

Laws of Idolatry, Chapter 5 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Summary of Lecture – Chapter 5, Laws of Idolatry, Book of Knowledge (Rambam)

Law 1 – The Law of One Who Incites an Individual Jew

Words of the Rambam: "One who incites an individual Jew, whether man or woman, is stoned, even though the incited person did not worship and the inciter did not worship idolatry, but merely attempted in a manner fitting to worship." The inciter is liable to stoning whether he is a layman or a prophet, whether he incites an individual (man or woman) or individuals (but not an entire city).

Explanation: One who incites even one Jew to worship idolatry is liable to stoning – even if the incited person did not worship, and even if the inciter himself did not worship.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. **Distinction between mesit/mediach – language of the verses:** The Rambam divides: mesit = inciting an individual (from the verse "ki yesitcha"), mediach = leading astray a city (from the verse "ki yadichu" regarding an ir hanidachat). Interestingly, regarding an individual the language is "mesit" and regarding a city "nidachat" – a city becomes nidachat, an individual becomes musat.

2. **Liability even without an act of idolatry:** The great novelty is that he is liable to stoning even when the incitement did not succeed – the musat did not worship. Normally "there is no agency for transgression," but regarding idolatry it works differently. The reasoning: idolatry in general comes from people who lead others astray with false thoughts – the mesit is the "guide" of idolatry, he has taught and shown the way, and therefore he already receives the punishment for being a mesit itself.

3. **A mesit who led astray most of a city – law of a prophet:** If one person leads astray most of a city, the nidachim receive the law of individuals (not ir hanidachat), because ir hanidachat requires "two who lead astray." But if the mediach is a **prophet**, he himself receives the law of a mediach and is stoned.

4. **Why specifically a prophet can be a mediach alone:** Two answers:

- (a) **Commentators:** He means to say that even if he is a prophet it doesn't help him – he still receives the law.

- (b) **Novelty in death penalty:** A false prophet is liable to strangulation (as the Rambam rules). One might have thought he receives strangulation as a false prophet – the Rambam comes and says he receives **stoning** as a mediach, which is a more severe death.

5. **Reasoning for why a prophet can be a mediach alone:** A prophet says "thus says Hashem" – he comes in the name of Hashem. Just as David said to Goliath "I come in the name of Hashem" – when one comes with the name of the

Holy One Blessed be He, one is not alone. Therefore one prophet can have the power to lead astray an entire city, which a layman cannot do alone.

6. **What does "prophet" mean here?** Two approaches: (a) He says "thus says Hashem" – prophesying in the name of Hashem that one should worship idolatry, or (b) He prophesies in the name of idolatry – "the idolatry told me." According to the Rambam in Laws of Foundations of Torah, a prophet must be "walking in the ways of the prophets" – a random person who says "thus says Hashem" doesn't count.

7. **Question on a layman who led astray most of a city:** If one layman (not a prophet) leads astray an entire city – he doesn't receive the law of mediach (because there need to be two), and the city doesn't receive the law of ir hanidachat. But why shouldn't he receive the law of **mesit** on each individual separately? The question is raised and not fully resolved.

8. **Warning-distinction:** Regarding warning there can be a practical distinction – one must tell the person precisely what he is transgressing: "you are being put to death" is different from "you are being led astray."

Law 2 – Language of the Mesit

Words of the Rambam: "The mesit, whether he incited in plural language or in singular language, is stoned. How so? He says to his fellow: I will worship idolatry, let us go and worship... I will sacrifice, I will go and sacrifice, let us go and sacrifice..." And so forth with all languages of idolatry.

Explanation: Whether he says "I am going to worship" (singular language) or "let us worship together" (plural language) – in both cases he is a mesit.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. **Kesef Mishneh – singular language "I will worship":** What does "I will worship" mean as incitement? The Kesef Mishneh explains: when he says "I am going to worship idolatry" the listener understands that he should follow him. Even if he doesn't say explicitly "you should worship," but rather "I am going to worship" – this is already incitement. The Kiryat Sefer (Mishneh LaMelech) explains that "I will worship and you after" means: I will worship and you will worship after me.

2. **Kesef Mishneh – "I will go and sacrifice" vs. "I will sacrifice":** "I will sacrifice" means he is already standing next to the idolatry and says "I am now going to slaughter." "I will go and sacrifice" means he still needs to go – it is still lacking action. The novelty: even when it is still lacking action (he still needs to go around the corner) it is already called mesit.

3. **Language of the verse:** "I will go and worship it" and "let us go and worship" are languages from verses. The Mishnah brings the same languages.

4. No distinction in formulation: There is no distinction whether he says "let's do it together," or "you do it," or "I am going to do it" – all forms are incitement (Tosafot Yom Tov and commentators).

5. The services that are enumerated: I will sacrifice (slaughter/offering), I will burn incense, I will pour libations, I will prostrate – these are the main laws of idolatry, and one must say a specific service "in the manner it is customarily worshiped" – as the Rambam learned in previous chapters.

Law 3 – Testimony and Stoning for Mesit / No Warning for Mesit

Words of the Rambam: The two people whom the mesit incited become his witnesses. They bring him to court, testify about him that this is what he said to them, and he is given stoning.

Explanation: The two people who heard the incitement serve as witnesses, bring him to court, and he receives stoning.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. Not interested parties: Seemingly one should ask – aren't the witnesses also interested parties (negiyim), because they are the ones he incited? This is simple – they are not interested parties.

2. No warning for mesit: The main novelty is that a mesit does not need warning, unlike all of Torah where even in capital cases one needs warning. The two witnesses did not warn him, and they can immediately bring him to court without warning.

3. Reason for no warning (Rambam in Commentary on the Mishnah): For a mesit, warning would accomplish nothing – not because he doesn't want to, but because he is afraid of the two witnesses. He won't truly repent, he will only stop because he is afraid. For other transgressions, the reason for warning is that perhaps he didn't realize or he is not truly intentional.

4. Three things without warning: Mesit, conspiring witnesses, and one more – for all three it says "no warning." For conspiring witnesses they also know very well what they are doing, so warning doesn't help.

[Digression: Conspiring witnesses who killed] The Maharya says a novelty: conspiring witnesses who led to a killing – with the law of conspiring witnesses they don't receive death (because "those killed are not killed" – when the defendant has already been killed, the conspiring witnesses don't receive death). But the witnesses themselves are the ones who killed the person (through their testimony), and they are killers without warning (they were not warned about killing). On this there is a law of "putting one's head in the oven" – a type of death penalty for a murderer who cannot be formally executed.

Law 4 – Law of Mesit to an Individual / Entrapment

Words of the Rambam: When a mesit speaks to one person, he doesn't have two witnesses. But it is a mitzvah to trap him. The individual should say "I have other friends interested in this matter" so that he will repeat it before two. The musat brings two and positions them in a dark place – the musat brings two people, places them in a dark place, so they

can see and hear the mesit, but he won't see them. The musat says to the mesit: "Tell me what you said to me in private."

Explanation: For mesit we actively seek to catch the criminal, unlike all other transgressions where we specifically seek less (finding merit, chance for repentance). We create a situation where the mesit is in the light (spotlight) and the witnesses are in darkness, so he won't hold back from saying his incitement.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. Opposite principle from all of Torah – "we heat up against him": For all other capital offenses we don't seek to catch the person – on the contrary, we seek to find merit. If one witness sees someone desecrating Shabbat, there is no concept that he should quickly bring another to see. We give him a chance to repent. But mesit is different – we go with all severity of law. This comes from the law "you shall not have pity and you shall not cover" – one may not have mercy on a mesit. Therefore we specifically do seek to catch him, even through cunning. **For all capital offenses in the Torah we do not heat up against them** – only for mesit is there this special law of heating up.

2. A bit of warning: When the musat says to the mesit "tell me what you said to me in private," and the mesit answers, this is a kind of bit of warning – not truly a formal warning, but somewhat an opportunity to withdraw.

3. "How can we abandon our God in heaven" – the musat's answer: The musat says to the mesit: "How can we abandon our holy Creator, the source of living waters, and go worship wood and stones?" This gives the mesit a chance to withdraw.

4. "If he retracts or is silent – exempt": If the mesit withdraws or is silent, he is exempt. R' Rabinowitz's explanation: when the mesit repeats what he said, he says it as "a story that happened" (he is only recounting what was), not that he is actively inciting now. Therefore, if he stops after that, nothing can be done to him, because he did not incite before the witnesses. (This is "a bit forced.")

5. "If he said yes, so it is" – standing in his rebellion: Only if he says yes, so it is, then the two witnesses stand up and bring him to court, and he is stoned.

6. Distinction between mesit to an individual and mesit to two: For two people there doesn't need to be any warning at all. For one person we give him a small chance to get out – somewhat a finding of merit. When he sees two people, he won't truly repent – he only thinks "they want to catch me." But when it's one person and he becomes silent, this is genuine.

Law 5 (should be) – Laws of the Musat (the one who was incited)

Words of the Rambam: The musat must himself be the first to kill the mesit, as it says "your hand shall be upon him first to put him to death." It is forbidden for the musat to love the mesit, as it says "you shall not consent to him." Since it says "you shall surely help with him" – might one think even for this one? Scripture says "and you shall not listen to him." Since it says "you shall not stand idly by your neighbor's blood" – might one think even for this one's blood? Scripture says "and your eye shall not pity." It is

forbidden for the musat to teach merit about him, as it says "and you shall not have compassion."

Explanation: The Torah has issued several prohibitions specifically on the musat – he may not love the mesit, not listen to him, not have mercy, not teach merit, and he must be the first to kill him.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. **Whether the prohibitions are only on the musat or on all Israel:** The Rambam doesn't bring here the language of the Sifrei which says "since it says 'and you shall love your neighbor as yourself,' might one think you should love this one? Scripture says 'you shall not consent to him.'" The **Minchat Chinuch** makes an implication in the Rambam that the prohibition of not loving the mesit is only on the musat himself, not on all Israel. This means that even such a Jew (a mesit) still has the mitzvah of "and you shall love your neighbor as yourself" for other Jews. But the lecturer disagrees with this novelty, and holds that all these laws are only on the musat, just as the mitzvah to kill the mesit is specifically on the musat. Reasoning: the musat knows the truth – he knows that the other is a mesit – but other people don't yet know, so they cannot have the prohibition.

2. **"And you shall not listen to him" – what does it mean?** Simply it means not to listen to idolatry, but this is already obvious from the prohibition of idolatry itself. The Rambam interprets it to mean not to listen to him even when he asks a favor or mercy – "because of hatred" (when he asks for help).

3. **"And your eye shall not pity" – against "you shall not stand idly by your neighbor's blood":** Normally there is a law of "you shall not stand idly by your neighbor's blood" – one may not stand by another Jew's blood. One might have thought that even for a mesit one must save him. The Torah comes and says "and your eye shall not pity" – here one must indeed have a bit of cruelty.

4. **"It is forbidden to teach merit about him" – when does it apply?** An important distinction: the prohibition of teaching merit applies only **after** the court has already concluded his judgment that he is a mesit. But during the investigations and inquiries – when the court does its "due diligence" to make sure he is truly a mesit – one must indeed go through the normal process, and if someone has a merit he must say it. This is not "teaching merit" – this is the basic job of the court.

5. **What does "teaching merit" mean practically?** Not to seek "creative" ways to exempt him – such as he had a difficult childhood, or perhaps he didn't say exactly that. Normally in capital cases we seek all kinds of ways to teach merit – for mesit the Torah says not to do this. A story is brought where a rabbi tried to disqualify a witness because he has a smartphone – such "creative" merits are meant here.

6. **Why does the Torah have so many prohibitions on this?** Because mesit is as severe as idolatry, the Torah wanted to make a strong reinforcement that one should not make too many leniencies. Six prohibitions are added to the matter so that one should not come to any mercy.

Warning for a Layman Mesit

Explanation: Where is the prohibition (warning) for a layman who is a mesit? For mediach we already learned "you

shall not listen to him by the sword," for a prophet – ba'al ov. For a layman mesit it says "they shall not continue to do" – that when everyone knew that the other killed him, we see that this is not done.

Law 6 – Mesit Who Said "Worship Me"

Words of the Rambam: A mesit who raised himself up and said to them "worship me" – if they worshiped him he is not stoned. Even if they accepted from him and said "yes" – he is not stoned. But one who incites to worship another person, even though they did not worship idolatry, if they accepted from him and said "yes we will go and worship," even though they have not yet worshiped – both are stoned, the mesit and the musat.

Explanation: When someone says "worship me," he doesn't receive stoning even if they accepted him. But when he incites to worship someone else, both receive stoning even if they haven't yet worshiped.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. **Why doesn't he receive stoning when he says "worship me"?** The Rambam's reason: **"a person cannot acquire himself"** – every person knows that a person is not serious when he says "worship me". No one takes it seriously. A person wants to be worshiped, but this is not idolatry until one actually worships him with an acceptance as a god or one of the four services.

2. **A practical ramification:** Seemingly it emerges from this that a "small unsuccessful rebbe" who asks people to worship him crazily, nothing happens to him – because no one takes it seriously. This is compared to the law in Choshen Mishpat regarding a thief.

3. **Great novelty – the musat is also liable to stoning:** When someone incites to worship a third party, and the musat accepted and said "yes we will go and worship" – even if he has not yet worshiped idolatry – he already receives stoning for the very acceptance. As it says "you shall not consent to him and you shall not listen to him." This means that the mere agreement to go worship idolatry is already liable to death – even without an act of idolatry.

Law 7 – Prophet Who Prophesies in the Name of Idolatry

Words of the Rambam: "A prophet who prophesies in the name of idolatry, how so? This is one who says such-and-such idolatry or such-and-such star told me to do thus and thus or not to do thus and thus... even if he aligned with the law to declare impure what is impure and pure what is pure... his death is by strangulation."

Explanation: A prophet who says that an idolatry or a star told him to do thus or thus – even if the content of his prophecy is correct according to law (to declare impure what is impure and pure what is pure) – he is liable to death by strangulation.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. **The transgression is in the "in the name of" not in the content:** The prophet in the name of idolatry does not have the law of mediach (he doesn't incite people to idolatry through the content), but he has a separate law of prophesying

in the name of idolatry. The transgression lies in that he speaks in the name of idolatry, not in what he says. Therefore even if he says "keep Shabbat" in the name of the star, he is liable to death.

2. Distinction between false prophet and prophet in the name of idolatry: These are two separate laws with two separate verses. **False prophet** = says in the name of Hashem something that Hashem did not tell him ("who presumes to speak a word in My name that I did not command him"). **Prophet in the name of idolatry** = says prophecy in the name of idolatry ("who speaks in the name of other gods"). Both are liable to strangulation, but from different sources. The prophet in the name of idolatry is also a false prophet (because idolatry did not truly tell him), but he has an additional law.

3. Question whether idolatry can truly speak: A question is raised — from where do we know that idolatry did not truly tell him? A power can indeed speak with a person. This is left as an open inquiry.

4. The prohibition of prophet in the name of idolatry: The Rambam says **"his warning is from the general statement 'and the name of other gods you shall not mention.'" This doesn't mean simply mentioning the name of idolatry, but specifically saying prophecy in the name of idolatry.**

Law 8 – We Don't Test a Prophet in the Name of Idolatry
Words of the Rambam: "And it is forbidden to think about the response from one who prophesies in the name of idolatry... and we don't ask him for a sign or wonder... and if he performed an act we don't pay attention to it and don't think about it. And anyone who thinks about his signs that perhaps they are true... as it says 'you shall not listen to the words of that prophet.'"

Explanation: We must not test a prophet in the name of idolatry with a sign or wonder — we know immediately that he is false. Even if he performs a wonder, we ignore it. Anyone who thinks "perhaps his signs are true" is transgressing.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. What does "perhaps they are true" mean: The sign was indeed seen with the eyes, what is the doubt? "True" doesn't mean that the sign occurred (we saw that), but that it is a **true sign** — i.e. that it was not a trick or sorcery, but a real proof that his prophecy is true. On this the Rambam says that one may not think this way, because we believe in Torah, and a wonder from a prophet in the name of idolatry is merely sorcery/sorcerer.

Law 9 – False Prophet (Prophesying Falsely in the Name of Hashem)

Words of the Rambam: "And similarly a false prophet... even though he prophesied in the name of Hashem and did not add or subtract... one who prophesies what he did not hear in a prophetic vision, or one who heard the words of his fellow prophet and said this thing was not said to me in prophecy but to so-and-so it was said to him and I am prophesying it... his death is by strangulation."

Explanation: A false prophet who says in the name of Hashem something that Hashem did not tell him — even if he did not add or subtract from Torah, even if he says good correct things — is liable to strangulation. This includes: (a) one who says something he never saw in prophecy; (b) one who hears from a true fellow prophet and says it as his own prophecy.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. Two types of false prophet: (a) A false prophet who **adds or subtracts** from Torah — here we know he is false because we know that Torah does not change; the transgression lies **in the content** of what he says. (b) A false prophet who says **good correct things** but claims that Hashem told him when Hashem did not — here the transgression lies **in the falsehood** that he claims prophecy, not in the content. Both are liable to strangulation.

2. "Who presumes" — the condition of intentional: The verse says "who presumes to speak a word in My name" — "presumes" goes on "to speak in My name," i.e. he must intentionally say falsehood in the name of Hashem. For a prophet in the name of idolatry it is always "presumes" (it is always intentional). But for a false prophet in the name of Hashem — what if he thought he saw a prophecy (unintentional)? This is left as a question.

3. "Heard the words of his fellow prophet" — even from the Chumash: Even one who looks in the Chumash and says what is written there as his own prophecy — is also in the category of "prophesying what he heard from his fellow," as long as he says it as prophecy.

Why Does False Prophet Appear in Laws of Idolatry (Mesit and Mediach) and Not in Laws of Foundations of Torah

Novelties and Explanations:

1. Main novelty — false prophet is a branch of mediach: Why did the Rambam place the laws of false prophet in Laws of Idolatry (after mesit and mediach) and not in Laws of Foundations of Torah where he speaks of prophecy? **False prophet is not a law of "saying bad words" (like blasphemer), but a law of bad influence on the Jewish people** — he is an important person who can lead people astray. Therefore he belongs in the category of mesit and mediach. Even when he says good things, he is liable — because the transgression is not in the content but in the potential influence.

2. The condition of "walking in the ways of prophecy": The Rambam says **"anyone who refrains from killing a false prophet because of his stature for he is walking in the ways of prophecy"** — this shows that we are speaking of a person of stature. What if a random person (a "plumber") says in the middle of work "I have a prophecy"? On such a person there is no ramification — he is crazy, his word is worth nothing. **The law of false prophet applies only when the person is walking in the ways of prophecy** — because only then does he have a bad influence. This supports the novelty that it is a law of mediach-like influence, not simply saying bad words.

3. "You shall not fear him" — the prohibition of not killing a false prophet: One may not have mercy on a false prophet because of his stature. The prohibition is necessary

specifically because he is a person of stature — he walks in the ways of prophecy, he is a servant of Hashem, people might think "perhaps he is indeed righteous." On this the verse says "you shall not fear him" — do not fear his importance. One who holds back from teaching liability on a false prophet out of fear, transgresses "you shall not fear him."

4. False prophet is only judged in a court of seventy-one (Great Sanhedrin): This shows that false prophet is a public matter — who is the correct leader, who speaks in the name of Hashem. It is not a private transgression of an individual who said false words. As a "proposition" it is suggested that if someone says prophecy only to one person, perhaps there is no law of false prophet — there must be a public dimension, people hear him.

Law 10 – One Who Swears / Vows in the Name of Idolatry

Words of the Rambam: One who makes a vow or oath in the name of idolatry — receives lashes, as it says "and the name of other gods you shall not mention."

Explanation: One who makes a vow or oath in the name of idolatry receives lashes.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. The same verse – multiple layers: The verse "and the name of other gods you shall not mention" (Exodus 23) serves as a source for several prohibitions: (1) prophesying in the name of idolatry, (2) oath/vow in the name of idolatry, (3) simply mentioning the name of idolatry. This is an example of "more than one meaning from the same verse."

2. Why is an oath in the name of idolatry worse than simply mentioning? Because an oath is a matter of honor — when a person wants to prove that he means truth, he swears by the most important thing. If he swears in the name of idolatry, he shows that idolatry is for him "the truest thing" — this is a more severe level of "you shall not mention."

3. Novelty: Even when he swears for a gentile — i.e. he intends to prove to the gentile that he means truth by swearing in the name of idolatry — is also a great transgression.

Law 11 – Oath to a Gentile in His Fear

Words of the Rambam: If a Jew says to a gentile "swear to me by your idolatry" — it is forbidden, but one does not receive lashes.

Explanation: One may not cause a gentile to swear in the name of idolatry, but one does not receive lashes for it.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. Lifnei iver or separate prohibition? Is this **lifnei iver** for the gentile (because one causes him to mention the name of idolatry), or is this a prohibition on the Jew himself? This is compared to the law of selling animals to idolaters — because the gentile will do a transgression through you.

2. The Rambam says explicitly: "It is forbidden to cause others to vow and fulfill in the name of idolatry" — whether a gentile or a Jew, no distinction. But **lashes is only** for one who himself vows/swears/fulfills in its name — not for one who causes.

Law 12 – Simply Mentioning the Name of Idolatry

Words of the Rambam: Even to mention the name of idolatry not in the manner of an oath — is forbidden. For example, "wait for me next to such-and-such idolatry" — making a marker through an idolatry.

Explanation: Simply saying the name of idolatry is also forbidden, even without an oath.

Novelties and Explanations:

1. A prohibition without action? This is a "lower level" of "you shall not mention" — the main prohibition with lashes is oath/vow (which is an action), and simply mentioning is also forbidden but on a lower level.

2. Why does the Torah itself mention names of idolatry? The Rambam says: "Any idolatry written in the Holy Torah it is permitted to mention its name, such as Peor and Baal and Nevo and Gad and the like."

- **Question:** If it is forbidden to mention the name of idolatry, how does the Torah itself mention "Baal Peor", "Peor", "Baal Tzafon", "Gad", "Nevo"? (Verses: "Bel has bowed, Nevo stoops" — Isaiah; "Those who set a table for Gad" — Isaiah; "Before Baal Tzafon you shall encamp" — Exodus).

- **First answer (simple):** If the Torah itself says it, you may also — "one need not be more pious than the Torah."

- **Second answer:** We mention it because we need to mention it — it is in the Torah, it is an educational purpose.

- **Third answer (reasoning):** Usually idolatry names have importance in themselves — the name itself brings out honor for the idolatry. But the names that the Torah uses already have **derogatory language** — the Torah has removed the importance from the name. (The answer is left with a doubt — "something is funny.")

- **Proof that Tanach does indeed change names derogatorily:** "Ish Boshet" in Chronicles — in truth he was called "Ish Baal", but the Tanach changed the name to "Boshet" so as not to mention "Baal." But in other places the Tanach does say "Baal Peor" — this shows it is not always consistent.

- **Question on the Mishnah:** It says in the Mishnah "these are the exiles" — how may one say names of idolatry in the Mishnah? Answer: these are "common names" (names that are already known from Torah).

[Digression: The Rivash's approach] The Rivash said one should not say names of holy angels — because "calling by name" brings an influence from there. For idolatry there is also such a concept — but if one uses it to bring what is in the Torah, it is already different.

General Novelty: The Verse "And the Name of Other Gods You Shall Not Mention" — Multiple Layers

The one verse includes:

1. Prophesying in the name of idolatry
2. Oath/vow in the name of idolatry (receives lashes)
3. Simply mentioning the name of idolatry (forbidden)
4. Causing others to swear/vow in the name of idolatry (forbidden, but does not receive lashes)

All of these are **protections for idolatry** — not the idolatry itself, but safeguards around it.

Full Transcript

Chapter 5, Laws of Idolatry – The Law of the Inciter

Law 1: One Who Incites an Individual Jew

Speaker 1:

We're learning Chapter 5 in the Laws of Idolatry, Book of Knowledge. We learned in the previous chapter about the maddiach (one who leads astray). Maddiach means when one is... the Rambam divides them this way: mesit is maddiach. Mesit means when one incites an individual (yachid), maddiach means when one leads astray a city, an ir hanidachat (wayward city). One person becomes a mesit, is incited, a city becomes nidachat (led astray), it's interesting. Apparently it's all language from verses. By ir hanidachat it says "ki yadichu" (for they will lead astray), and by mesit it says "ki yesitcha" (for he will incite you), that's written regarding an individual.

Now we're going to learn Chapter 5, and we're learning more about the law of mesit, when someone incites an individual Jew. The Rambam says this: **"One who incites an individual Jew"**, someone who incites, he speaks to a Jew to worship idolatry, **"whether a man or a woman"**, whether he incites a man or a woman, **"behold he is stoned"**, he is liable to stoning (sekilah). And the novelty is, **"even though the one incited did not worship and the inciter did not worship"**. A very interesting law.

We already know this, that an inciter and one who leads astray is liable even if he himself did not worship idolatry, because if he himself had worshiped idolatry he would have been liable to stoning for the worship. But here he is liable for making the other person worship. Although generally "there is no agency for a matter of transgression," one cannot say because the other person incited me, but by idolatry it does work. It can be as you say, because idolatry in general, all idolatry comes from wicked people who make simple people think wicked thoughts.

But here the novelty is stated, that even when the person whom he incited did not worship idolatry, the incitement was not successful, but he tried, **"even though the one incited did not worship and the inciter did not worship idolatry, but only in an attempt appropriate to worship"**, but because he showed him, this is the language of the Raavad, because for being an inciter to worship idolatry he already receives the punishment. This is the moreh hora'ah (one who gives instruction), the moreh hora'ah of idolatry. He taught him, he showed him the way. He was the moreh derech (guide) of idolatry.

So the Rambam continues further: **"whether the inciter was a commoner or a prophet"**, whether the inciter was a commoner (hedyot), or he was a prophet, apparently it means to say that he told the other person that I'm telling you as a prophet that this is the law of idolatry. Later the Rambam will speak a bit more about the law of a prophet.

"Whether the one incited was an individual, man or woman, or individuals", whether one incites an individual, man or woman, or more than one person, many individuals, but up to a whole city, then it becomes an ir hanidachat. **"His death is by stoning"**.

Discussion: An Inciter Who Led Astray Most of the City

Speaker 1:

There's another thing we saw differently than before. Maddiach is two, mesit is one person.

Speaker 2:

Ah, good. Wait, the Rambam says, **"One who incites an individual Jew"**...

Speaker 1:

Then he already has the law of maddiach, **"and he is not called a mesit"**, and then one must look in the previous chapter at the law of a maddiach.

Speaker 2:

Yes, but I mean that this is what if one person leads astray a whole city, and the city has the laws of ir hanidachat, apparently he does have the law of mesit, not a maddiach. Apparently yes. I just want to say, that it must be two is perhaps only a law regarding the city. One needs to know.

Speaker 1:

Yes, I mean that the maddiach himself is perhaps indeed stoned even so. I don't know. In any case, the law of maddiach is he is liable as a mesit.

Law 2: A Prophet Who Led Astray

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says further, he's going to say further here about what I said about a prophet. **"If this one who led astray most of the city was a prophet"**, back to maddiach, what I said, the person who led astray most of a city, if he is a prophet. What does it mean he is a prophet? That in the past he said prophecies, or that he says as a prophet, he says that God told him that he received a prophecy? Later he'll explain a bit more about this prophet, yes.

It could be, it could be, I have a deduction later, that it could be that prophet, first of all prophet means he says "thus says God" (ko amar Hashem). That's simple. It could also be that in order to be a prophet one must walk in the ways of the prophets. If someone just says "thus says God," that doesn't count. Just as the Rambam learned that someone who is not worthy that he should have prophecy.

So, the one who led astray, if he is a prophet, **"his death is by stoning, and those led astray have the status of individuals"**, those led astray receive the law of individuals, **"and they don't have the law of ir hanidachat, until there are two who lead astray"**. We learned before that those who lead astray must be two. But if one was a maddiach, those led astray receive the law of individuals, and he indeed receives a law like a maddiach and **"his death is by stoning"**, but only if he is a prophet. Yes.

Discussion: Why Specifically a Prophet?

Speaker 2:

An individual didn't receive any law of maddiach and must have the law of mesit. What's the difference? It's the same law. Why does he specifically want a prophet? Apparently even if he's not a prophet.

Speaker 1:

It's interesting, **"If this one who led astray was a prophet, if he was a prophet"**.

There are two answers. All the commentators say, he means to say that the fact that he is a prophet doesn't help him, he still

receives the law even if he is a prophet. Or it could be that he means something else. It could be what we learned earlier in the Laws of Prophecy, that one must kill him with the sword (sayif), I think, as a false prophet. Here the Rambam says that he doesn't receive the law of the sword like a false prophet, but he receives the law of stoning like a maddiach. Even if he was only one maddiach, and the others don't receive any law, because here there is a novel law that you thought one must give him here the punishment of a false prophet, we say no, one must give him the punishment of a maddiach.

I don't know. I thought of a reasoning, one must learn the matter, there's simply an accounting of the sugyot (Talmudic discussions) that one must see. I thought of a reasoning that perhaps usually to lead astray a whole city one person is not enough, one must have at least two people. A prophet can indeed, he says in the name of God, he has great leader power. Yes, but in all this he doesn't have the law of ir hanidachat, because it's one person who is guilty of the whole thing, that's not called ir hanidachat, that's called individuals who worshiped idolatry. As David says to Goliath that I don't come alone, I come to you in the name of God, yes? When one comes with the name of God one is not alone. That's what he means to say. And here he says that he is alone, it's not in the name, but...

Speaker 2:

But there was a whole sugya about this prophet who led astray. But apparently this is the point, that he receives stoning. Death comes to him anyway as a false prophet, as we will indeed learn more later. But he receives chenek (strangulation), as you say, chenek is indeed sword.

Speaker 1:

But you say that it's chenek. Do you know that there's a dispute among the Tannaim?

Speaker 2:

Aha. How does the Rambam rule regarding a false prophet?

Speaker 1:

A false prophet is liable to chenek, that's how I remember. Yes, right, a false prophet by chenek. Yes, false prophet, the law of a false prophet is chenek. So he does have a law. He doesn't receive chenek, but he receives stoning because he has the law of a maddiach. So the Rambam says further.

Speaker 2:

How, what does it mean a prophet who is a maddiach?

Speaker 1:

It could be that he prophesies in the name of idolatry, and he says "the idolatry told me," idolatry told me this thing.

As we learned earlier in the first chapter regarding idolatry, that was the second stage, that the power of the false prophets who unfortunately led away a whole generation together after idolatry, the whole world was together after idolatry, yes? Perhaps the flood was a law of ir hanidachat on the whole world.

Okay, if he tells him "**God told me to worship idolatry**", or that he is "**a prophet who prophesied falsely in the name of God, behold this is a prophet who led astray**", he receives the law of a prophet who led astray, and if he led astray others, if most of a city was led astray after him, the people don't receive the law of ir hanidachat because there

weren't "two who lead astray," but he himself receives the law of maddiach and he is stoned.

Discussion: Law of Mesit on One Maddiach

Speaker 2:

And one wonders, if he hadn't been in the name of idolatry, he would have only been one maddiach, he wouldn't have received any law, one wouldn't have killed him, perhaps other punishments. One person leads astray a whole city, they don't receive the law of ir hanidachat, and he also doesn't receive the law of maddiach, why not?

Speaker 1:

Because he doesn't say in the name of idolatry but as a prophet. That I ask you, why not? Because it's a decree of Scripture that there must be two who lead astray.

Speaker 2:

Wait, but if he is a mesit? A mesit is even on one person also liable to death, liable to stoning.

Speaker 1:

Ah, does he have the law of mesit? The same thing I ask you, the prophet if he led astray a whole city, further he is a mesit. Let's see, the Rambam will say a law soon, let's see.

I don't understand the law, I can't tell you, something could have confused me here, the commentator here says that I'm not the first to be confused, so I don't feel so bad. You feel good? You feel like... a rabbim (many)? Yes, not any individuals in attendance, not any who lead astray, but one sees here the distinction between many and an individual, yes? Yes.

It could be, one thing could be that regarding warning (hatra'ah) it's different, because regarding warning one must tell the person exactly what he is transgressing. One tells him "with this death you will die" is different than one tells him "with this you will be led astray," one needs to know.

Law 3: The Language of the Inciter

Speaker 1:

Okay. Further. Um... the Rambam says, what is the language of the inciter? What must he say? Yes. The Rambam says, "**The inciter, whether he incited in plural language or in singular language, behold he is stoned. How so?**" What does it mean incites in plural language, what does it mean incites in singular language? So he explains, "**He says to his fellow, I will worship idolatry**", I'm going to worship idolatry. I'm going to go, let us worship together idolatry, that is "**let us go and worship**". Let us go. "**Such-and-such worship**", he tells him a worship "**whose way is to worship it thus**", as the Rambam learned in previous chapters, that one must say a certain worship which is the law of idolatry by stoning.

And the Rambam brings further the languages, "**I will sacrifice**", and he says, "**I will go and sacrifice**", or "**I will sacrifice**", or "**I will go and sacrifice**", or "**let us go and sacrifice**". That's indeed singular language and plural language, "I will go and sacrifice" doesn't add.

Discussion: Distinction Between "I Will Sacrifice" and "I Will Go and Sacrifice"

Speaker 2:

Perhaps because "I will go" means more in future tense, not now. "I will sacrifice" means I'm going to slaughter now, "I will

go and sacrifice" means I'm going to go slaughter tomorrow.

Speaker 1:

I mean that "I will go and sacrifice" is the language of the verse. "I will go and worship it," right? "Let us go," "let us go" is the language of the verse.

Yes. These are the same languages from the Mishnah. So, the Kesef Mishneh explains, "I will worship," and you should do after me. I'm going to worship, and you should do after me. Yes, it says here, not that he says it for himself alone. So singular language means, the witness understands from what he says "I will worship," the simple meaning is one should do after him. That is, if I say in singular language, the other person says I'm going to worship idolatry, with this the other person understands that he's going to do after him.

That's what the Kesef Mishneh explains, that "I will go and sacrifice" means, even if it's still lacking. "I will sacrifice" means, the idolatry is standing right here, and I say I'm going to worship now. And even if it's only "I will go and sacrifice," we're going to go around the corner to worship, it's a bit, even if it's still lacking an action it's also called an action. One sees that the Gemara says so. The same thing is with slaughtering, the same thing is with libations, these are the main laws of idolatry – I will sacrifice, I will burn incense, I will pour libations, I will bow down, yes, all these ways.

So regarding actions, there's no difference whether he says let us do it together, or he says you do it, or he says I'm going to do it. He doesn't say it to anyone, he says it to one person, you do it. You do it yourself. What's written here is, even if he says "I will worship," he doesn't say you should do it, he says let us worship idolatry, he says let us not do it alone, there's no difference. The novelty here is to say, that even if I say I will worship, that's an action, because the other person understands that people do after, the other person understands that he means to say I will worship and you will also. He doesn't have to say you worship, he doesn't have to say at all, that's the novelty. And here one understands with the Tosafot Yom Tov and commentaries, that this is the way how to educate. Very good.

Law 4: Law of Testimony and Stoning by an Inciter

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says further, it doesn't mean only a person who was two people, so there must be witnesses on him, so enter witnesses, and the two people become his witnesses, and **the two people bring him to the court, they come to the court, and testify about him that this is what he said to them**, that so he told them, he told us let us worship idolatry, **and they stone him**, one gives him stoning.

Apparently one needs a simple novelty, apparently it doesn't mean he's not a party to the witnesses, what? It's not a party, it's simple, what's the novelty? Ah, but something else is apparently missing here, there wasn't any warning. The Rambam says, **and even though the inciter doesn't need warning**, there is a law that usually throughout the entire Torah, even in capital matters we've seen that there is the law of warning, but an inciter doesn't need warning. So what have we learned that what? He was warned? Yes, yes.

Speaker 2:

Witnesses, there should be a trap set up.

Speaker 1:

He can be the witnesses themselves and that's it. One, so doesn't need warning. The two witnesses didn't warn him, and they can bring him immediately to the court without warning. Okay. I'll go further.

Law of Inciter to an Individual – How One Catches Him

Speaker 1:

If he said to one, what happens if one person tells one person that he is an inciter? So he doesn't have two witnesses. But there is a mitzvah, we try to catch the inciter. The inciter is usually throughout the entire Torah we try to catch a person in it. On the contrary, one seeks as little as possible. There are all these laws "teach merit," but therefore if one witness sees someone desecrating Shabbat, there's no concept that he should quickly bring another one to see. On the contrary, let's give him a chance to do repentance (teshuvah). But an inciter is different. An inciter one must go with all severity of the law. He says advice, and he brings from the Gemara that this is the advice: that the individual should tell him, "Ah, you know, I have more friends, I have friends interested in the deal." Why does he do this? Because he wants to catch him, he wants to have two witnesses, and he is clever with him, so he outsmarts him, until he says before two, he should say his incitement in front of two people, in order to kill him, so that the two together can be his witnesses and catch him and kill him.

He says, **if the inciter did not want to say to two**, if he doesn't want to, it's still a mitzvah to be clever with him, it's a mitzvah to outsmart him and find a way that he should indeed want. To hide, so to speak still make his... to hide witnesses for him. One is going to make him afraid, the inciter starts thinking perhaps they will want to judge him. Then one places someone to listen to how he says his... yes, yes, exactly, not any...

For All Those Liable to Death Penalties in the Torah, We Do Not Entrap Them

For all other those liable to death penalties in the Torah, we do not seek to catch that person, we do not seek to use trickery to be able to catch him, but except for this, except for this, besides this there is a special law for a mesit (inciter to idolatry), just as one of the laws regarding a mesit is there is a law of "**lo tachmod v'lo techase**" (**you shall not pity nor shall you conceal**), one may not have mercy on him, rather we specifically do seek to catch him.

Halacha 5: The Law of Hatmana - How We Set Up the Witnesses

Speaker 1:

The Rambam says further, how does one do the hachmana (entrapping)? The law of hatmana, hachmana. **Keitzad machminim lo? (How do we entrap him?)** How does one do the trickery? He says, **hamuset mevi shnayim (the one who was incited brings two people)**, the person whom he tried to incite brings two people, **u'ma'amidam b'makom afel (and stands them in a dark place)**, he places them there in a place where the mesit should not see them. Dark, shadow, he places them in the darkness and by him it is light, so they should be able to see the mesit, **v'shomei'a devarav (and hears his words)**, the mesit is in the spotlight, **v'lo yir'em (and he does not see them)**, he should not see them, so that he should not hold back from saying his incitement.

V'omer lameset (and he says to the mesit), because a mesit is also, whom is the mesit a yachid (individual), so it is enough that they hear how he incites the individual. **V'omer lo lameset (and he says to him, to the mesit)**, and here is how the mercy is, because even if the mesit had not planned now to say it, he says to him, "**emor lanu ma she'amarta li b'yichud**" (say to us what you said to me in private).

V'omer lo, v'hameset meshiv lo (and he says to him, and the mesit answers him), ah, this is an interesting thing, the mesit must answer him on this. It's like a bit of a warning. It's actually perhaps not exactly a law of warning, but some kind of law of warning there is. And the mesit says to him, "**heichach nani'ach et Elokeinu shebashamayim**" (how shall we abandon our God in heaven), how should we abandon our holy Creator, "**oto yesod mekor mayim chayim**" (that foundation, source of living waters), how does one abandon the Almighty, "**v'neilech la'avod et ha'etzim v'et ha'avanim**" (and go to serve the wood and the stones)?

So then, **im chozer bo (if he retracts)**, if he actually retracts from what he said, **o sheshtok (or if he is silent)**, or he is silent, **harei zeh patur (behold he is exempt)**, then he is exempt. It's actually even if he did not have any warning, because in practice there were not two witnesses who heard him inciting.

Discussion: What Does "V'hu Omer Lo" Mean?

Speaker 2:

He just now said, "v'hu omer lo," I don't understand.

Speaker 1:

No, he has not yet answered him. "Im amar hamuset emor ma she'amarta li b'yichud," yes, the mesit has not yet said. What does "v'hu omer lo" mean? Ah, "v'hu omer lo" means he tells him over what he had said to him.

So one must think, why does it appear here that when there are two people there does not need to be a warning, and when there is one person there does need to be a warning? It's not clear. He says that "v'hu omer lo" means he says, I told you thus, but I told you that it's only a story that happened, I only told what happened then, he's not saying it now.

But in any case, it appears from the Rambam that although one should not have mercy on the mesit, but some small drop of a chance we do give him to crawl out, at least when he is inciting one person. It's actually when he is inciting two people, then a warning is already enough. But when he is inciting one person, perhaps he didn't mean it, perhaps... it appears that there is some kind of law that we still think some bit of judging favorably, so we give him a chance, we give him this bit of warning, and if after the warning he did not continue to be a mesit, that doesn't mean simply he did repentance, rather simply he did nothing, and I see that he did repentance in that he stopped being a witness.

Speaker 2:

Yes, that's what I meant. Okay.

Speaker 1:

Or he actually did repentance, but he said that Rabbi Rabinowitz's interpretation is that he was not a witness now, so we can do nothing to him, because he was not a witness before the witnesses. So he only tells a story that happened earlier.

Speaker 2:

If one doesn't learn that he repeated the same thing again. Yes.

Speaker 1:

He tells over the same thing, but as a story that happened. Ah, he tells him what he had said then. It's a bit forced, I don't know. Okay.

Speaker 1:

But **im amar lo (if he said no)**, if the witness said, "yes, **kach hi, v'al zeh ani chayav l'ha'id alav, v'kach hi ona li** (so it is, and for this I am obligated to testify against him, and so he answers me)," it is good so. Provided that he stands in his rebellion, then **omdim alav shnei edim u'mevi'in oto l'veit din (the two witnesses stand against him and bring him to the court)**, the two witnesses bring him to the court, not the moser (informer), or all three perhaps. The two witnesses, or not the moser alone, because here he becomes a witness immediately. I don't know. **U'mevi'in oto l'veit din v'soklin oto (and they bring him to the court and they stone him)**.

Perush HaMishnayot: Why There Is No Warning for a Mesit

Speaker 1:

He brings that the Rambam says in Perush HaMishnayot, why is the meaning "ein hatra'ah lameset (there is no warning for a mesit)"? Is there another thing where it says "ein hatra'ah"? Edim zomemin (conspiring witnesses). Three things it says "ein hatra'ah." The Rambam says, what is the meaning? Because with a mesit this does nothing. But not because he doesn't want to, but because he is afraid of the two witnesses. Very good. Because he is a mesit, and he sees two people, he will immediately think, he won't truly do repentance, he will immediately think, "ah, they want to catch me," so he won't repeat it. But when there is one person, and he will be quiet after he will incite him, we see, yes, it's genuine.

Speaker 2:

Right.

Speaker 1:

And what is the difference from all other transgressions in the Torah? Because the other transgressions in the Torah, the meaning that "ein hatra'ah" is perhaps he didn't understand, or not really intentional. A mesit means, that the edim zomemin, one knows very well what they are doing. Edim zomemin, I mean, is also, it could be that the inquiry and investigation negates the warning. One says to him, "tell me for sure how you said it."

Speaker 2:

Yes, that's not the point, but he doesn't catch the intention.

Digression: Edim Zomemin Who Have Killed

Speaker 1:

Before I go further, there is another prohibition, but this is a novelty that doesn't really come in, but I'll give it a throw in. We spoke about edim zomemin, I saw that the law is always those who kill are not killed. But I saw that the Maharia says a novelty that the witnesses are the ones who kill. So, edim zomemin who have killed, with the law of edim zomemin they don't get death, but with the law that they were the ones who killed the person against whom they testified, and they were killers without warning, they did not warn themselves about a

killing. Should receive. There is further a law, there is on this a law of "machnisin rosho l'kipah u'machil onsho (they put his head in a dome and hasten his punishment)," there is a type of death penalty, so even if one kills a murderer, he will not receive the law as edim zomemin. Okay, let's go back further.

Halacha 6 - Laws of the Muset (The One Who Was Incited)

Speaker 1: But what then, it means that they were killers without warning, because they were not warned about a moment. So they receive further a law, there is on this a law, they put him in the dome and feed him barley, there is a type of death penalty. So even if one kills without witnesses, he doesn't receive the law as edim zomemin.

Okay, let's go back to where we are holding here.

The Rambam's Words

Speaker 1: Halacha 6. The Rambam says further, we will now learn here a few laws that say that the muset, the person whom they tried to incite, must be very harsh against the mesit. He must hate the mesit who wanted to take him away from the way of Hashem. So a few things, the first thing is that **he himself must be the one who kills the mesit, as it says "yadcha tihyeh vo barishona l'hamito" (your hand shall be upon him first to put him to death).**

Further, **"v'asur lamuset le'ehov et hameset" (and it is forbidden for the one who was incited to love the mesit)**, the person who was incited may not love the mesit, **as it says "lo toveh lo" (you shall not consent to him)**, that you may not love him.

Discussion: Are the Prohibitions Only on the Muset or on All Israel

Speaker 1: What does this mean to say? That the Rambam doesn't bring here the language of the Sifrei. Other people may love him?

Speaker 2: Other people... no, some bring it, because he is a Chabadnik, that the Rambam holds that it's not a commandment on every Jew, one may not love a mesit, it's a prohibition only on the muset. And the Sifrei, and in other places the Rambam brings the language of the Sifrei, "since it says 'and you shall love your neighbor as yourself,' could it be you should love this one? Therefore it says 'you shall not consent to him,'" that it's an exception from the commandment of "and you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Speaker 1: I don't agree that everyone... I mean that even the muset, or especially the muset, I don't believe that everyone has a commandment not to love him. The Minchat Chinuch makes an implication in the Rambam that it's only a commandment on the muset. And the Lubavitchers had pleasure from such a piece, that even such a Jew there is still a commandment to love. Seems to me a push.

In general, a prohibition in any case is not here. "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself" says clearly "it is forbidden for the muset." All these laws here are on the muset. Just as there is not only a commandment on the muset to kill the mesit, right? It means only a special commandment. Very good, but I don't agree. The same thing, "the one who informs," all things. It seems to me that all these laws are only on the muset.

Reasoning Why the Prohibitions Are Only on the Muset

Speaker 1: And one can also understand why the Rambam says it here, because the mesit u'madiach has a... he goes already, and he will think, let me cover for him, let me not bring him to court, let me... I don't know from what.

Speaker 2: Yes, because they say it's relevant the prohibition, but not some feeling just like that, there is... the prohibition means to say to hold back from killing him.

Speaker 1: Also true, but also in a general way that...

"V'lo Tishma Elav" - Against "Azov Ta'azov Imo"

Speaker 1: As the Rambam goes further, **since it says regarding an enemy "azov ta'azov imo" (you shall surely help with him)**, it says even on an enemy, and as the Gemara says it means even on a Jew who is a transgressor. So to think that also on a mesit there is a law of "azov ta'azov," and one is obligated to toil and help also to help the mesit, **therefore it says "v'lo tishma elav" (and you shall not listen to him).**

So, "v'lo tishma elav" you thought... "v'lo tishma elav" is not to hear the law of idolatry, that's obvious, because it's a law of prohibition of idolatry. Rather what, this is an extra verse for something else. "V'lo tishma elav" means to listen to him, when he asks a favor or what, when he asks for mercy.

"V'lo Tachus Einecha" - Against "Lo Ta'amod Al Dam Re'echa"

Speaker 1: Okay, so that's a previous stage.

Since it says "lo ta'amod al dam re'echa" (you shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor), so to think "could it be so regarding the blood of this one," that there is not the law that we learned earlier that you should set up two witnesses, and there is no mercy on him so that he should not be killed. **Therefore it says "v'lo tachus einecha" (and your eye shall not pity)**, here is the place where one must have a bit of cruelty.

"It Is Forbidden for the Mesit to Teach Merit on Him"

Speaker 1: **"Asur lameset l'lamed alav zechut" (it is forbidden for the mesit to teach merit on him)**, the person on whom they incited may not make any judging favorably on him. As it says... as it says... **"v'lo tachmod" (and you shall not pity).**

When Does the Prohibition of Teaching Merit Apply

Speaker 1: And conversely, and he brings here also on this from Sefer HaLacha, that this is only after one has already concluded his judgment that he is a mesit. But when the question is to save the mesit, he is not yet a mesit.

Speaker 2: Ah, one minute, one minute, very good. If so I understand why it says mesit, because the mesit knows the truth. All other people don't yet know that he is a mesit. So, as long as one doesn't know, perhaps one must love him, one doesn't know. Only after his judgment is concluded. Here we speak of the mesit himself, that he should not have mercy on himself. Because in truth his judgment is already concluded, he knows very clearly. Perhaps that's the reasoning.

Speaker 1: But he is right that "it is forbidden to teach merit on him" doesn't mean to say during the inquiries and investigations when the court does their research in order to be able to know for sure that he is a mesit.

There must be the usual process, the "due diligence" as they say, and then if someone has a merit he must say it. Only after

one has already concluded his judgment, it makes no sense, what is the point of this?

Discussion: What Does "Teaching Merit" Mean Practically

Speaker 1: It means this also, it means the mesit. The one who knows that he actually did it, someone knows it, he knows that he has a side that the deed didn't happen, certainly he can't say, he doesn't know. But the one who knows yes, perhaps that's the word of the mesit also, if the mesit has a doubt perhaps he didn't say it in a way that he is liable.

Speaker 2: Yes, that's exactly the merit that he may not teach, exactly that. That means, actually a death by human hands, but one can understand he had a difficult childhood.

Speaker 1: A deed is, very good. But these are all details of laws, not which merit he has. He goes here said a judging favorably, he had a difficult childhood. What does all this judging favorably want?

Speaker 2: No, judging favorably here can mean that perhaps he didn't have all the laws and details of mesit, perhaps he didn't say it in a manner proper to be punished.

Speaker 1: Very good, and on this it says "we don't teach merit on him." No, I say, when I come in and say that one incited me, the court asks me how did he do it, and all these things. So certainly I must first say that I was with all the laws of mesit that the Rambam says, and that doesn't yet mean teaching merit. That means still a part of the regular inquiry and investigation to make sure that he is actually a mesit. But once one has established for me that he is a mesit, he should say perhaps he was forced, perhaps he forgot, perhaps he is...

Speaker 2: I mean that I want to tell you something. The Torah said six other prohibitions that are connected to the deed, and this was certainly lengthy. Certainly from speaking all these things he will come to all these ways. Certainly he speaks of a deed, but he speaks of what I say, the mesit knows that he is a mesit, and sees he goes in before three people without witnesses and warning. One should set oneself up, one should not set oneself up.

Speaker 1: And one who admits to a liability is exempt? If he knows that he has a merit, he should not say it. And if he knows a liability, another reason why one should not love the person, "he is hated and cursed to Hashem."

Speaker 2: I know what you're asking, I know what you're asking. This also turns, we're not speaking here of the essence of the deed. The essence of the deed is the testimony. The testimony is, even by a witness we learned that the court may not add a word that he said. And the court asks him yes, did you say exactly so? And perhaps he twisted out, didn't say it right.

He didn't say "a matter that is not common," he said "a matter that is not usually revealed." And that's not a deed.

Speaker 1: But what? You say, the Torah says, it's considered like idolatry, it means a tremendous thing. No, he didn't use the words, rather he said nothing. So that you shouldn't make too many leniencies, and the Torah wants very strongly to make strengthening in this matter, we attach it with a prohibition.

Speaker 2: I mean, no, I want to bring out, it seemed to me that here something, something... you know, one usually judges favorably in capital cases. All kinds of laws, you see all

these laws, perhaps this, perhaps that. You ask a question, we kill him immediately.

Speaker 1: No, we speak when one knows that he is a mesit, and we seek ways. Just as every, almost every rabbi, every question, one can seek arguments against and arguments for.

Speaker 2: I know, there was once a case, someone was a groom married to a great sick person, and they greatly spared the wife. A rabbi came and said, he tried to find that one of the witnesses is perhaps a false witness, because he has a smartphone. He now used it in a "creative" way to disqualify that one. Such things this means. But the essence of making sure that he has the laws of mesit, that the Rambam enumerated, that's the "basic job" of the court, to make sure that he has the laws of mesit.

Speaker 1: Ah, you want to be in doubt so, one can be in doubt so.

Laws of a Prophet Who Prophesies in the Name of Idolatry and a False Prophet

One Who Incites to Worship Himself Versus Another Idolatry

Speaker 1: He is like an inciter for becoming an inciter. For becoming an inciter, but it's very interesting, because this too is like a matter that has no action, he only said "I'm going." He already receives stoning for saying he's becoming an inciter. Every inciter is only speaking. One must think, the law must presumably also mean that he meant it seriously. If there's a way to say... You say, I didn't mean it seriously enough. Again, you see, you say, if a person says "worship me," I say he doesn't mean it seriously. But he says "worship that one," he can perhaps mean it seriously.

Speaker 2: Yes, the gabbai has a greater stringency than the... I got a fright. A rebbe is not idolatry. I mean, someone who truly says that he is a god, he is...

Speaker 1: Yes. Very good. Yes, let's now learn various laws about what happens regarding a prophet who incites people to idolatry.

The Gemara says, yes, "your brother," doesn't mean... I'll say the Gemara that I said. Doesn't mean pity him in a, "your brother" like your friend, make him different from him. He's a stringent person like us. Mock him.

Speaker 2: Okay.

Law 8: A Prophet Who Prophesies in the Name of Idolatry

Speaker 1: Now, let's learn the laws of one who prophesies in the name of idolatry. A prophet... a new type of inciter. A prophet, until now we've learned about a common person who is an inciter, he just says. In whose name does he say it? He says a logical argument, he gives a reason, a parable. And now we have here a prophet who says idolatry. It happened. A prophet who prophesies in the name of idolatry, how? How does the law work?

The Rambam says thus, "**One who says, someone says thus: Such-and-such idolatry or such-and-such star told me that one is commanded to do thus and thus or not to do thus and thus.**" Very interesting, even, the intent of the law, even if the person truly said something that is actually so, but he only said it in the name of the idolatry or in the name of the star. He said for example, the star told me to keep Shabbos. He actually said the law "**to declare the**

impure impure and to purify the pure." It's interesting that this is the example, to declare the impure impure and to purify the pure. Then he is liable to death.

Speaker 2: But he says yes, some mitzvah he leaves. He says you can become pure, or you must...

Speaker 1: Yes, but the mitzvah he says is the true mitzvah. But the prohibition is on the saying. The prohibition is being a prophet in the name of idolatry. One may not be a prophet of idolatry. He doesn't have the law of an act of inciting, he has the law of prophesying in the name of idolatry, for which comes the regular punishment of a false prophet of strangulation.

Discussion: Distinction Between a Prophet in the Name of Idolatry and a False Prophet

Speaker 2: A prophet in the name of idolatry, not a false prophet is yet another thing.

Speaker 1: Two, it's another external thing. But not from the law of an act of inciting, rather it's two other laws, he brings two other verses. A false prophet is one who says in the name of Hashem, he says he's also a false prophet, because idolatry didn't tell him.

Speaker 2: How do you know? Perhaps it did tell him, it doesn't say. A power can't speak with a person?

Speaker 1: A power can speak with a person.

Okay, again, the term false prophet is only prophesying in the name of Hashem, he lies in the name of Hashem. A prophet of idolatry is an external law, one may not say any prophecy in the name of idolatry, not a false prophet.

Speaker 2: What's the difference? False means you say in the name of Hashem that which He didn't command him. Says in the name of a god, that's a new question whether the power speaks or doesn't speak, I don't know. One must investigate, I don't know what the investigation is.

Speaker 1: Both, **"who speaks in the name of other gods,"** a prophet who speaks in the name of idolatry, **"and his death"** is a prophet. And where is the prohibition? Every punishment comes with a prohibition. The Rambam says, **"his warning is from the general of both, 'and in the name of other gods you shall not mention.'"** Wait, this doesn't mean just mentioning, but nothing. He says that the law says something, yes.

Law 9: It is Forbidden to Engage in Judgment and Response with One Who Prophesies in the Name of Idolatry

Speaker 1: The Rambam says further, **"and it is forbidden to contemplate judgment and response from one who prophesies in the name of idolatry."** Usually when someone comes to say prophecies, there is about how one tests him, as the Rambam brought. One doesn't test too much, but one makes a few tests, one asks him for a sign and wonder. But one who says in the name of idolatry, one knows immediately automatically that he is a false prophet and a prophet in the name of idolatry, and one shouldn't deal with him at all. One doesn't ask him any laws, one doesn't ask him any response, **"and we don't ask him for a sign and wonder."**

He says further, **"and if he performed an act,"** even if he did a sign and wonder, **"we don't pay attention to it and don't contemplate it."** One doesn't think perhaps, he says, perhaps he is indeed correct. The Rambam says further, **"and**

anyone who thinks about his signs perhaps they are true," anyone who thinks about his signs, perhaps they are true, he begins to consider perhaps it is indeed true, true meaning to say that it's true that this proves that one must worship idolatry and the like? Or that the idolatry prophesied with him?

Speaker 2: Not that the sign is true, because the sign he indeed saw that it's true.

Speaker 1: True means to say that it's a true sign. It means it wasn't a trick, it wasn't sorcery. The sorcery didn't happen.

But even if he did, **"as it says 'you shall not listen to the words of that prophet.'"** You shouldn't... sorcerer here means like one who raises a ghost, from several types... That itself is a matter of no permission. One may not believe. The Rambam explains why one may not believe, because we truly believe in the Torah. But one may not believe such a wonder, it's one who made a wonder, it's a sorcerer, there's no power to make wonders.

Laws 10-11: The False Prophet

Speaker 1: The Rambam says, **"and so too the false prophet who prophesies in the name of idolatry."** And so too a false prophet, one who doesn't say in the name of idolatry, but he says false prophecies, that is he says that the Almighty told him something that the Almighty didn't tell him.

"Even though he prophesied in the name of Hashem and didn't add or subtract." There are two types, there's a false prophet whose sin is that he adds or subtracts from the Torah, he says differently than it says in the Torah, he adds commandments or he removes commandments. But the essence of the false prophet, even if he wasn't adding or subtracting, and he just said falsehood in the name of Hashem, also his death is by strangulation.

The Rambam says, "false prophet," one type of false prophet is because he adds and subtracts, because we know he's a false prophet, because the Almighty said that the Torah won't change. This He said after the Torah. And just because he's a false prophet, that is even the sin isn't in the things he said. When he adds and subtracts the sin is in the things he said. Here the point is, even if he said good things, but the falsehood is that the Almighty told him and He didn't tell him.

The reason why this is the law of Laws of the Foundations of the Torah, is the reason why one gives strangulation for one who says adding and subtracting, is because we know it's a lie. Besides that he transgresses "you shall not add," on that comes the death comes on the part of the falsehood. But he says just in the name of Hashem, how do you know it's not true? Because it didn't happen. Because the sign and wonder didn't happen, **"as it says 'and the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name that which I didn't command him to speak.'"** Things he wasn't commanded to say, or **"who speaks in My name that which I didn't command him to speak,"** right? Here are the first false prophet, and the second is "prophet in the name of idolatry," **"and that prophet shall die."**

Discussion: Explanation of "Who Presumes"

Speaker 2: I mean the word here is "who presumes." "Presumes" goes up on the "to speak in My name." Not "in the name of other gods" is always a "presumes." "Presumes" - if he thought he sees a prophecy, it's unintentional.

Speaker 1: I don't know, the Torah says he's intentional, must be. I don't know.

Here it's certainly idolatry, it's interesting that this is in Judges, so it's obvious why the Rambam put it here at all. Here we're talking about an inciter, and even the law, the commandment of false prophet is only here, not there. It's simple.

Speaker 2: Yes, in inciter and enticer it's there in Sanhedrin.

Speaker 1: Yes, yes, but the commandment isn't brought, the laws aren't brought, all the things aren't brought. It's obvious. It could be that the whole law of false prophet is a branch of the inciter. The Gemara also connects both things. One must clarify this.

The Rambam says, yes, **"one who prophesies what he didn't hear in the vision of prophecy,"** whether he prophesies something that is false, because he never saw it in the vision of prophecy, or he heard it in the vision of prophecy. Yes, interesting, "he's saying a novelty." Whatever, "heard" means he understood and heard it, there's no difference.

"Or one who heard the words of his fellow prophet" - or a false prophet can also mean that he says after a second prophet, as he says **"this matter wasn't said to me in prophecy, but to so-and-so it was said to him and I'm prophesying it."** This is interesting. The prophet is true, he has a friend who is a true prophet, but he says "I heard it." Behold he's a false prophet, because what he says is a lie. He says something he didn't hear in prophecy.

Speaker 2: Even one who looks in the Chumash and he says what it says in the Chumash, it's also "prophesying what he heard from his friend." If he says it as prophecy.

Speaker 1: Yes, yes. Both are false prophets, and his death is by strangulation.

Law 12: You Shall Not Fear Him - It is Forbidden to Refrain from Killing the False Prophet

Speaker 1: Yes, and also on a false prophet stands the warning that one may not have mercy on him. The Rambam says, **"Anyone who refrains himself from killing the false prophet because of his excellence and merit, for behold he walks in the way of prophecy, once his falsehood is clarified, behold he transgresses a negative commandment, as it says 'you shall not fear him.'"** One will go thinking about him that it's true. Because it must be that we're talking about one who already has some level. What happens if not? He's just crazy and his word is worth nothing.

Discussion: Why False Prophet is in Laws of Idolatry

Speaker 1: It seems so, it seems that the false prophet isn't some law because he said a bad word like a blasphemer. It's some law in guarding the community of Israel from people who can be inciters. Therefore the Rambam placed him after inciter and enticer. It's not such a person uttered from his mouth bad things. It's an important person who can have a bad influence on the community of Israel. I say, therefore one places him after inciter and enticer. It's not such a category like blasphemer, he uttered the wrong people from his mouth. He says even a good thing. The false prophet doesn't have to be that he says a bad thing. He walks in the ways of prophecy, he's one who has an influence on people.

What happens when just a plumber says in the middle of his work, "Oh, I just had a prophecy"? He's crazy, he says foolish

words, on such a one there's no practical difference. Therefore the Rambam placed him in the category of inciter and enticer.

What it says here is however that a person may not go and say, "I can kill you, you're wicked, you're righteous, you go to the mikvah a hundred times, you're counted." Why should I think? The Rambam says thus, why should a person refrain from killing a false prophet? I mean, it's only a false prophet. He's a false prophet, one must kill him, he says falsehood. No, he's a person of stature who walks in the ways of prophecy, he's called a servant of Hashem, he's already "in this the prophet was created." There's a prohibition of "you shall not fear any man."

I meant to say thus, on the previous question why the Rambam placed these things under inciter and enticer, I say that it's not a law of saying bad words, it's a law of having a bad influence on Jews, like inciter and enticer. It's in the category similar to inciter and enticer. Therefore it makes a lot of sense that one who walks in the ways of prophecy it's a great sin, and one who doesn't walk in the ways of prophecy it's not so.

The second explanation, the Shelah HaKadosh doesn't agree, but I think that the main reason is, one who walks in the ways of prophecy is like the Rambam said in Foundations of the Torah, that it's not simple... People just don't hold so. Walks in the ways of prophecy, people can think that a person can want to be a prophet, a plumber.

The Jew who learned Rambam knows that one cannot.

The Rambam adds a condition here that "holech b'darachei nevuah" (following the ways of prophecy) is a condition even for a false prophet.

And on this the Rambam understands that it's a...

Halacha 12 (continued): "Lo tagur mimenu" — One may not fear him

Speaker 1:

This is the second interpretation that the Rambam says, which I don't think I agree with, but I think the main reason is, someone who is holech b'darachei hanavi (following the ways of a prophet) is as the Rambam said in Yesodei HaTorah, it's not simple that people just don't hold that way, it's not simple that holech b'darachei hanavi, people can think that a person can become a prophet like a plumber. One who has learned Rambam knows that one cannot. The Rambam adds a condition here, that holech b'darachei hanavi is a condition even for a navi sheker (false prophet). And on this the Rambam understands it's a true reasoning. That means let's understand even according to the truth, even for us who have learned Rambam, we could also have had a hava amina (initial assumption) not to kill this person, because he did try to go b'darachei hanavi. On this the Torah says **"lo tagur mimenu"** (do not fear him), don't be afraid of him, it's a great side, the halacha is so anti being afraid of people who say he has powers, he tried, no, he's saying some falsehood, he's liable to death.

The Rambam says further, **"v'ein hamonei atzmo milamdo chovah"** (and one who restrains himself from teaching him is obligated), one can say before the beis din, the navi sheker who said, **"oy hapachad v'yarum divro"** (woe, fear and his word will be exalted), one who is afraid of him, **"harei hu biklal"** (behold he is included), he says not to be afraid, **"harei hu biklal"**, one may not fear him.

A false prophet is only judged in a beis din of seventy-one

The Rambam says further, "**v'ein danin navi sheker ela b'veis din shel shivim v'echad**" (and we only judge a false prophet in a court of seventy-one). Also the navi sheker, we only judge him in a beis din of seventy-one. Aha. So you see also how there comes here a case with a known person. So what a law of the community, what a law of the public, is not a law of an individual who said wrong words. It says, he says it's a verse, a Mishnah, I don't know why. So you say yes, that because the simple meaning is the topic of navi sheker is more a topic of who is the correct leader, who is the correct one speaking in the name of Hashem. It's not a small matter. So you can even say this, if I tell my friend a navi sheker and it's only one person, there's no law of navi sheker, it's only one who has some public... So this is a proposition that holech b'darchoi hanavi, people listen to him.

Laws of Idol Worship — Swearing in the name of idolatry

Halacha 13: Making a vow or oath in the name of idolatry — one receives lashes

Speaker 1:

Here we're going to learn this, not by idolatry. A new mitzvah from one of the mitzvos that he counted by idolatry. In the category of idolatry it says "**nishba b'shem avodah zarah**" (swearing in the name of idolatry). There is a mitzvah to indeed swear in the name of Hashem, this means that one must receive the Almighty's name with honor, in an oath.

And one who makes a vow or an oath in the name of idolatry, he says receives lashes, as it says "**u'shem elohim acherim lo tazkiru**" (and the names of other gods you shall not mention), you shall not mention idolatry.

Why is swearing in the name of idolatry worse than merely mentioning it?

We see even in this verse, okay? Yes, I didn't know it, I thought it was in Yisro, in Mishpatim. But we've already seen here twice, we saw there also the warning of a prophet in the name of idolatry, right? This is here is the connection apparently. The verse also teaches that a prophet may not speak in the name of idolatry, but also another thing, one may not make a vow in the name of idolatry. I thought that this is the mention, I thought that this is when he makes a vow in its name or an oath in its name.

The severity of making a vow or oath in the name of idolatry is more severe than merely mentioning the idolatry's name, because this is a matter of honor. When a person wants to prove that he means the truth, he says, "I swear in the name of my child, in the name of the Almighty, in the name of Moshe Rabbeinu," as you mentioned yesterday. If he swears in the name of idolatry, he shows that the idolatry is for him the most important thing, he receives lashes for this. The truest thing even, as it were.

An oath to a gentile in his fear — forbidden but one doesn't receive lashes

And I didn't know, whether he swears just like that for himself, and I didn't know that even for a gentile, he thinks that for the gentile he proved this way, is also a great sin.

Besides this, an oath to a gentile in his fear also one may not do. For this one doesn't receive lashes, but he wants an oath from the gentile, he says to the gentile, "Swear to me in the name of your idolatry," it's simple that the gentile will now,

you're causing him to mention the idolatry's name. Like a... which prohibition is this? You're causing the gentile... but if the gentile is allowed, there's no concern. Is this lifnei iver (placing a stumbling block) for the gentile, or is this because this is a prohibition for the person, for the Jew, to do?

Speaker 2:

He's causing him. The law of selling animals to idolaters is also this, because he's going to do a sin through you.

Speaker 1:

And he says that on this there was also a halacha l'maaseh (practical law), he brings. Okay, we'll see.

Halacha 14: Even to mention the name of idolatry not in the manner of an oath — forbidden

Speaker 1:

And even to mention the name of idolatry not in the manner of an oath is also forbidden. One may not mention the name of idolatry at all, to say the name of idolatry. Plainly saying the name of idolatry is also forbidden, even without an oath. This is also "**lo tazkiru**". Okay, not... Again, this is like the many mitzvos that we've seen that there's more than one meaning from the same verse. But for this he says one receives lashes.

Speaker 2:

Isn't this somewhat a lav she'ein bo maaseh (a prohibition without an action)?

Speaker 1:

No, what is this? I think this is like a smaller level of "**lo tazkiru**". The real "**lo tazkiru**" is a...

The real prohibition is "**lo tazkiru es shemoseihem**" (you shall not mention their names). Afterwards there is "**lo yazkir es shemos elohim acherim**" (one shall not mention the names of other gods). The Rambam says further, for example, "**lo yomar adam l'chaveiro 'shmor li b'tzad avodah zarah pelonis', v'chayotza baze**" (a person should not say to his friend 'wait for me by such-and-such idolatry,' and the like). "Make a sign by an idolatry," "wait for me by that idolatry," and the like.

Idolatrics written in the Torah — permitted to mention

The Rambam says, but there are idolatrics whose names one may indeed mention. As we learned earlier, for example, the Rambam in the Laws of Idolatry mentioned Pe'or and Markulis. The Rambam says, "**kol avodah zarah hakesuva b'Torah hakedosha, mutar l'hazkir es shemah, k'gon Pe'or u'Baal v'Nevo v'Gad v'chayotza bahen**" (any idolatry written in the Holy Torah, it's permitted to mention its name, such as Pe'or and Baal and Nevo and Gad and the like). Pe'or is in the Torah, and Baal, yes, the Jews were "stumbled with Baal Pe'or." Baal is mentioned, Baal was the... in Daniel I think it's mentioned. "**Kara Bel koras Nevo**" (Bel has bowed down, Nevo stoops). And Gad, "**ha'orchim l'Gad shulchan**" (who set a table for Gad). And the like one may indeed. Why may one? Because if the Torah itself transgressed the prohibition of "**u'shem elohim acherim lo tazkiru**", the simple answer is, one may.

Discussion: Why does the Torah itself mention names of idolatry?

Speaker 2:

No, one can say another answer. He mentions it because one must mention it, because it's in the Torah.

Speaker 1:

It's an interesting halacha, I think one must understand it better. Because I ask you a question, if there's a prohibition to mention the name of idolatry, why does the Torah itself mention the name of idolatry? It's a question. One can say that usually idolatries, their names bring out something of their importance, like the holy... In the word idolatry already stands a name of honor. Probably the names that the Torah mentions, the Torah already gave a derogatory language in this, or removed the honor from it. I don't know, something is funny. One sees even in the Torah... No, it doesn't say "lord Pe'or" or "the god Baal." That's the prohibition, obviously. But is there even without this? Okay. I ask you, it's a question that's always difficult for me, that in the Torah itself there's a name attached to a certain idolatry, right? **"Lifnei Baal Tzefon tachanu"** (before Baal Tzefon you shall encamp). Literally a sign, literally the thing. One must understand it better.

On the other hand, there are indeed places in Tanach where one sees that the Chumash doesn't say the names of idolatry. For example, Ish Boshes, in the Book of Chronicles, and in other places it says Ish Baal. He was called Ish Boshes, because in truth he was named Ish Baal. A whole confusion was made, what's the simple meaning? But the Tanach sometimes does indeed change the names of idolatry derogatorily. He doesn't say the name of idolatry in order to fulfill the mitzvah. And in other places in Tanach he does say it. One sees that it indeed says **"Baal Pe'or"**. One shouldn't be more pious than the Torah. If the Torah itself says the name, you can also do so. Yes, good, it means that one adds things on the spot, as I said, that one speaks when the name of the idolatry has in it some importance.

A great rabbi of idolatry is a heretic, when one calls his names it has in it importance. He derives a new law, a new leniency. He asks a question on the Mishnah: it says "these are the idols," how can one say the Mishnah? Rather what, these are secular names. I think, one can learn everything from Modeh Tov. That means, someone mentions the name of Hashem,

yes? He only mentions, he speaks of a gentile, not because of "in their mouths," he says, "wait for me by the study hall," yes, "by the Temple." It's for me a way of... Yes, it's because just saying the name is already a step. It brings even, as the Rivash said, one shouldn't say names of angels, holy angels. It's a matter of calling in the name, it's indeed, the Almighty comes, an influence comes from there. It could be by idolatry there's also a matter, but if one uses it to bring what's in the Torah, it's no longer the problem, it's different.

Causing others to vow and fulfill in the name of idolatry – forbidden but one doesn't receive lashes

The Rambam says another section, that **"asur l'grom l'acherim she'yidru v'yakimu b'shem avodah zarah"** (it's forbidden to cause others to vow and fulfill in the name of idolatry). This is causing another, as earlier he said, a gentile or a Jew, no difference. Noder means a vow, mekayem means also an oath? Yes. But one doesn't receive lashes. Ah, the Rambam says himself, **"v'eino lokeh, dazeh asur. Aval eino lokeh, ela hanoder bishmah v'hamekayem bishmah v'hanishba bishmah"** (and he doesn't receive lashes, for this is forbidden. But he doesn't receive lashes, only the one who vows in its name and fulfills in its name and swears in its name). That means, one does an action. But causing another is forbidden, but one doesn't receive lashes.

Summary: The verse "u'shem elohim acherim lo tazkiru" – multiple layers

Speaker 1:

Okay, so this is another interesting thing. Why did it come in here? It came in here because it's also from the same verse of **"u'shem elohim acherim lo tazkiru"**, it includes both the matter of prophesying in the name of idolatry, and mentioning the names of idolatry, or making someone swear in its name, or making someone not kick in its name. Everything is forbidden, and this is like boundaries for idolatry, it's not the idolatry itself.