

¹² But his master said to him, "Let us not turn into a city of a foreign [people] who are not of the Children of Israel. Let us pass on to Gibeah." ¹³ So he said to his attendant, "Come, let us approach one of the [Jewish] places, and we will end the night in Gibeah or in Ramah." ¹⁴ So they passed [Jebus] and went on, and the sun set upon them near Gibeah of Benjamin. ¹⁵ They turned there to me and spend the night in Gibeah. He entered and sat in the town square, but one brought them into a home to spend the night.

¹⁶ Just then an old man came from his work, from the field, in the evening. The man was from Mount Ephraim, but he was living in Gibeah; the local people were Benjamites. ¹⁷ When he raised his eyes and saw the traveler in the town square, the old man said, "Where are you headed? From where have you come?"

¹⁸ He answered him, "We are passing from Beth-lehem of Judah to the hills of Mount Ephraim; I am from there. I went to Beth-lehem of Judah, and I am headed for the House of HASHEM. * And no man is bringing me into his house. ¹⁹ We even have straw and fodder for our donkeys, and there is even food and wine for me and your maidservant and the boy who is with your maids; not a thing is lacking."

²⁰ The old man said, "Peace be with you! However, all your provisions shall I upon me. Just don't spend the night in the [town] square!"

²¹ He brought them to his house and prepared food for the donkeys; they washed their feet and ate and drank. ²² As they were feeling merry, behold — a group of the city, lawless people, surrounded the house, banging on the door, and saying to the old man, the owner of the house, "Send out the man who came with your house, so that we may know him."

²³ The man who was the owner of the house went out to them. He said to them, "No, my brothers! Please do not be wicked! Since this man has come to my house, do not do this disgusting thing! ²⁴ Here are my virgin daughter and his concubine! I will bring them out and you may molest them and do to them whatever you please. But do not do this disgusting thing to this man!"

²⁵ But the men were not willing to listen to him. The man grabbed his concubine and thrust [her] outside to them. They knew her and they molested her all night long until the morning; they sent her away as the dawn began to break.

The woman arrived towards morning and collapsed at the door of the man's house, where her master was staying until it was light. ²⁷ Her master got up in the morning, opened the doors of the house, and left to go on his way, and behold — his concubine wife was fallen at the entrance of the house, with her hands on the threshold! ²⁸ He said to her, "Get up, let us go!" but there was no answer. He took her upon the donkey, and then the man got up and went to his house.

²⁹ When he arrived in his house, he took a knife and took hold of his concubine. He sliced her body limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her parts throughout all the borders of Israel. * ³⁰ It happened that whoever saw it said, "Such a thing has never happened nor been seen since the day the Children of Israel went up from the Land of Egypt to this day! You must revere this, take counsel and speak up!"

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲדֹנָיו לֹא נִסְוֹר אֶל-עִיר
יְכָרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִנֵּה וְעָבְרֵנוּ עַד-גִּבְעָה: וַיֹּאמֶר לְנַעֲרֹו לֵךְ
וְנִקְרְבָה בְּאֶחָד הַמְּקֻמֹּת וְלִבֵּנוּ בְּגִבְעָה אוֹ בְּרָמָה: וַיַּעֲבְרֵוּ וַיָּלֶכְוּ וַתָּבֹא
לָהֶם הַשָּׁמֶשׁ אֶצֶל הַגִּבְעָה אֲשֶׁר לְבִנְיָמִן: וַיִּסְרוּ שָׁם לְבֹא לָלֶזֶן בְּגִבְעָה
וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּרֻחוֹב הָעִיר וְאֵין אִישׁ מֵאֶסְפֵּי-אוֹתָם הַבָּיְתָה לָלֶזֶן: וַהֲגַה
אִישׁ וְלֶזֶן בָּא מִן-מִעְשָׂהוּ מִן-הַשָּׂדֶה בְּעָרֵב וְהָאִישׁ מִקֵּרֶב אֶפְרַיִם וְהוּא-גֵר
בְּגִבְעָה וְאִנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם בְּנֵי זְמִינִי: וַיֵּשֶׁא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת-הָאִישׁ הַאֲרֻחַ
בְּרֻחוֹב הָעִיר וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה הֵן תֵּלֵךְ וּמֵאֵין תָּבֹא: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו
עֲבָרִים אֲנִי הֵנִי מִבֵּית-לָחֶם וְהוֹדָה עַד-יִירֵכְתִי הָרֶ-אֶפְרַיִם מִשָּׁם אֲנִי
וְאֵלַי עַד-בֵּית לָחֶם וְהוֹדָה וְאֵת-בֵּית יְהוּדָה אֲנִי הֵלֵךְ וְאֵין אִישׁ מֵאֶסְפֵּי
אוֹתִי הַבָּיְתָה: וְגַם-תָּבֹן גַּם-מִסְפּוֹא יֵשׁ לְחֻמּוֹרֵינוּ וְגַם לָחֶם וְיֵין יֵשׁ-לִי
וְלֹא-מִתָּךְ וְלֹא-עַם-עֲבָרֶיךָ אֵין מִחֻסּוֹר כָּל-דָּבָר: וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה
שָׁלוֹם לָךְ רַק כָּל-מִחֻסּוֹרְךָ עָלַי רַק בְּרֻחוֹב אֶל-תֵּלֵךְ: וַיְבִיאוּהוּ לְבֵיתוֹ
וַיֹּבִיל [וַיִּבֶל] לְחֻמּוֹרִים וַיִּרְחְצוּ רַגְלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׁתּוּ: הֵמָּה
מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-לִבָּם וְהוּא אִנְשֵׁי הָעִיר אִנְשֵׁי בְנֵי-בְלִיעֵל נָטְבוּ אֶת-הַבָּיְתָה
מִתְדַּפְּקִים עַל-הַדֶּלֶת וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל-הָאִישׁ בְּעַל הַבָּיְתָה הַזֶּה לֹא-אֵת
אֶת-הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-בָּא אֶל-בֵּיתְךָ וְנִדְעָנוּ: וַיֵּצֵא אֲלֵיהֶם הָאִישׁ בְּעַל הַבָּיְתָה
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם אֶל-אֲחֵי אֶל-תִּרְעוּ נָא אֶתְרִי אֲשֶׁר-בָּא הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה אֶל-
בֵּיתִי אֶל-תַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת-הַנִּבְלָה הַזֹּאת: וְהוּא בְּתֵי הַבְּתוּלָה וּפְלִגְשָׁהוּ
אוֹרִיצָה-נָא אוֹתָם וְעָנוּ אוֹתָם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינֵיהֶם וְלֹא-אִישׁ
הַזֶּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ דָבָר הַנִּבְלָה הַזֹּאת: וְלֹא-אָבֹו הָאֲנָשִׁים לְשֹׁמֵעַ לוֹ
וַיִּחַק הָאִישׁ בְּפִלְגָּשׁוֹ וַיֵּצֵא אֲלֵיהֶם הַחוּץ וַיִּדְעוּ אוֹתָהּ וַיַּתְעַלְלוּ-
בָּהּ כָּל-הַלַּיְלָה עַד-הַבֹּקֶר וַיִּשְׁלַחוּהָ בַּעֲלוֹת [בַּעֲלֹת] הַשָּׁמֶר:

וַתָּבֹא הָאִשָּׁה לַפְּנוֹת הַבֹּקֶר וַתִּפֹּל פָּתַח בֵּית-הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-אֲדוּגָה שָׁם
עַד-הָאֹר: וַיָּקָם אֲדֹנָיָהּ בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּפְתַּח דֶּלֶתוֹת הַבָּיְתָה וַיֵּצֵא לְלֶכֶת לְדַרְכּוֹ
וַהֲגַה הָאִשָּׁה פִּילְגָּשׁוֹ נִפְלָת נִפְתַּח הַבָּיְתָה וַיִּדְּהָ עַל-הַסָּף: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהָ
קוּמִי וְנִלְכָה וְאֵין עֲנָה וַיִּקְחָהּ עַל-הַחֻמּוֹר וַיָּקָם הָאִישׁ וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמִקְמוֹ: וַיָּבֹא
אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הַמֵּאֲכָלָת וַיִּחַק בְּפִלְגָּשׁוֹ וַיַּתְחָהּ לַעֲצָמֶיהָ לְשָׁנִים
וַעֲשׂוּ נִתְחִים וַיִּשְׁלַחַהּ בְּכָל גְּבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְהִנֵּה כָּל-הָרָאָה וְאָמַר לֹא-
נִהְיָתָה וְלֹא-נִרְאָתָה כְּזֹאת לְמִיּוֹם עָלוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם עַד
הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה שִׁמּוֹ-לָכֶם עָלֶיהָ עֲצוּ וְדַבְּרוּ:

C. 1010

2

Now, had evil not spread on such a large scale, the perpetration of such an act in the midst of a large population including all ages and classes would have been impossible. The young would have joined forces with the common folk against the inhumanity, and the old would have aided the upper classes in the preservation of public decency. But in this instance young and old, high and low, united to perform an inhuman and immoral act. For this reason the sentence of **אנשי סדום** was sealed.

Rav Hirsch Braisht כ"ס

3

The Gemara explains the reason for the Sodomites' moral downfall:

אנשי סדום לא נתנאו - The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: **THE PEOPLE OF SODOM BECAME ARROGANT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE BOUNTY THAT THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED IS HE, LAVISHED UPON THEM.** **וְהָיָה כְּתוּב - WHAT IS WRITTEN in Scripture CONCERNING THEM? אֶרֶץ מִמֶּנָּה יֵצֵא לֶחֶם וְהַחֲמִיּוֹת נִהְפְּחוּ בְּמִוֶּה - A LAND FROM WHICH BREAD COMES FORTH HAS, IN ITS STEAD, TURNED INTO SCORCHED EARTH. וְהָיוּ סָבִיב מִמֶּנָּה סָבִיב אֲבָנֶיהָ נִשְׁפָּרוּ וְהָיוּ לְנֶחֱסִים - ITS VERY STONES YIELDED SAPPHIRES, ITS VERY DUST WAS GOLD. לָא יָדְעוּ עֵשֶׂת וְלֹא נָתַיב לֹא יָדְעוּ עֵשֶׂת - [IT WAS] A PATH UNKNOWN TO ANY ROBBER, UNOBSERVED BY ANY SPY. לֹא הִדְרִיכוּ בְּנִי-שְׁמוֹץ לֹא-עָרָה עָלָיו - MIGHTY BEASTS HAD NOT TROD IT, NO LION EVER TRAVERSED IT. [THE PEOPLE OF SODOM] SAID: וְכִי מֵאַחַר - NOW, INASMUCH AS SODOM IS A LAND FROM WHICH BREAD COMES FORTH ... AND ITS VERY DUST IS GOLD, לָמָּה לָנוּ עוֹבְדֵי דְרָכִים - WHY DO WE NEED WAYFARERS, שְׂמֵאן בָּאִים אֵלֵינוּ אֲלֵינוּ לְחַסְרֵנוּ [מִמְנוּנוֹנוּ] - WHO COME TO US ONLY TO DEPRIVE US OF OUR MONEY? בָּאוּ וְנִשְׁבַּח - COME, LET US CAUSE THE VERY CONCEPT OF WAYFARING TO BE FORGOTTEN IN OUR LAND (i.e. let us undertake to mistreat all non-Sodomites so terribly that they will no longer desire to travel through our territory). שְׂמֵאן נִחַל מַעַם-נָר - This sin caused their destruction, AS IT IS STATED: **A STREAM BURST OUT OF ITS NORMAL COURSE [AND WAS CAST UPON THE TOWN] THAT HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN BY THE WAYFARER'S FEET. THEY WERE BANISHED, CONSIGNED TO [ETERNAL] DISGRACE.****

The Gemara explains how the Sodomites murdered and robbed as part of their plan to discourage wayfarers from passing their way:

וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - Rava expounded: What is the meaning of that which is written: עַד-כַּדָּה תַּחֲזוּתוֹ עַל-אִישׁ תִּרְצָחוּ - How long will you plot treacherously against man, will all of you murder with leaning wall, with toppled fence? [This] teaches that [the Sodomites] would cast their eyes upon those

wayfarers and visitors who were wealthy individuals, **וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - and would seat [such a person] next to a leaning wall וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - and push [the wall] down upon [the unsuspecting wayfarer], killing him. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - They would then come and take his money.**

The Gemara describes the cunning of the Sodomite thieves: **וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - Rava expounded: What is the meaning of that which is written: וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - In the darkness he burrows under houses; by day they seal themselves in, never knowing the light? [This] teaches that [the Sodomites] would cast their eyes upon those wayfarers who were wealthy individuals, וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - and would deposit balsam, which is a fragrant substance, with [each one] for safekeeping. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - [The unsuspecting victims] would place [these costly bailments] in their depositories, where they safeguarded their own money and valuables. The location of these hiding places was, of course, a well-kept secret. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - In the evening באים [the Sodomite thieves] would come and sniff out the location of [the depository], which now exuded the fragrance of balsam, acting in the manner of a dog, שְׂמֵאן - as it is stated: **They return toward evening, they howl like the dog and go round about the city.** Once they located the depository they would come and burrow there, into the room, וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - and take that valuable property belonging to the wayfarer.**

The Gemara now cites a number of verses from Job to describe various Sodomite atrocities:

וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - They would allow the naked to spend the night unclothed, no garment to shield against the cold. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - They drive away the orphan's donkey, take the widow's ox in pledge. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - They move back boundary markers, have stolen flocks and take them out to graze. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - He will be taken to the burial ground, be hastened to the mound.

Sanhedrin 109b

4

וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - AND IT WAS ON ACCOUNT OF THIS idol of Michah THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE era of the incident of the CONCUBINE OF GIVAH WERE PUNISHED, וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - for THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED IS HE, SAID TO THEM [the people of that era] בְּבִדּוּרִי לֹא מִוִּיתֶם - AT the affront to MY HONOR, i.e. when Michah's idol was set up, YOU DID NOT PROTEST. וְהָיוּ כְּתוּב - However, AT the affront to THE HONOR OF FLESH AND BLOOD, i.e. the rape of the concubine at Givah, YOU DID PROTEST.

Sanhedrin 103b