



Sanhedrin 55a  
The William Davidson Talmud (Koren - Steinsaltz)



55a

- הבא על הבהמה בין כדרכה בין שלא כדרכה והאשה המביאה את הבהמה עליה בין כדרכה בין שלא כדרכה חייב

or one who engages in intercourse with an animal, whether in a typical manner or in an atypical manner, i.e., anal intercourse, and similarly a woman who engages in intercourse with an animal, whether in a typical manner or in an atypical manner, is liable. This *baraita* sets the minimum age for the passive male at nine years and one day.

- דרש רב נחמן בר רב חסדא באשה שני משכבות ובבהמה משכב אחד

Rav Naḥman bar Rav Ḥisda taught: With regard to a woman there



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*baraita* sets the minimum age for the passive male at nine years and one day.

- דרש רב נחמן בר רב חסדא באשה שני משכבות ובבהמה משכב 2

אחד

Rav Naḥman bar Rav Ḥisda taught: With regard to a woman there are **two** manners of **lying**. A woman who engages in intercourse with an animal, whether it is vaginal or anal intercourse, is liable. **But with regard to** a man who engages in intercourse with **an animal** there is only **one** manner of **lying**, i.e., vaginal intercourse.

- מתקיף לה רב פפא אדרבה אשה דאורחה היא אמשכב מיחייב 3

אמידעם אחרינא לא מחייב בהמה דלאו אורחא היא לחייב עלה על כל נקב ונקב

Rav Pappa objects to this opinion: On the contrary, a woman, whose



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only **one** manner of **lying**, i.e., vaginal intercourse.

- מתקיף לה רב פפא אדרבה אשה דאורחה היא אמשכב מיחייב  
אמידעם אחרינא לא מחייב בהמה דלאו אורחא היא לחייב עלה על  
כל נקב ונקב

Rav Pappa objects to this opinion: **On the contrary**, a woman, whose **typical manner** of intercourse is vaginal, is **rendered liable for lying** with an animal only in that manner; she is **not rendered liable for something else**, i.e., for engaging in anal intercourse with an animal. With regard to a man who engages in intercourse with **an animal**, by contrast, **since it is not its typical** conduct to engage in intercourse with a man, he **should be rendered liable for** engaging in intercourse with it through each and every orifice.

- תניא (דלא כתרוייהו) זכר בן תשע שנים ויום אחד הבא על הבהמה



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- תניא (דלא כתרוייהו) זכר בן תשע שנים ויום אחד הבא על הבהמה 4  
בין כדרכה בין שלא כדרכה והאשה המביאה את הבהמה עליה בין  
כדרכה בין שלא כדרכה חייב

It is taught in a *baraita* in accordance with neither of their opinions:  
One who engages in homosexual intercourse with a male aged nine  
years and one day, or one who engages in intercourse with an  
animal, whether in a typical manner, or in an atypical manner, i.e.,  
anal intercourse, and similarly, a woman who engages in intercourse  
with an animal, whether in a typical manner or in an atypical  
manner, are liable. Evidently, there is no difference between the nature  
of the transgression of a woman who engages in bestiality and a man  
who engages in bestiality in this regard.

- א"ל רבינא לרבא המערה בזכור מהו 5



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א"ל רבינא לרבא המערה בזכור מהו 5

**Ravina said to Rava:** With regard to **one who performs the initial stage of intercourse with another male**, i.e., insertion of the penis, without completing the intercourse, **what is the *halakha*?** Is he liable for engaging in homosexual intercourse?



המערה בזכור (ויקרא יח, כב) משכבי אשה כתיב ביה אלא המערה בבהמה מהו 6

The Gemara comments: With regard to **one who performs the initial stage of intercourse with a male**, what is the question? The expression “**as with a woman**” (Leviticus 18:22) is written with regard to him, which indicates that any act that is considered an act of intercourse with a woman is also considered an act of intercourse with a man. **Rather**, the question is as follows: With regard to **one who performs the initial**





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- המערה בזכור (ויקרא יח, כב) משכבי אשה כתיב ביה אלא המערה  
בבהמה מהו 6

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- א"ל אם אינו ענין להעראה דכתיבא גבי אחות אביו ואחות אמו  
דלא צריכא דהא איתקש להעראה דגדה תניהו ענין להעראה  
דבהמה 7



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- א"ל אם אינו ענין להעראה דכתיבא גבי אחות אביו ואחות אמו  
דלא צריכא דהא איתקש להעראה דנדה תניהו ענין להעראה  
דבהמה

Rava **said to him:** In the verse: “And you shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister nor of your father’s sister; for he has made naked [*he’era*] his relative” (Leviticus 20:19), the word *he’era* alludes to the initial stage of intercourse [*ha’ara*]. **If the word *he’era* is not needed for the matter of the initial stage of intercourse in the context where it is written, i.e., for the prohibition of intercourse with one’s father’s sister and one’s mother’s sister, as it is not necessary in that context since the *halakha* of the initial stage of intercourse with regard to all forbidden sexual relations is compared by the Torah to the *halakha* of the initial stage of intercourse mentioned with regard to a menstruating woman, apply it instead to the matter of the initial**



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- מכדי בהמה מחייבי מיתות ב"ד היא למה לי דכתיב להעראה דידה 8





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- מכדי בהמה מחייבי מיתות ב"ד היא למה לי דכתיב להעראה דידה  
גבי חייבי כריתות לכתביה גבי חייבי מיתות בית דין וליגמור חייבי  
מיתות בית דין מחייבי מיתות בית דין

The Gemara asks: **Since** one who engages in intercourse with **an animal is among those who are liable** to receive a court-imposed death penalty, **why do I** need the *halakha* of one who performs the **initial stage of intercourse with an animal to be written** in a verse **concerning those who are liable** to receive *karet*, i.e., the case of one who engages in intercourse with his aunt? **Let the Torah write this *halakha* with regard to those who are liable** to receive a court-imposed death penalty, **and** one would then **derive** this *halakha* concerning **those who are liable** to receive a court-imposed death penalty **from** the *halakha* of **those who are liable** to receive a court-imposed death penalty, and not from the less relevant *halakha* of one who engages in intercourse with his aunt who is punished with *karet*.



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the punishment of those who are liable to receive a court-imposed death penalty, and not from the less relevant *halakha* of one who engages in intercourse with his aunt, who is punished with *karet*.

- הואיל וכוליה קרא לדרשא הוא דאתי כתיבא נמי מילתא דדרשא 9

The Gemara answers: **Since the entire verse** about the punishment of one who engages in intercourse with the sister of his father or mother is superfluous, and **comes for the sake of exposition**, as this *halakha* is already stated in other verses (see **Leviticus 18:12–13**), this **matter**, i.e., the fact that the initial stage of intercourse is halakhically defined as intercourse, **is also written** in this verse for the purpose of an **exposition**, i.e., in order to indicate that this principle holds true with regard to bestiality as well.

- בעא מיניה רב אחדבוי בר אמי מרב ששת המערה בעצמו מהו אמר ליה קבסתן 10



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- בעא מיניה רב אחדבוי בר אמי מרב ששת המערה בעצמו מהו אמר ליה קבסתן 10

**Rav Aḥadevoi bar Ami asked Rav Sheshet:** With regard to **one who performs the initial stage of homosexual intercourse on himself**, what is the *halakha*? Is he liable for homosexual intercourse? Rav Sheshet **said to him:** You disgust me with your question; such an act is not possible.

- אמר רב אשי מאי תיבעי לך בקושי לא משכחת לה כי משכחת לה במשמש מת למאן דאמר משמש מת בעריות פטור הכא פטור ולמאן דאמר חייב הכא מיחייב תרתי מיחייב אשוכב ומיחייב אנשכב 11



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אא

- אמר רב אשי מאי תיבעי לך בקושי לא משכחת לה כי משכחת לה במשמש מת למאן דאמר משמש מת בעריות פטור הכא פטור ולמאן דאמר חייב הכא מיהייב תרתי מיהייב אשוכב ומיהייב אנשכב

**Rav Ashi said:** What is your dilemma? With regard to doing so with an erect penis, you cannot find such a case. You can find it only when one performs this act of intercourse with a flaccid penis. And the *halakha* is subject to a dispute: According to the one who says that a man who engages in intercourse with a flaccid penis, with one of those with whom relations are forbidden, is exempt, as that is not considered intercourse, here too, when one does so to himself, he is exempt. And according to the one who says that he is liable, he is rendered liable here for transgressing two prohibitions according to Rabbi Yishmael; he is rendered liable for engaging in homosexual



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- בעו מיניה מרב ששת עובד כוכבים הבא על הבהמה מהו תקלה וקלון בעיניו והכא תקלה איכא קלון ליכא או דילמא תקלה אע"פ שאין קלון 12

The students asked Rav Sheshet: With regard to a gentile who engages in intercourse with an animal, what is the *halakha*? Must the animal be killed? The Gemara elaborates: **Do we need** two reasons to kill the animal, namely that it caused a **calamity and** that it caused **shame, and** therefore **here** the animal is not killed, as while **there is a calamity**, as it caused a person to sin and be executed, **there is no shame**, as the Jewish court is not responsible for the shame of a gentile? **Or perhaps** one reason is enough, and an animal is killed because of the **calamity** it caused **even if there is no shame?**

- אמר רב ששת תניתוה מה אילנות שאין אוכלין ואין שותין ואין 13





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- אמר רב ששת תניתוה מה אילנות שאין אוכלין ואין שותין ואין מריחין אמרה תורה השחת שרוף וכלה הואיל ובא לאדם תקלה על ידן המתעה את חבירו מדרכי חיים לדרכי מיתה על אחת כמה וכמה

**Rav Sheshet said:** You learned the answer to this question in a *baraita*: If with regard to trees, which neither eat nor drink nor smell, and nevertheless, if they are used in idolatrous rites, the Torah says: **Destroy, burn, and demolish** them (see Deuteronomy, chapters 7, 12), and the reason is since a calamity was caused to people by them, then with regard to one who leads another astray from the ways of life to the ways of death, all the more so he is liable to be destroyed. It can be derived from here that any item used for a transgression that renders one liable to be executed should be destroyed.



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- אלא מעתה עובד כוכבים המשתחוה לבהמתו תיתסר ומקטלא מי איכא מידי דלישראל לא אסר ולעובד כוכבים אסר 14

The Gemara challenges this ruling: **If that is so**, in the case of a **gentile who bows down to his animal**, the animal **should be forbidden**, i.e., it should be prohibited to derive benefit from it, **and it should be killed**. The Gemara answers: **Is there anything that is not forbidden to a Jew, but is forbidden to a gentile?** Since a Jew who bows down to an animal does not render it forbidden (see *Temura* 29b), a gentile who does so does not render it forbidden either.

- ישראל גופיה ליתסר מידי דהוה ארביעה אמר אביי זה קלונו מרובה וזה קלונו מועט 15

The Gemara challenges that assumption: With regard to a **Jew himself** who bows down to his animal, **let the animal be forbidden, just as it is**



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- ישראל גופיה ליתסר מידי דהוה ארביעה אמר אביי זה קלונו מרובה 15  
וזה קלונו מועט

The Gemara challenges that assumption: With regard to a **Jew himself** who bows down to his animal, **let the animal be forbidden, just as it is in a case of bestiality**, when the animal is forbidden and is killed.

**Abaye says:** The cases are not the same. In **this** case, where one commits bestiality, **his shame is great; but in that** case, where one worships an animal, **his shame is slight**, and he will not be so disgraced if the animal is left alive.

- והרי אילנות דאין קלונן מרובה ואמרה תורה השחת שרוף וכלה 16  
בבעלי חיים קאמרינן דחס רחמנא עליהו

The Gemara asks: **But** with regard to **trees** that are used in idolatrous



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ישראל גופיה ליתסר מידי דהוה ארביעה אמר אביי זה קלונו מרובה  
וזה קלונו מועט

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- רבא אמר אמרה תורה בהמה נהנית מעבירה תיהרג 17

**Rava says** that there is a different reason for the distinction between an animal that was worshipped and an animal with which one committed bestiality: **The Torah states** that because the **animal enjoyed the transgression, it must be killed**. This cannot be said about an animal that was worshipped.

- והרי אילנות דאין נהנין מעבירה ואמרה תורה השחת שרוף וכלה  
בבעלי חיים קאמרינן דחס רחמנא עלייהו 18

The Gemara asks: **But** with regard to **trees** that are used in idolatrous rites, **which do not enjoy the transgression**, nevertheless **the Torah says: Destroy, burn, and demolish**. The Gemara answers: **We are speaking of living animals**. The *halakha* is different there, as **the Merciful One has pity on them**. Therefore, an animal is killed only if





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that was worshipped.

- והרי אילנות דאין נהנין מעבירה ואמרה תורה השחת שרוף וכלה  
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- ת"ש ד"א שלא תהא בהמה עוברת בשוק ויאמרו זו היא שנסקל  
פלוגי על ידה מאי לאו 19

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** a resolution from the mishna to the dilemma concerning an animal with which a gentile committed



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it enjoyed the transgression.

- ת"ש ד"א שלא תהא בהמה עוברת בשוק ויאמרו זו היא שנסקל פלוני על ידה מאי לאו 19

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** a resolution from the mishna to the dilemma concerning an animal with which a gentile committed bestiality: **Alternatively**, it is **so that this animal will not pass through the marketplace, and those who see it will say: This is the animal because of which so-and-so was stoned**, and its existence would shame his memory. **What, is it not**

55b

- מדסיפא תקלה וקלון רישא תקלה בלא קלון והיכי דמי עובד כוכבים הבא על הבהמה 1