

## XII.

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### BAVLI SHABBAT CHAPTER TWELVE

### FOLIOS 102B-105A

#### 12:1

- A. He who builds — how much does he build so as to be liable [on that count]?
- B. He who builds — in any measure at all.
- C. He who hews stone, hits with a hammer or adze, bores — in any measure at all is liable.
- D. This is the governing principle: Whoever on the Sabbath performs a forbidden act of labor and [the result of] his act of labor endures is liable.
- E. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, “Also: He who hits with a hammer on an anvil when he is performing an act of labor is liable.
- F. “For he is tantamount to one who improves [prepares] for [another] act of labor.”

- I.1**
- A. **He who builds** — *in any measure at all: But what purpose could possibly be served [by “any measure at all” of building]?*
  - B. Said R. Jeremiah, “A poor person may dig a hole for hiding his money.”
  - C. *And along these same lines in regard to the tabernacle?*
    - D. Those who sew the hangings would dig holes to hide their needles.
  - E. *Said Abbaye, “But since they would rust in such holes, people wouldn’t do so. Rather, because a poor person makes the legs of a small stove to put a pot on it.”*

F. *And along these same lines in regard to the tabernacle?*

G. Those who boiled dyes for dyeing the hangings, when their finished dyes didn't meet the need, would make the feet of a small stove to put a small kettle on it."

- H. R. Aha bar Jacob said, "There is no poverty in a situation of wealth. [Such a thing could not have happened in the building of the tabernacle.] Rather: A household who finds a hole in his dwelling would close it up [with the most minor act of building]."

I. *And along these same lines in regard to the tabernacle?*

J. When a board got wormy, one would drop molten lead into it and close the hole [and that would be a case of building].

- I.2** A. Said Samuel, "He who on the Sabbath arranges a building stone [moving it around to find the right spot (Freedman)] is guilty."
- B. *An objection was raised:* If one person puts down the stone and another party the mortar, the one who puts on the mortar is liable [but not the one who puts down the stone, contrary to Samuel's allegation].
- C. *Well, by your reasoning, look at what follows:* R. Yosé says, "And even if one lifted up the stone and set it on a row of stones, he is liable." *Rather, there are three classifications of building, in connection with the bottom, the middle, and the top rows of stone. The lowest one requires putting the stones in place and putting in dirt around the stones; the middle range requires mortar; the upper range of stones require placing the stones [but not with the care required for the bottom row].*

**II.1** A. **He who hews stone:**

- B. *On what count is hewing stone culpable?*
- C. Rab said, "On the count of building."
- D. And Samuel said, "On the count of striking with a hammer."

**II.2** A He who makes a hole in a hen coop [for ventilation (Freedman)] — *on what count is he culpable?*

- B. Rab said, "On the count of building."
- C. And Samuel said, "On the count of striking with a hammer."

**II.3** A. *One who inserts a pin through the eyelet of a spade [Freedman] — on what count is hewing stone culpable?*

- B. Rab said, "On the count of building."

C. And Samuel said, “On the count of striking with a hammer.”

**II.4** A. *And all three items are required. For had we been informed of the first, it might have been thought that it is in the first in particular that Rab took the position that he did, because that is how people build, but as to making a hole in a hen coop, which is not a usual way of building, I might say that he concurs with Samuel. And if we had been informed of the latter, then in the latter it might have been thought that Rab took the position that he did because it is comparable to building, since it is made for ventilation; but as to the pin in the eyelet of a spade, which is not even comparable to an act of building, I might suppose he concurs with Samuel. And if we had been told only the third item, I might have supposed that only here Samuel rules as he does, but in the former two cases, I might suppose that he agrees with Rab. So they are all required.*

- II.5** A. R. Nathan bar Oshayya asked R. Yohanan, “On what count is hewing stone culpable?” He made a gesture to him with his hand, as if to say, “On the count of striking with a hammer.”
- B. *But haven’t we learned in the Mishnah the formulation: **He who hews stone and hits with a hammer?***
- C. Say: He who hews stone, he who hits with a hammer.
- D. *Come and take note: **[103A] He who bores — in any measure at all is liable.** From Rab’s perspective that poses no problem, since it looks like boring a hole for a building. But from Samuel’s perspective [that boring a hole is not an act of building], this is hardly a completion of an act of labor [since the hole has to be filled in]!*
- E. *Here with what situation do we deal? A case in which he pierces it with an iron pick and leaves the pick in, so that it really does complete the work.*

- III.1** A. **This is the governing principle: Whoever on the Sabbath performs a forbidden act of labor and [the result of] his act of labor endures is liable:**
- B. *What is encompassed under the governing principle?*
- C. *Hollowing out a small measure with a bigger measure. [Freedman: One might think that this labor is incomplete, since he will probably enlarge the measure subsequently to the larger size; therefore the general principle teaches that this is a complete act of labor.]*

**IV.1 A.** Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, “Also: He who hits with a hammer on an anvil when he is performing an act of labor is liable. For he is tantamount to one who improves [prepares] for [another] act of labor”:

- B. *But what does he do [that this constitutes an act of labor]?*
- C. *Both Rabbah and R. Joseph say, “It is because he trains his hand for the work.”*
- D. *Rahbah’s sons found this hard: “If so, if someone sees an act of labor done on the Sabbath and learns how to do it, here, too, are you going to maintain that he is culpable [but that is impossible, his having done not a thing]?”*
- E. *Rather, both Abbaye and Raba said, “It is because those who beat out the foil for the tabernacle did that kind of work.”*

F. *So, too, it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

G. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, “Also: He who hits with a hammer on an anvil when he is performing an act of labor is liable. For those who beat out the foil for the tabernacle did that kind of work” [T. **Shab. 11:**].

### 12:2

- A. **He who ploughs — in any measure whatsoever,**
- B. **he who (1) weeds, he who (2) cuts off dead leaves, and he who (3) prunes — in any measure whatsoever,**
- C. **is liable.**
- D. **He who gathers branches of wood —**
- E. **if [it is] to improve the field — in any measure at all;**
- F. **if [it is] for a fire —**
- G. **in a measure [of wood] sufficient to cook a small egg,**
- H. **[is liable].**
- I. **He who gathers herbs**
- J. **if [it is] to improve the field —**
- K. **in any measure at all;**
- L. **if it is for cattle [to eat] — in the measure of a lamb’s mouthful, [is liable].**

**I.1 A.** [He who ploughs — in any measure whatsoever:] *So what good is that small bit of ploughing?*

- B. *It’s good for planting pumpkin seeds.*

- C. So, too, in the building of the tabernacle, it was fit for planting one stalk of vegetable dyes.

**II.1 A. He who weeds, he who cuts off dead leaves, and he who prunes — in any measure whatsoever, is liable:**

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*  
C. He who picks endives and cuts greens, if this is for human consumption — one is liable for doing so on the Sabbath and cutting a volume of a dried fig;  
D. if it is for animal food, one is liable for cutting or picking enough for a kid's mouthful;  
E. if it is for fuel, it must be enough fuel to boil an egg lightly;  
F. if it is to improve the soil [leaving room for other plants], it is however little.

**II.2 A. But aren't all of these actions good for improving the soil?**

B. *Both Rabbah and R. Joseph said, "We learned the rule for a swamp" [where it won't matter].*

C. *Abbaye said, "You may even say that it refers to a field that is not a swamp, but it is in an instance in which he didn't have the intention of improving the soil by doing these things."*

D. *But lo, both Abbaye and Raba say, "R. Simeon concedes in a case of 'cut off his head but let him not die'" [that a labor performed incidentally in the course of doing a permitted deed is itself permitted, unless that labor follows inevitably from the latter, in which case it is equivalent to a forbidden labor (Freedman)].*

E. *That would apply if he was working someone else's field [in which case he would be uninterested in any improvement these actions would bring about].*

**12:3**

- A. **He who writes two letters,**  
B. **whether with his right hand or with his left,**  
C. **whether the same letter or two different letters,**  
D. **whether with different pigments,**  
E. **in any alphabet, is liable.**  
F. **Said R. Yosé, "They imposed liability [on one who writes] two letters only because of making a mark.**

- G. **“For so did they write [make a mark] on the boards of the tabernacle, to determine which belonged with which.”**
- H. **Said R. Judah, “We find that a short name comes from a long name, Shem from Shimeon or from Shemuel, Noah from Nahor, Dan from Daniel, Gad from Gadiel.”**

- I.1**
- A. **[Whether with his right hand or with his left:]** *There is no problem understanding why one should be liable for writing with the right hand, which is that that is how writing is done. But why should one be liable for writing with the left hand? Lo, that isn't the ordinary way of writing!*
  - B. Said R. Jeremiah, “We have learned this rule concerning a left-handed person.”
  - C. *Well, then, let the left hand of such a person be classified as is the right hand of all other persons, and let him be liable for writing with the left hand but not with the right hand!*
  - D. Rather, said Abbaye, “It refers to someone who is ambidextrous.”
  - E. *R. Jacob son of the daughter of Jacob said, “Lo, who is the authority behind this rule? It is R. Yosé, who has said, ‘They imposed liability [on one who writes] two letters only because of making a mark.’”*
  - F. *But lo, since the latter clause contains the statement of R. Yosé, the former clause oughtn't to stand for the position of R. Yosé!*
  - G. *The whole of the passage represents the position of R. Yosé.*

- II.1**
- A. **Said R. Judah, “We find that a short name comes from a long name, Shem from Shimeon or from Shemuel, Noah from Nahor, Dan from Daniel, Gad from Gadiel”:**
  - B. *Then it is for writing two different letters that R. Judah imposes liability, but for writing the same letter twice he does not. But hasn't it been taught on Tannaite authority:*
  - C. **“And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to the people of Israel, “If anyone sins unwittingly in any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and does any one of them””’ —**
  - D. **Might one suppose that one is liable only if he writes the entire word [on the Sabbath, thus deliberately violating the law], weaves the entire garment, makes the entire sieve?**
  - E. **Scripture says, “...of the things.”**

- F. If it is "...of the things," then might one think that liability is incurred even if one wrote a single letter, wove a single knot, made a single square on a sieve or sifter?
- G. Scripture says, "...and does any one of them...."
- H. **[103B]** How so? One is liable only if one writes a syllable of a word that itself can be regarded as a word on its own, such as Sim from Simeon or from Samuel, Noah from Nahor, Dan from Daniel, Gad from Gadiel."
- I. R. Judah says, "Even if one wrote two letters, should they form an entire word, he is liable, for example, SS, TT, RR, GG, HH."
- J. Said R. Yosé, "But is it on the count of writing that one incurs liability? Is it not on the count of making a mark? For so do they make a mark on the beams of the tabernacle, to determine which belonged to which" [T. **Shab. 11:6B-D/M. Shab. 12:3H**].
- K. "Therefore if one wrote at the head of one writing sheet on one side and one writing sheet on the other side [following Tosefta's wording], he is liable [T. **Shab. 11:7A, C**].
- L. R. Simeon says, "...and does any one of them':
- M. "Might one think that liability is incurred only if one writes out the entire word, weave the entire garment, make the entire sieve?
- N. "Scripture says, '...of the things.'
- O. "If it is '...of the things,' then might one think that liability is incurred even if one wrote a single letter, wove a single knot, made a single square on a sieve or sifter?
- P. "Scripture says, '...and does any one of them....'
- Q. "How so?
- R. "One is liable only for doing a type of work the like of which endures."
- S. R. Yosé says, "...and does any one of them':
- T. "There are occasions on which one is liable for a single offering on account of a sequence of deeds, and there are times that one is liable for each and every deed that he does" [Sifra XXV:II.1-3/35. Parashat Vayyiqra Dibura Dehobah Perek 1].
- U. *Now the Tannaite formulation, in any event, contains the statement: R. Judah says, "Even if one wrote two letters, should they form an entire word, he is liable, for example, SS, TT, RR, GG, HH"!*

- V. *No problem, the one represents his own view, the other the view of his master, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:* R. Judah says in the name of Rabban Gamaliel, “Even if one wrote the same letter twice, for example, SS, TT, RR, GG, HH.”

**II.2** A. *What R. Simeon says is the same as the initial Tannaite authority! And should you say that between them would be writing the double A of “I will gird you” (Isa. 45: 5), [Freedman: the double alef does not form an independent word], the initial Tannaite authority maintaining that for writing the double A of that word, one is not liable, and R. Simeon’s maintaining that, since writing A twice is done in charms in general, he would be culpable, then shall we propose that R. Simeon takes the more stringent position? Surely it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

**B. He who digs, scrapes or cuts down in any measure at all — lo, this one is liable.**

**C. R. Simeon says, “He is liable only if he digs up the whole of the field, scrapes the whole of it, cuts the thorns of the whole of it. He who paints a picture is liable only if he paints the whole of it. He who tans a hide is liable only if he tans the whole of the hide. He who works a hide is liable only if he works the whole of the hide” [T. **Shab. 11:3**].**

*D. Rather, R. Simeon’s purpose is to let us know that one is guilty only if he writes the entire word.*

*E. But can you really maintain such a view? And hasn’t it been taught on Tannaite authority:*

**F. “Might one think that liability is incurred only if one writes out the entire word, weaves the entire garment, makes the entire sieve?**

**G. “Scripture says, ‘...of the things.’**

**H. “If it is ‘...of the things,’ then might one think that liability is incurred even if one wrote a single letter, wove a single knot, made a single square on a sieve or sifter?**

**I. “Scripture says, ‘...and does any one of them....’ [How so? One is liable only for doing a type of work the like of which endures.]”**



J. You may settle the question by formulating the matter this way: “Might one think that liability is incurred only if one writes a complete sentence? Scripture says, ‘...and does any one of them....’”

**II.3 A. R. Yosé says, “‘...and does any one of them’: There are occasions on which one is liable for a single offering on account of a sequence of deeds, and there are times that one is liable for each and every deed that he does” —**

B. *Said R. Yosé b. R. Hanina, “What is the reading of R. Yosé here?* It is because it is written, ‘and shall do of one of them’ (Lev. 4: 2). [Freedman, *Sanhedrin*, p. 421, n. 3: This is a peculiar construction. The Scripture should have written, ‘and shall do one (not of) of them,’ or, ‘and do of them’ (one being understood), or, ‘and shall do one’ (of them being understood). Instead of which, a partitive preposition is used before each. Hence each part of the pronoun is to be interpreted separately, teaching that he is liable for the transgression of ‘one’ precept; and for part of one (i.e., for ‘of one’): for ‘them’ (explained as referring to the principal acts); and for the derivatives ‘of them’ (acts forbidden because they partake of the same nature as the fundamentally prohibited acts); also, each pronoun reacts upon the other, as explained in the discussion. What follows, to the end of this paragraph, is Freedman’s translation, at *Sanhedrin*, to 62A, p. 423-425, reproduced with only minor changes:] This teaches that liability is incurred for one complete act of violation [i.e., ‘one’]; and for one which is but a part of one [i.e., ‘of one’]; and for transgressing actions forbidden in themselves [i.e., ‘them’], and for actions [the prohibited nature of which is derived] from others [i.e., ‘of them’]; further, that open transgression may involve liability for a number of sacrifices [i.e., ‘one’ = ‘them’], whilst many offenses may involve but one sacrifice [i.e., ‘them’ = ‘one’]. Thus: ‘one complete act of violation’ — the writing [on the Sabbath] of Simeon; ‘one which is but a part of one’ — the writing of Shem as part of Simeon; ‘actions forbidden in themselves’ [i.e., ‘them’] — the principal acts of labor forbidden on the Sabbath; ‘actions [the prohibited nature of which is derived] from others [i.e., “of them”]’ — the derivatives; ‘one transgression may involve liability for a number of sacrifices [i.e., “one” = “them”]’ — for example, if one knew that it was the Sabbath [and that some work is forbidden on the Sabbath], but was unaware that these particular

acts are forbidden; ‘many offenses may involve but one sacrifice [i.e., “them” = “one”]’ — for example, if he was unaware that it was the Sabbath, but knew that his actions are forbidden on the Sabbath. But here [in idol worship], since separation of actions is not derived from elsewhere, may we not say that all agree [even R. Yosé] that prostration was singled out to indicate ‘separation’? [But this is so?] May not ‘separation’ of acts in the case of idolatry, too, be deduced from ‘of one of them’? Thus, ‘one complete act of idolatry’ — sacrificing [to idols]; a part of one [i.e., ‘of one’] — the cutting of one organ. ‘Actions forbidden in themselves’ [i.e., ‘them’] — principal acts, i.e., sacrificing, burning, incense, making libations, and prostration; ‘actions derived from others’ [i.e., ‘of them’] the derivatives of these — for example, if he broke a stick before it; ‘one transgression may involve liability for a number of sacrifices,’ [i.e., ‘one’ = ‘them’], for example, when one knows that it is an idol [and that idolatry is forbidden], but is unaware that the particular acts in question constitute idol worship; many offenses may involve but one sacrifice, [i.e., ‘them’ = ‘one’]; if he is unaware that it is an idol, but knows that these acts are forbidden in idol worship.”

- II.4 A. Said R. Judah, “We find that a short name comes from a long name, Shem from Shimeon or from Shemuel, Noah from Nahor, Dan from Daniel, Gad from Gadiel”:**
- B. *But are the cases parallel? The final M in the name SHeM is closed, but the M in the name SHiMeoN is open!*
- C. Said R. Hisda, “That bears the implication, if a letter is to be written closed [that is, a closed mem, occurring at the end of the word] is written open [as it would be in the middle of the word], it is valid.”
- D. *An objection was raised: “And you shall write them” (Deu. 6: 9) — the meaning is, the writing must be perfect [the letters for the cited word can yield this other reading], thus: One must not write the alef as an ayin, the ayin as an alef, the bet as a kaf, the kaf as a bet, the gimmel as a saddi, the saddi as a gimmel; the dalet as a resh or the resh as a dalet; the heh as a het or the het as a heh; the vav as a yod or the yod as a vav, the zayyin as a nun or the nun as a zayyin, the tet as a pe or the pe as a tet, letters bent should not be written straight, straight, bent, the mem as a samekh or the samekh as a mem, closed letters open or open letters closed; an open section may not be written closed*

nor a closed section open. If one wrote a section as is the Song [Exo. 15:1-18, Deu. 32:1-43] or if one wrote the Song as an ordinary text is written; if one wrote it without ink; if one write the Divine Names in gold, the scrolls that are written in this manner must be suppressed.

- E. *R. Hisda rules in accord with the following Tannaite authority, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- F. R. Judah b. Beterah says, “With reference to the second day, it is said, ‘and their drink-offerings,’ and in reference to the sixth day, ‘and the drink-offerings thereof’ while with reference to the seventh day it is said, ‘after the ordinance’ (Num. 29:19, 31, 33) — this yields a mem, a yod, and a mem, thus, water, on the strength of which we find an indication in Scripture for the water libation.”
- G. *Now, since if an open letter is written closed, it is valid, if a closed letter is written open, it is valid, so if a closed letter is written open, the scroll is fit* [the mem of ‘their drink-offerings’ appears at the end and is closed, but here it is taken as the first letter of the word for water, mayim, and hence, open; so if an open letter is written closed, the scroll is fit (Freedman)].
- H. *But are the cases parallel?* If the letter is written closed, **[104A]** *he raises its level [of sanctification],* for said R. Hisda, “The Mem and the Samekh that appeared in the Tables of the Ten Commandments stood there by a miracle.” *On the other hand,* if it was closed and he wrote it open, *he diminished its standing,* for said R. Jeremiah, and some say, R. Hiyya bar Abba, “The double form of Mem, Nun, Saddi, and Kaf [open, closed] was declared by the prophets.” [Freedman: The open letters date from a later period and are less sacred.]
- I. *But do you really think so? Isn’t it written,* “These are the commandments” (Lev. 27:34) — showing that a prophet has not got the right to innovate in any detail from that time onward?
- J. *Rather, they were in existence, but people didn’t know which of the forms was for the middle of the word and which was for the end of the word, and the watchers came along and established the facts of the matter.*
- K. *Still:* “These are the commandments” (Lev. 27:34) — showing that a prophet has not got the right to innovate in any detail from that time onward?
- L. *Rather, they forgot them and the others went and reestablished them.*

**II.5** A. *Reverting to the body of the foregoing:* Said R. Hisda, “The Mem and the Samekh that appeared in the Tables of the Ten Commandments stood there by a miracle” —

B. And said R. Hisda, “The writing on the Ten Commandments could be read from both sides of the tablets, for instance, nebub/buban; behar/rahab; saru/waras.” [Freedman: The writing would appear backwards seen from the other side, and the letters of the words given as examples are easy to read in such a way.]

## Topical Appendix on the Meanings of Letters of the Alphabet

- II.6** A. *Rabbis said to R. Joshua b. Levi, “Just now children have come to the study house and said things the like of which even in the days of Joshua b. Nun were never said. Thus: alef bet means, learn wisdom; gimmel dalet means, show kindness to the poor. How come the foot of the gimmel reaches out to the dalet? Because it is appropriate for the benevolent to pursue the poor. Why is the roof of the dalet reaching out to the gimmel? Because the poor must make himself available to him. How come the face of the dalet is turned away from the gimmel? Because the donor must give the help in secret, so as not to shame him. He, vav — that is the name of the Holy One, blessed be He. Zayyin, het, tet, yod, kaf, lamed — and if you do this, the Holy One, blessed be He, will sustain you, give you a heritage, bind a crown on you in the world to come. As to the open mem and the closed mem — the open mem refers to a word that is stated in the open, the closed one, to one that is kept secret. The bent nun and the straight nun — the faithful, if humble, will be straightened out. Samekh, ayyin — support the poor. Another reading of the same: samekh, ayyin stand for: make a mnemonic in the Torah and so acquire it. The bent pe and the straight pe: an open mouth, a closed mouth. The bent saddi and the straight saddi: the righteous one is bent in this world, the righteous one is straightened up in the next world.”*
- B. *But that’s the same message as the faithful, if humble, will be straightened out!/?*
- C. *“Scripture thus adds humility to his humility, so teaching us that the Torah was given with a bowed head.*
- D. *“Quf — holy; Resh — evil — why is the face of the Quf turned away from the resh? Said the Holy One, blessed be He, ‘I can’t bear to look upon the evil.’*
- E. *“And how come the crown of the quf is turned toward the resh? Said the Holy One, blessed be He, ‘If he repents, I shall tie on him a crown like mine.’*
- F. *“And how come the foot of the quf is suspended and not tied to any other stroke? It is to show, if he repents, he can enter and be brought in through this opening.”*

G. *That supports what R. Simeon b. Laqish, for said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, ‘As to the scorers, he scorers them, but as to the humble he gives grace’ (Pro. 3:34)? If someone comes wanting to be purified, he is helped to do so; if he comes wanting to be made unclean, they open the way for him.”*

H. Shin stands for sheqer, lie, and tav stands for emet, truth. *How come the letters for the word for lie, SH, Q, R, stand close together, while those of the word for truth, alef, mem, tav, stand far apart? Because falsehood is consecutive, truth, rare. And how come the word for lie, in Hebrew letters, stands on one foot, while the word for truth stands on a foundation of brooks? Because truth stands, falsehood can’t.*

- II.7** A. [If we match the letters, so that] the alef stands for a tav, and the bet for a shin, we get: he who rejects me — shall I desire him?
- B. Exchanging the bet for the shin: he who doesn’t delight in me — shall my name rest on him?
- C. Gimel/resh: he has defiled his body, shall I have mercy on him? dalet/quf: he has closed my doors, shall I not cut off his horns — thus far is the hermeneutic for the wicked.
- D. But as for the hermeneutic for the righteous:
- E. Alef/tav, bet/shin: if you are ashamed to sin, then dwell in Heaven.
- F. He/saddi, V v/ Peh: there will be a barrier between you and wrath.
- G. Saddi Het Samekh Tet Nun: nor will you tremble before Satan.
- H. K/L: the prince of Gehenna said to the Holy One, blessed be He, “Lord of the world, to the sea let all be consigned.” But the Holy One, blessed be He, replied, “Alef het samekh, bet tet gimmel peh [combining the first, eighth, and fifteenth letters, so, too, the second, ninth, and sixteenth, etc. (Freedman)]: meaning, “I spare them, because they spurned sensual pleasures; they are contrite; they are true; they are righteous; you have no portion in them.
- I. Gehenna cried out before him, “Lord of the world, my lord, satisfy me with the seed of Seth.”
- J. He replied, “You have nought in them. Where shall I lead them? To the garden of myrtles.”
- K. Gehenna cried out before the Holy One, blessed be He, “Lord of the world, I am faint with hunger.”

- L. To that he said, “These are the seed of Isaac; wait, I have entire platoons of gentiles whom I shall give you.”

### 12:4

- A. [104B] He who writes two letters during a single spell of inadvertence is liable.  
B. [If] he wrote with (1) ink, (2) caustic, (3) red dye, (4) gum, or (5) copperas,  
C. or with anything which leaves a mark,  
D. on two walls forming a corner, or on two leaves of a tablet, which are read with one another,  
E. he is liable.  
F. He who writes on his flesh is liable.  
G. He who scratches a mark on his flesh —  
H. R. Eliezer declares him liable to a sin-offering.  
I. And R. Joshua declares him exempt.

### 12:5

- A. [If] one wrote with (1) fluids [blood, water, milk, honey, etc., as at M. Makh. 6:4], (2) fruit juice, (3) dirt from the street, (4) writer’s sand,  
B. or with anything which does not leave a lasting mark,  
C. he is exempt.  
D. (1) [If he wrote] with the back of his hand, with his foot, mouth, or elbow,  
E. (2) [if] he wrote one letter alongside a letter already written,  
F. (3) [if] he wrote a letter on top of a letter [already written],  
G. (4) [if] he intended to write a het and wrote two zayins,  
H. (5) [if he wrote] one on the ground and one on the beam,  
I. (6) [if] he wrote [two letters] on the two walls of the house, on the two sides of a leaf of paper, so that they cannot be read with one another,  
J. he is exempt.  
K. [If] he wrote one letter as an abbreviation,  
L. R. Joshua b. Beterah declares him liable.  
M. And sages declare him exempt.

- I.1** A. With (1) ink, (2) caustic, (3) red dye, (4) gum, (5) copperas:  
B. **Ink:** *This is soot ink.*

- C. **Caustic:** paint.
- D. **Red dye:** *Said Rabbah bar bar Hannah, “This is the same as ‘red dye’ [in Aramaic].”*
- E. **Gum:** *gum in Aramaic.*
- F. **Copperas:** *Said Rabbah bar bar Hannah said Samuel, “Blackening used by bootmakers” [Freedman].*

## **II.1 A. Or with anything which lasts —**

- B. *Including what?*
- C. *Including what is covered by the Tannaite statement made by R. Hanina, “If the writ of divorce is written with the juice of wine lees or gallnut juice, it is valid.*

## **II.2 A. A Tannaite statement of R. Hiyya:** *If the writ of divorce is written with lead, black pigment, or coal, it is valid.*

## **III.1 A. He who scratches a mark on his flesh — R. Eliezer declares him liable to a sin-offering. And R. Joshua declares him exempt:**

- B. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. **Said R. Eliezer to them, “But didn’t Ben Sateda [Stada=Jesus] bring witchcraft from Egypt by writing the formulas on his skin?”**
- D. **They said to him, “He was a singular fool, and we don’t derive proof of propositions on the basis of the actions of idiots” [T. [Shab. 11:15D-E](#)].**

## **IV.1 A. [If] he wrote one letter alongside a letter already written:**

- B. *Who is the Tannaite authority for this ruling?*
- C. *Said Raba bar R. Huna, “It doesn’t accord with R. Eliezer, for as to R. Eliezer, hasn’t he said, “For one thread added to woven material, he is liable”?*

## **V.1 A. [If] he wrote a letter on top of a letter [already written]:**

- B. *Who is the Tannaite authority for this ruling?*
- C. *Said R. Hisda, “It does not accord with R. Judah, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- D. *“Lo, if, when copying a scroll of the Torah, the scribe intended to write the Name of God and had the intention of writing the name, Judah, but in error he omitted the letter D [and so wrote the name of God] —*
- E. *“one may go over it with a quill and so properly consecrate it,” the words of R. Judah.*

- F. "And sages say, 'That would not be the most desirable manner of writing the name of God.'"

**V.2** A. *A Tannaite statement:*

- B. If one wrote one letter and thereby completed a book, or wove a thread and thereby completed a garment, he is liable.
- C. *Who is the Tannaite authority?*
- D. *Said Raba bar R. Huna, "It doesn't accord with R. Eliezer, for as to R. Eliezer, hasn't he said, "For one thread added to woven material, he is liable"?"*
- E. *R. Ashi said, "You may even say it represents the view of rabbis, since what completes a prior object would be exceptional."*

- V.3** A. Said R. Ammi, "If one wrote a single letter in Tiberias and another in Sepphoris, he is liable, since it is an act of writing which lacks only being brought into proximity."
- B. *But we have learned in the Mishnah: [If] he wrote [two letters] on the two walls of the house, on the two sides of a leaf of paper, so that they cannot be read with one another, he is exempt?*
- C. *In that case, what is lacking is the act of bringing them together [before they can be read as one the paper has to be cut away (Freedman)], here, the act of bringing the letters into juxtaposition is not lacking at all.*

- VI.1** A. [Supply: **[If] he intended to write a het and wrote two zayins,...he is exempt.**] *A Tannaite statement:* If one corrected a single letter, he is liable.
- B. *Now look:* If one wrote a single letter, he would be exempt, so how can he be liable if he merely corrects one?
- C. *Said R. Sheshet, "Here with what case do we deal? It would be a situation in which he removed the upper bar of a het and made it into two zayins."*
- D. Raba said, "It would be a case in which he removed the projection of the dalet and made it into a resh."

- VI.2** A. *A Tannaite teaching:* If one intended to write a single letter **[105A]** and he happened to write two, he is liable."
- B. *But haven't we learned in the Mishnah: [If] he intended to write a het and wrote two zayins,...he is exempt]?*
- C. *No problem, in the one case the letter requires the tittles, in the other not.*

- VII.1** A. **[If] he wrote one letter as an abbreviation, R. Joshua b. Beterah declares him liable. And sages declare him exempt:**



- B. Said R. Yohanan in the name of R. Yosé b. Zimra, “How on the basis of Scripture do we know that abbreviations are valid? Because it is written, ‘For the father of a multitude of nations I have made you’ (Gen. 17: 5), and the letters in those words serve as abbreviations for, ‘I have made you a father of nations, a chosen one of nations I have made you, a beloved one of nations I have made you, a king I have made you for the nations, an eminent figure I have made you among the nations, faithful I have made you among the nations.’”
- C. *R. Yohanan speaking in his own name said, “‘I am the Lord your God’: (Exo. 20: 1) — serves as an abbreviation for, ‘I myself have written the script.’”*
- D. Rabbis say, *“Sweet speech, writing, a gift.”*
- E. *There are those who say, “The word ‘I’ is to be read as an abbreviation running backward, namely: ‘Scripture was given to man, faithful are its words.’”*
- F. *A member of the household of R. Nathan said, “‘Because your way is perverse before me’ (Num. 22:32) — ‘the ass feared, she saw, she turned aside.’”*
- G. *A member of the household of R. Ishmael stated as a Tannaite teaching: “‘Karmel’ means ‘rounded and full.’”*
- H. R. Aha bar Jacob said, “‘...and he cursed me with a curse that is grievous’ (1Ki. 2: 8) — that serves as an abbreviation for: ‘He is an adulterer, a Moabite, a murder, an enemy, an abomination.’”
- I. R. Nahman bar Isaac said, “‘What shall we speak, or how shall we clear ourselves’ (Gen. 44:16) stands for: ‘We are honest, righteous, pure, submissive, holy.’”

## 12:6

- A. **He who writes two letters in two distinct spells of inadvertence,**
- B. **one in the morning and one at twilight,**
- C. **Rabban Gamaliel declares him liable.**
- D. **And sages declare him exempt.**

### I.1

- A. *What is at issue in this dispute?*
- B. *Rabban Gamaliel maintains that If one is aware of half of the requisite measure only, that is null.*
- C. *And sages hold that If one is aware of half of the requisite measure only, that is effective.*