעַת הַרְבָּנִים לְהֶפֶךְ, שֶׁהַבֶּעַל יוֹרֵשׁ אֶת אֲשֶׁתּוֹ. וְאִין לָהֶם סִמּוֹן מִן הַתּוֹרָה, רַק הֵבִיאוּ רֵאִיָּה מִמַּאֲמַר וִירֵשׁ אֶתָּה הַכָּתוּב בְּפִרְשֵׁת פִּינָחָס, סִימָן כ"ז. וְזֶה מִסְכְּלוֹתָם בְּדַרְכֵי הַדִּקְדּוּק, כִּי אֵין פָּסוּק הַנִּ"ל אֶפְלוּ זְכוֹרוֹן אִשָּׁה; אֲבָל מֶה שֶׁאָמַר וִירֵשׁ אֶתָּה בְּלִשׁוֹן נִקְבָּה שָׁב הַכְּנוּי אֶל הַנִּחְלָה, שֶׁהִיא שֵׁם בְּלִשׁוֹן נִקְבָּה.

וְהָאִשָּׁה בְּמוֹת בַּעֲלָה כְּמוֹ כֵּן אֵינָה יוֹרֵשֶׁת הַשְּׁאֲרִיּוֹתֶיהָ כָּלָם, רַק תּוֹבַעַת כְּתֻבָּתָהּ וּמַהֲרָה הַמֵּאָחֵר מִנְּכָסֶיהָ.

בָּכוֹר הִירָשָׁה הוּא בָּכוֹר אֹחַ, לֹא בָּכוֹר פֶּטֶר רַחֵם, כִּי זֶה

of “a double portion” is twice as much value as any other one son. Thus, [for example,] if there are three sons, one of whom is the firstborn, then they must divide the estate into four portions, and the firstborn will take a double portion; and always, [however many sons there are,] they add one more portion, which goes to the birthright of the firstborn.

Moreover, regarding a man’s inheritance of his wife’s estate – according to the opinion of our sages, the man does not inherit from his wife; rather, her sons stand in her place [to receive her inheritance], and, in the absence of sons, the relatives that are close to her from her clan. But according to the opinion of the Rabbanites, it is the opposite: the husband inherits from his wife. They do not have any support from the Torah; but rather, they cite an argument from the words in *Parashath Pinḥas*, [Numbers] chapter 27, [verse 11:] *and he shall possess it*, [which they read as: *and he shall possess her*.] This is a result of their folly in grammatical matters, for that verse does not even mention a woman; rather, it says *he shall possess it*, with the pronoun *othah* in the feminine form referring to the inheritance [*naḥala*], a [grammatically] feminine noun.¹³⁴ [Moreover, according to the Karaite sages,] when a woman’s husband dies, she does not inherit all his estate, but may only claim her *kethubba* and her later bridal price from his property.

The firstborn for the inheritance is the firstborn of the father,¹³⁵ not the firstborn of the mother,¹³⁶ because that one is not clearly

¹³⁴ Ḥakham Benjamin al-Nahāwandī also was of the opinion that a man inherits from his wife. See *The Remnant and the Relic: From the Books of Commandments of the Early Karaites* (Daly City: The Karaite Press, 2017), p. 19.

¹³⁵ Hebrew *bekhor on*, using the language of Deuteronomy 21:17 (the passage dealing with inheritance) and Genesis 49:3.

¹³⁶ Hebrew *bekhor reḥem*, using the language of Exodus 13:2 et passim.

לֹא יִנָּדַע בְּבִרְוֹר. וְאִם יִהְיֶה הַקּוֹדֶם גַּפֶּל אוֹ בֵּית, לֹא יַעֲכָבוּהוּ
מִהִבְכוּרָה. וְטַעַם: הֵינּוּ הָעוֹזֵר לְאָבִיו קֹדֶם כָּל הַבָּנִים, וְעַל־כֵּן
נוֹטֵל פִּי שָׁנִים.

known.¹³⁷ And if the preceding [birth] was a stillbirth or a daughter, it does not take away [the first son]’s birthright. The reason for [the birthright of the firstborn is that he is] the son who helps his father before all other sons, and therefore receives a double portion.

¹³⁷ It is not clear what our author means by “because that one is not clearly known.”

בְּעֵינֵי הָאֲבֵלוֹת וְדִין קְבוּרַת הַמֵּת

מִצֻּת קְבוּרַת הַמֵּת יָדוּעַ מִפְּשִׁיטַת הַשֵּׁכֶל, וְנִקְרָאת "חֹסֶד וְאַמֶּת", כְּמוֹ שֶׁכָּתוּב בִּיעֶקֶב: וַעֲשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֹסֶד וְאַמֶּת אֵל נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם (בראשית 50:25). וּמִנֵּהג זֹאת הַמִּצְוָה מִסָּבֵל הִירָשָׁה לְרַחוּץ הַמֵּת וְלִסְגִּיר נִקְבִּיו וְלִסְתוּם פִּיו וְעֵינָיו וְלִהְלִבִּישׁוֹ {כט} תַּכְרִיכִין לְבָנִים לְפִי כְבוֹדוֹ וּלְקַבְּרוֹ בְּאֶרֶן עֵץ. וְחוֹפְרִין בִּקְרָקַע כְּשֶׁעוֹר שֶׁלֹּא יֵצֵא רֵיחַ בְּשָׂרוֹ. וְכָל זְמַן שֶׁהַמֵּת מִנַּח בְּבֵית אוֹמְרִים קִינּוֹת, וּמִנַּחֲמִים הָאֲבֵלִים וְעוֹשִׂים הַסִּפָּד, אִם הִנֶּפֶטָר מִן הַחֲשׂוּבִים, בְּדַבְרֵי דָרֶשׁ וּבִסְפּוֹר חֲשִׁיבוֹתוֹ, בְּבַחֲיִנַת מַעֲשָׂיו הַטּוֹבִים אוֹ בְּבַחֲיִנַת חֲכָמָתוֹ וְיָחוּסוֹ. וְאַחֲרֵכֶּךָ מוֹלִיכִים בְּמוֹט בְּכִתְף, וּמַלְוִים כָּל הַקָּהָל כָּאֶחָד, וְאוֹמְרִים צְדוּק הַדִּין בְּפִסּוּקִים גְּאוּתִים לְעֵנֶיךָ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁמִּסְדֵּר בְּסוֹף חֶלֶק שְׁנֵי שָׁל סְדוּר הַתַּפְּלוֹת. וְאַחֲרֵי הַקְּבוּרָה יוֹשְׁבִים הַשָּׂאֲרִים וְהַקְּרוֹבִים עַל הָאֶרֶץ שְׁבָעָה יָמִים, וְנוֹהֲגִים אֲבֵלוֹת שְׁלָשִׁים יוֹם. וְלִכְבוֹד

Chapter 24

Regarding Mourning and the Laws of Burying the Dead

The commandment to bury the dead is known from common sense; it is called “kindness and truth”, as Jacob said: *and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt* (Genesis 47:29). The way of practicing this commandment, [as known] from the Burden of the Inheritance, is to wash the dead person, to close his orifices, to close his mouth and his eyes, to dress him ^{29} in a white shroud, befitting his dignity, and to bury him in a wooden coffin. We dig sufficiently deep in the ground such that the smell of his flesh will not come out. During the whole time that the dead person lies in the house, [the people] recite dirges, and comfort the mourners, and eulogies are delivered, if the departed person is dignified enough [to deserve them], with words expounding [on the Torah], and with stories of his dignity, regarding his good deeds or his wisdom and ancestry. Afterwards, they carry him with poles on their shoulders,¹³⁸ and the whole community together recites the Acknowledgment of the Judgment [*zidduq ha-din*],¹³⁹ with Biblical verses appropriate for the occasion, as presented at the end of the second volume of the prayer book. After the burial, the family members and other relatives sit on the ground for seven days, and observe mourning for

¹³⁸ That is, the coffin is held up by poles, which the people bear on their shoulders.

¹³⁹ Verses accepting that God's decision to take the person's life has been just.

ההורים נוהגים הבנים אבלות קרוב לשנה; וכן הבעל לאשה והאשה לבעל מתאבלים שנה. ובשבעה ימי האבלות חיבים כל בני הקהלה לבקר האבלים ולנחמם במאכל ובכוס תנחומין בסדר, כל אחד. ומנהג האבלות שפורש האדם עצמו מכל מיני תענוגים ותפנוקים ומתרחק מן הדברים המשמחים. ובדרך כלל משנה ומחליף מלבושיו ודבורו וכל תנועותיו כדרך האבלים, כמו שמבאר בארץ בספר האדרת, בהקש מנבואת יחזקאל. ועל-כל-פנים, מדין תורה אין צריך להתאבל יותר מדי, כמו שכתוב: **בְּנִים אַתֶּם לַה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לֹא תִתְגַּדְּדוּ וְלֹא תִשְׁיִמוּ קִרְחָה בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמַת (דברים יד:א);** כי זה המנהג היה בעובדי עבודה זרה, שנאמר: **כִּי כָל הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הָלַךְ אַחֲרַי בָּעַל פְּעוֹר הִשְׁמִידוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵיךְ מִקִּרְבְּךָ (דברים יא:א).** ואנחנו הבטחנו במאמר ואתם הדבקים בה' אלהיכם חיים כלכם היום (שם, פסוק ד).

thirty days. In honor of parents, the children¹⁴⁰ observe mourning for close to a year; and similarly, a husband for his wife, and a wife for her husband, observe mourning for a year. During the seven days of mourning, each one of the members of the community is obligated to visit the mourners, and to comfort them with food and a cup of consolation in [that] order, each one. The practice of mourning is to refrain from all kinds of pleasures and indulgences, and to stay away from things causing happiness. In general, the bereaved change their clothes, their way of speaking, and all their activities, in the way of mourners, as explained in detail in the book *Addereth*, [derived] by Analogy from the prophecy of Ezekiel.¹⁴¹ In any event, the law of the Torah is that one does not need to mourn too much, as it is written: *Ye are the children of the Lord your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead* (Deuteronomy 14:1). For this [excessive mourning by self-laceration] was the custom of the idol worshippers; [and we are obligated to be different from them,] as it is said: *for all the men that followed the Baal of Peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from the midst of thee* (Deuteronomy 4:3). And we were promised in the words [of the next verse]: *But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day* (Deuteronomy 4:4).¹⁴²

140 Or “sons;” it is unclear if the author means to include daughters or not, since we see that he makes gender distinctions regarding various other commandments.

141 In Ezekiel 24:15–18, God commands the prophet not to observe mourning practices for his dead wife. There are several things that he is told to do or not do; from this, we can derive that other mourners are supposed to do exactly the opposite.

142 The author concludes the book with an optimistic Biblical verse, offering blessing to his readers; this is a common way for Jewish books to end.

Appendix

As noted in the introduction, we have made several changes to Neubauer's edition of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo*. We have catalogued those changes here:

(i) Addition of Paragraph Breaks:

- P. 18: ולהבין שנות דור ודור;
- P. 36: פצע ולא מילה;
- P. 40: ובעבור אלו הב' פעלות נאמר שנית;
- P. 40: בות מלאכות כאשר הם ידועים בספרי החכמים;
- P. 44: הכבוי בשבת מלאכה;
- P. 52: בספרי הקראים ימצא;
- P. 56: החקים האלה (דברים טז:יב);
- P. 58: מתרים בפסח;
- P. 76: ועניני התפלות ידוע בסדור;
- P. 90: מרובות מהפרשיות וע"כ נהגו זה המנהג;
- P. 98: ונשלמה פרים שפתינו;
- P. 98: דבקו לש"ת;
- P. 102: before each of the principles of faith in chapter 16;
- P. 116: פתיל תכלת ולא הודו להם חכמינו;
- P. 118: יישר ארחותיך;
- P. 120: וטומאת יום לבד;
- P. 124: כפל שמונים יום;
- P. 126: ממאמר במים יובא;
- P. 132: הדם אשר בכל הגוף;
- P. 134: ובספרי השחיטות של חכמינו;
- P. 140: והם סנפיר וקשקשת;
- P. 142: הקצף והלכלוך;
- P. 144: מקילים כאשר נתבאר למעלה;
- P. 156: before each of the six types of forbidden sexual relationships listed in chapter 22;
- P. 164: ותעבור הבכורה; and
- P. 164: ומוהרה המאוחר מנכסיו.

(ii) Correction of Clear Typographical Errors:

- P. 2: המתששלת, which we have fixed to המשתלשלת;
- P. 10: והחלקין, which we have fixed to והחלוקין, as it appears correctly in the title at the head of that chapter;
- P. 24: כמוכן in a single word, which we have fixed to כמו כן;
- P. 30: סבב הירושה, which we have fixed to סבל;
- P. 50: האצטגנינים, which we have fixed to האצטגנינים;
- P. 52: קצת הראייה, which we have fixed to קשת הראייה (see our explanation in footnote 24);
- P. 74: ישראל, which we have fixed to ישרל;
- P. 74: כ"ט, which we have fixed to בט' (for 9 Tammuz is the date given by Scripture (Jeremiah 39:2) for the breaching of the city walls, and the traditional Karaite date for the Fast of Tammuz, and, moreover, even our author says below that the summer mourning period begins on 9 Tammuz);
- P. 84: התנאים, which we have fixed to התאנים.
- P. 122: וצריכה, which we have fixed to צריכה;
- P. 124: החפירות, which we have fixed to החפורות;
- P. 130: ויהוא ענין השחיטה, and we have fixed the first word to והוא;
- P. 148: קכ"ו קנ"ו, שיר המעלות של קנ"ו, which we have fixed to קכ"ו (for our Bible contains only 150 Psalms. It is clear from MS New York JTS 3325, of the long version of *Appiryon 'Asa Lo* that the correct reading is קכ"ו); and
- P. 162: אין לן אב, and we have fixed the middle word to לו.

(iii) Correcting of Biblical Quotations:

- P. 32: Ed. Neubauer prints בשור וחמור, whereas the Biblical text has בשור ובחמר. We have fixed this quotation to fit the Biblical text, though we have kept the version of ed. Neubauer later in the sentence, where the verse is discussed.
- P. 104: Ed. Neubauer prints לבני ישראל; we have fixed this to לפני בני ישראל, in accordance with the Biblical text.