

Babylonian Talmud: Tractate ‘Abodah Zarah

Folio 22a

— R. Simeon b. Eleazar has not in mind the metayage principle at all; but the reason why he permits in the case of an idolater is because, if he is told [to abstain from work on forbidden days] he obeys. But a Cuthean, too, if told would surely obey! — A Cuthean would not obey; he would say: 'I am more learned than thou!' If that is so, why then mention the objection of the field being called by the owner's name; he could have given the reason of not placing a stumbling block before the blind?¹ — He mentions that reason as an additional one, as if to say: There is the one reason of [not placing a stumbling block] before the blind, and there is also the objection of its being called by his name.

Two² saffron-growers, [one of whom was] a heathen who took charge of the field on the Sabbath, and [the other] an Israelite who did so on the Sunday, came before Raba; he declared the partnership as permissible. Rabina, however, cited the following in refutation of Raba's ruling: If an Israelite and a heathen leased a field in partnership, the Israelite must not say subsequently to the heathen, Take as thy share the profit in respect of the Sabbath, and I will take as mine that in respect of a week-day;³ only when such a condition was made originally is it permitted. [Likewise] if they just calculate the profit⁴ it is forbidden! Whereupon he [Raba] blushed. Subsequently, the fact came to light that the partners had indeed laid down that condition originally.

R. Gabiha of Be-Kathil⁵ said: That was a case of 'orlah⁶ plants, the produce of which the heathen was to eat during the forbidden years and the Israelite during [a corresponding number of] permitted years, and they came before Raba who permitted it.⁷ But did not Rabina cite a statement in objection to Raba's ruling? — [No,] it was in order to support it.⁸ Then why did Raba blush? — That never occurred at all.

The question was asked: What if no arrangements at all were made? — Come and hear [the above passage]: 'Only when such a condition was made originally is it permitted,' hence, if there was no arrangement it is forbidden. Continue, then, with the next part: 'If they calculated the profit it is forbidden,' which implies that, if there was no arrangement it is permitted! — The fact is, no answer can be deduced from this passage.

CHAPTER II

MISHNAH. ONE SHOULD NOT PLACE CATTLE IN HEATHENS' INNS,⁹ BECAUSE THEY ARE SUSPECTED OF IMMORAL PRACTICE WITH THEM. A WOMAN SHOULD NOT BE ALONE WITH THEM, BECAUSE THEY ARE SUSPECTED OF LEWDNESS, NOR SHOULD A

MAN BE ALONE WITH THEM, BECAUSE THEY ARE SUSPECTED OF SHEDDING BLOOD.

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Original footnotes renumbered. See [Structure of the Talmud Files](#)

1. Lev. XIX, 14. V. *supra*. 6a.
2. Lit., 'these'.
3. As the partnership was entered into unconditionally, the duty of working the field devolved equally on both partners. The work carried out by the heathen on the Sabbath is therefore done by him, in respect of one half thereof, as the agent of the Israelite.
4. If the Israelite apportions the profits in respect of the Sabbath to the heathen even without telling him explicitly to work on the Sabbath it is likewise forbidden, as in the absence of specific conditions, the assumption is that the heathen is to work on behalf of the Jew on the Sabbath — which is in direct opposition to Raba's ruling.
5. [On the Tigris, north of Bagdad (Obermeyer, *op. cit.* p. 147).]
6. Lit., 'uncircumcised', newly-planted trees, the produce of which is forbidden during the first three years. V. Lev. XIX, 23.
7. This is quite in order since even during the forbidden years, the Israelite is only forbidden to eat of the produce, but is permitted to do the work. There is therefore no objection to the heathen's working even though he does so as the Israelite's agent.
8. The statement in Rabina's citation, that where the prohibition does not extend to the work — as in the case of laying down the conditions originally — the arrangement is permitted, distinctly supports Raba's ruling in regard to produce of 'orlah trees.
9. (On the ill-repute of the Greek and Roman inns, v. Elmslie a.l.]

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‘Abodah Zarah 22b

GEMARA. The following was cited in contradiction: One may buy of them cattle for a sacrifice, and it need not be feared lest it committed, or had been used for, an immoral act, or had been designated as an offering to idols, or had been worshipped.¹ Now we are quite right not to fear about its having been designated as an offering to idols or having been made an object of worship, since if it had been so designated or worshipped, its owner would not have sold it; but we surely ought to fear as to committing an immoral act!² — Said R. Tahlifa in the name of R. Shila b. Abina in the name of Rab: A heathen would have regard for his cattle, lest it becomes barren.³ This would indeed hold good in the case of female cattle but what answer would you give in the case of males? — Said R. Kahana: Because it has a deteriorating effect on their flesh. Then what about that [Baraitha] which has been taught: 'One may buy cattle of any heathen shepherd'; ought we not to fear lest he used it for an immoral purpose?⁴ — The heathen shepherd would be afraid of forfeiting his fee. What then about this [other Baraitha] which has been taught: 'One should not entrust cattle to a heathen shepherd';⁵ why not assume that the heathen shepherd would be afraid of forfeiting his fee? — They fear detection by one another since they know a good deal about it, but they are not afraid of us who do not know much about it. Rabbah said: This is what the popular proverb says. 'As the stylus penetrates the stone so one cunning mind detects another.' In that case, neither should we buy male cattle⁶ from women, for fear of their having used them for immoral practice! — She would be afraid of being followed about by the animal. What then about this which R. Joseph learnt: 'A widow should not rear dogs, nor accommodate a student as a guest'? Now it is quite right in the case of a student, as she might reckon on his modesty,⁷ but in the case of a dog why not say that she would be afraid of being followed about by it? — Since it would follow about on being thrown a piece of meat, people will say that it is because of being given such pieces that it follows her. Why then should we not leave female animals alone with female heathens?⁸ — Said Mar 'Ukba b. Hama: Because heathens

frequent their neighbours' wives, and should one by chance not find her in, and find the cattle there, he might use it immorally. You may also say that even if he should find her in he might use the animal, as a Master has said:⁹ Heathens prefer the cattle of Israelites to their own wives, for R. Johanan said: When the serpent came unto Eve he infused filthy lust into her.¹⁰ If that be so [the same should apply] also to Israel! — When Israel stood at Sinai that lust was eliminated, but the lust of idolaters, who did not stand at Sinai, did not cease.

The question was asked: How about fowls?¹¹ — Come and hear: Rab Judah said in the name of Samuel on behalf of R. Hanina: I saw a heathen buy a goose in the market, use it immorally, and then strangle it, roast, and eat it. Also R. Jeremiah of Difti¹² said: I saw an Arab who bought a side [of meat], pierced it for the purpose of an immoral act, after which act he roasted and ate it.

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Original footnotes renumbered. See [Structure of the Talmud Files](#)

1. Any of which uses would disqualify it for the purpose of sacrifice (Tosef. 'A.Z. II). V. B.K. 40b.
2. The Baraitha which rules out such possibility is therefore in conflict with our Mishnah.
3. Hence the Baraitha does not suspect immoral practice in the case of the heathen's own cattle, while our Mishnah, which deals with other people's cattle left in a heathen's inn, does suspect it.
4. As the cattle does not belong to him.
5. *Supra* 15b, Tosef. A.Z. III.
6. For sacrifices.
7. Which would deter him from making it known.
8. *V. supra*, 15b.
9. Git. 38a.
10. Shab. 146a; Yeb. 103b.
11. Does the suspicion connected with animals apply to them?
12. [Identified with Dibtha below the Tigris, S.E. Babylon, Obermeyer, *op. cit.* p. 197.]

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