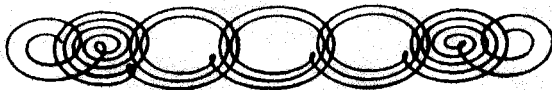


Exposing the truth in the matter of
nikkur to all inhabitants of America

**NIKKUR (purging) of forbidden
animal fat (chelev)**

Critical Information Concerning Chelev (forbidden animal fat) including an indepth study of the subject geared to elucidating the law to prevent unintentional stumbling into the terrible sins of eating forbidden fat for which carries the penalty of Kares (excision).



THIS BOOK IS FOR YOU!

The following are delineated:

- 1) Religious, G-d-fearing people stumble on the prohibition of chelev prohibited by the Torah.
- 2) There are no qualified menakkerim; the butchers themselves are the menakkerim.
- 3) The butchers know very little about nikkur.
- 4) They have no written certification.
- 5) They leave over Torah-prohibited chelev in many parts of the meat.
- 6) They feed the public with many parts actually belonging to the hind quarter — without the proper nikkur.
- 7) There is no supervision on nikkur.
- 8) The situation is decidedly worse in salami, frankfurters, and other types of delicatessen.
- 9) Detailed testimony.
- 10) Decision of Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem.
- 11) Decision of the menakkerim of Edah Hachereidis.
- 12) Instructions and exhortation in the matter of nikkur.

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First edition
Menachem - Av, 5742

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Elul 5742

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Warning of Chofetz Chaim O.B.M.

How much will an individual regret, when with a mere admonition, he could have extricated himself from all these punishments. Let him not be misled by the fact that others will share the punishment with him considering that he is not the only one in the city to have transgressed thereby finding false comfort.

As an analogy: In the event a person is a co-signer on a note encumbering a debt of millions of dollars, regardless the number of additional co-signers, when the debt becomes due, even if required to reimburse only a small fraction thereof, it could amount to a sizable sum, which will be quite painful to pay. Similarly, since today the ingestion and partaking of prohibited foods has become unfortunately widespread when the time for reckoning arrives, it will amount to many thousands of (K'saysim) olive-sized pieces of prohibited foods.

Consequently, those capable of arousing the populace in their vicinity to observe kashrus strictly and thereby prevent untold thousands of Jews who were lax from eating non-kosher, will surely be considered the most guilty. Our sages admonish: Tana D'vei Eliyahu: Anyone able to protest and refrains to do so; Anyone able to elicit repentance and does not do so, all blood spilled will be credited to his negligence and held against him...



Nikkur of the Inner Parts (removal of forbidden fat) **Important Points Necessary for All Jews Lest they Stumble Into the Sin of Eating Fat for Which the Penalty is Koris**

Chapter 1

A Conceptualization of the Nikkur Process

One who enters the field of **nikkur** must realize that the error rate tolerance level is absolute zero; every minor error committed jeopardizes the lives and continued existence of thousands of Jewish souls. Therefore, the diligent study of the Shulchan Aruch and the later authorities as well as the actual **chelev** examination must be performed with the appropriate responsibility and the due recognition of the fear of Heaven. At a minimum the following criteria are required:

- He must travel extensively to all places where **nikkur** is practiced and taught in order to acquire the requisite practical expertise, which is more critical than book study.
- He should ensure that his teacher possess the following qualities:
 - He must be a respectable scholar and a G-d-fearing man for many years.
 - He must have many years of professional experience in this field under the tutelage of teaches who were experts in the field.
 - He must possess "**certification**" from rabbis well versed in **nikkur**.
 - He must be a patient individual taking the time and effort to explain and elucidate to him every detail clearly.

- If possible, he should learn also the **nikkur** of the hind quarters. At a minimum his study should go beyond that of the "front quarters," since at times hind quarters are brought to the slaughter houses. It is, therefore, necessary to study the **nikkur** process to relating to all sections, which may be brought to the butcher shop.

1-A

The Nikkur Process in General

As we have ascertained, the **nikkur** process is sadly neglected. The teachers are many but the knowledgeable are few, and the general populace is guilty of inadvertent transgressions. Erudition in this field is found mainly in Eretz Yisroel, where the detailed knowledge has been transmitted from generation to generation. Neglectfully so in other countries where most of the Jews are refugees from the Second World War, whose mental concentration was impaired by their tragic troubles which befell the entire Jewish nation and they have forgotten important laws. Moreover, in many places, people with little knowledge and even lesser fear of G-d have entered the field. Unfortunately, there is no one capable of recognizing their shortcomings, since for some inexplicable reason the rabbis never deemed it necessary to study **nikkur**, a probable cause has its origin in Europe.

In Hungary there lived **menakkerim** of the highest caliber, excelling both in their erudition as well as their general knowledge of Torah, in addition to their extreme piety. They were appointed by the Rabbinical court of the community to supervise the **nikkur** process. They were duly certified by qualified and recognized **menakkerim** of the previous generation, as well as the greatest rabbis of their generation...who were highly versed in this field. Under such circumstances, it was, therefore, unnecessary for the rabbi of the community to burden himself with

studying the **nikkur** process, for he could depend and rely upon the professional capability and integrity of these individuals.

At present, however, we have unfortunately sunken very low, and the entire **nikkur** profession has been delegated to ordinary people who own butcher shops, or to their employees who are afraid of the boss (should they be too strict). **There is a serious lack of supervision over menakkerim, where, were one to base this need on the professional status of the menakkerim, there should be two or three times the number of mashgichim.** Yet, on the contrary, there is absolutely no supervision; all rely on the **menakker, who does as he pleases without any fear of sin nor discovery.** Any question concerning the matter of Nikkur, the decision is made by the **menakkerim themselves.** Is this an independent arms length transaction? Does this make sense? The pitfalls are frightening...Woe to us, what have we come to?

Temptation blinds people beyond all comprehension. A prohibitive food substance...chelev...listed to be amongst the most stringent, because of the seriousness of the penalty extracted upon its transgression...it even brings about apostasy...**Response Divrei Chaim, Yoreh Deah.** It is totally ignored by everyone.

Recently, we heard that **menakkerim, known and discovered to be lax in their work,** excused themselves by saying: **This was the "custom in Hungary."** We considered this a painful joke bordering on tragedy. One **menakker** was discovered to be absolutely ignorant concerning the law that the intestines had to be cleansed of fat. **To him it was a shame that the rabbis of the Talmud and the Shulchan Aruch were not immigrants from Hungary.**

There were many G-d-fearing menakkerim and great rabbis and halachic authorities in Hungary, yet there is not even a single comment or footnote which indicates any difference between the "Hungarian custom" and the custom of other countries in the matter of Nikkur. Let it suffice that one of the great Hungarian rabbis, Rabbi Pinchas Zelig Schwartz wrote a book, Givas Pinchas, concerning all details of nikkur and does not once mention any special "Hungarian custom." This should prove, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that this excuse is unadulterated and pure nonsense. Moreoever, the menakkerim in the holy city of Jerusalem, who migrated from Hungary, do not differentiate between what they learned in Hungary and the existing practice they encountered in Jerusalem. They are erudite scholars upon whom anyone can rely. Obviously, this is a sly trick, to fulfill the maxim, "He who wishes to lie, quotes far-off witnesses." We were astounded to learn that rabbis relied upon this gibberish nonsense and our astonishment grew when we learned that the rabbis themselves rely on these menakkerim!!!

Does this make sense? Is this a qualified hashgachah, when the rabbi's attention is called to a question concerning nikkur, instead of replying, "This is what I learned from my teachers," or, "This is what I saw practiced by expert menakkerim, known for their fear of G-d and certified by great rabbis." he replies, "Let us go and ask the menakker?" Such a practice is equivalent to the total absence of any hashgachah on the nikkur. This is contrary to the so-called Hungarian custom where the Hashgachah was very strict and meticulous. This is a paradoxical position. The menakker follows (according to his statement) the Hungarian custom, and the rabbi follows the

American custom, that no supervision is necessary for nikkur.

Moreover, why should rabbis and others who migrated from other countries, who never followed Hungarian custom, nor know anything about it, eat meat relying on the kashrus certification of the hechsher-granting-rabbi who states "the meat is kosher **L'mehadrin min ha-mehadrin** (for the most scrupulously observant?) Does this apply to people who come from Eretz Yisroel, Australia, London, or other parts of Europe? Moreover, in their countries of origin, this **chelev** is regarded as prohibited by the **Torah**, for which a penalty of **kares** is incurred.

Is it possible that immediately upon leaving their country of origin and stepping over the threshold of America they—even the most pious—are permitted to eat it? This is totally absurd, incredible, derision a mockery of all we regard as holy...and definitely contrary to halacha (law)! Now that the doors of most countries are open for travelers to come and go and thousands of people visit America annually who permitted this form of abbreviated **Nikkur** for them? (See **Orach Chaim 468, Sh'vilei David** in introduction to **Orach Chaim, Pri Chadash 468** at length. **Therefore, we categorically reject this ludicrous excuse. At a minimum, it should be publicized that meat sold in Hungarian butcher shops have been made kosher with nikkur acceptable only by those who follow Hungarian custom, and is kosher only for Hungarian immigrants)...and not for any other Jewish people.**

1-B

Consistency: There is Nothing New.

It appears that historically, as we shall see, there was always a certain degree of laxity in the field of **nikkur**. In every generation, Satan goes to all lengths to trap Jews to

transgress the prohibition of eating **chelev**. This dates back 500 years ago to the times of the Maharshall, and even prior, when those able to avoid this transgression were fortunate.

Accordingly, **it is incumbent upon every individual to do all within his power to avoid this trap.** Surely no one desires to be included among those listed in the Heavenly transcripts **as one who stumbled on the prohibition of chelev.**

It is strongly urged that until this issue is not rectified, one should abstain from eating the meat of animals. Otherwise, one will inadvertently (perhaps it can even be more than a shogag-inadvertently), eats **chelev** his entire lifetime. In fact the transgression can be termed "intentional" (may zid), being that sufficient warning and information was presented to permit a timely readjustment of one's practices.

1-C

The Degeneration of Generally Accepted Standards With the Passage of Time.

The **Pri Megadim** writes in **Orach Chaim** (Practices of one asked in matters of prohibition and permissibility, 2:1) **Unfortunately, in our times no one learns the laws of Nikkur — although everyone is entrusted with it.** It is, therefore, proper for every rabbi to learn them, and he will be blessed. While it is mandatory for all rabbis who give hechsharim on meat to give priority to this learning over all others.

The sad state of affairs should be noted. In his time, they ate the "hind quarters" where is situated the major chelev. And, even so, the diligent **nikkur** process was neglected, Surely in our times, when the majority gains confidence albeit falsely, by the fact that we eat only the "front

quarters," there is sufficient grounds to assume neglect and the probable findings of "material error.

The ignorance and unreliability of menakkrim (chelev auditors).

- 2 -

**The Great Gaon Rabbi Jonathan
Eibenschutz O.B.M. Author of Keresi Ufleisy
Writes that most all menakkerim are
unlearned, and therefore, cannot be relied
upon.**

"In these times, we must be more stringent, not relying on the **assumed piety** of the **menakker**. Now, there are many stringent rulings and the work is extremely difficult. Most of the Practitioners are unlearned...and we may **not** rely on the **nikkur** of anyone unless he is an expert and a long-standing G-d-fearing man...

From the time I was able to understand, I learned the laws of **nikkur** to be well-versed in them and in their names. I did **not** rely on the **menakker**, but ate only what I cleansed myself, and ate only from the toil of my hands."

The moral of the story is: If a holy and learned man like R. Yonason whose precious time was totally dedicated to heavenly pursuits, toiled with his own two hands to clean out the meat, it surely must be a very serious matter.

Sefer Divrei Moshe, on Torah, **Parshas Kedoshim**.
From the deeds of the Gaon R. Yonason everyone can understand the rabbinical axiom: "one who benefits from the toil of his hands is greater than one who fears Heaven..." Namely one who works with his two hands is greater than one who fears Heaven — if that accomplishment comes to him easily, without toil.

- 3 -

The Leaders obligation to forcefully emphasize the seriousness of the chelev prohibition.

The words of the great Rabbi Yonason Eibenschutz in effect, an admonition for all rabbis, that they have not fulfilled their responsibility by refraining from protest. Who in our generation, is as great as R. Yonason, whose reverence hovered over all nations and nevertheless, freed himself from all his holy work to engage in a low, menial work as **nikkur**. Surely, he did not do this because of his desire for meat; G-d forbid to entertain such thoughts concerning a saint like R. Yonason, especially since he had the choice of eating from parts of the animal that do not require **nikkur**. But, as it is known to all who entered his house, his entire lifestyle was a continuous chain of disseminating Torah and purity to the flocks of Israel, as a faithful shepherd only concerned for his flocks. In this case, he intended to perform a shocking attention-grabbing astonishing act to impress every Jew with the stringency of the prohibition of **chelev**. He believed that if the general populace would see that a rabbi of his caliber...whom thousands of Jews revere...whose table is surrounded by hundreds of disciples to whom princes of nations turn for advice...considers it obligatory to spend time on such a degrading work as removing the fat from the meat...

Let everyone else judge for himself: The fear aroused the ire of this great stalwart of Judaism, causing him to quake with fear eating chelev (and it is needless to comment that the menakker serving under his banner was a pious scholar) what shall we simple people do? The rabbis should also learn from this example. **Let them dismiss the lax menakkerim and replace them with pious scholars** (Maftchi Yoreh Deah 65).

- 4 -

Personally Knowing the Menakker is a Prerequisite

A pious person should not rely on any **menakker** unless he recognizes him as a G-d fearing man and an expert in the profession of **nikkur** ³ (**Yam shel Shelomo, Chulin** ch. 1, par. 2) Hence, it is obligatory upon every pious person, before eating meat, to be acquainted with the **menakker**, even if there is no question raised concerning his reliability. Surely, if there is a question concerning his integrity, it is obligatory for everyone who has any fear of Heaven, to investigate the **menakker**, his origin and his deeds.

- 5 -

Laudatory comments concerning countries where the menakkerim are scholarly G-d-fearing individuals.

The practice of Cracow, are highly praised. There the butchers and **menakkerim** were not plain people who do their work routinely. Rather all butchers and **menakkerim** are ordained rabbis, scholars, and well-versed in Torah. So is the practice of all Germany, Bohemia, Poland, and Russia, not to appoint butchers except pious scholars. Also those who remove the fat from the "hind quarters" must be scholarly men and experts in the laws of **chelev** and **nikkur**.

In the decisions of Mahari Sarzina (printed at the end of the Responsa of **Rosh** and quoted by **Darchei Techuvah** 64).

This statement discloses that the countries whence American Jewry originated, which the author praised so highly, demanded that the butchers **as well as** the **menakkerim** should be rabbis and scholars who are well-versed in Torah. Now, why should we be deprived of this

and not have in this blessed and affluent land of ours what **he** had in the poverty-stricken lands of Europe?

Furthermore, we can deduce from his words that for **nikkur** of the inner parts, they were stricter than for that of the "hind quarters;" for the inner parts they required "rabbis, scholars," whereas for the hind-quarters they required people familiar with Torah and expert in their field.

How remarkable!!!

- 6 -

The sad state of affairs where Rabbis are not well-versed in nikkur and the menakkerim are ignorant.

The **Sefer Beis Yitzchak** castigates the rabbis who divorce themselves from the **menakkerim** and do not supervise them. How can they rely on the **menakkerim**, each of whom learned from his predecessor (**Yora Deah** 64) sometimes the teacher did not learn? And in such an instance how can the pupil know?

Also, in **nikkur** of the inner part, everyone participates including women, servants, minors, and especially **shochtim** who just recently learned the laws of **shechitah** and **bedikah** but never learned anything about **nikkur**. Yet, as soon as they commence to practice as **shochtim**, they become **menakkerim**, and everyone relies on them without ascertaining whether they are doing their work properly.

This occurs because even the rabbis who promulgate halachic decisions are not sufficiently well-versed in this field. Therefore, the rabbi **himself** must learn thoroughly the procedure of **nikkur** in the "front part" and then he can test the **shochet** and guide him in the proper way, so that nothing prohibited leaves his hand. (Quoted by **Giv'as Pinchas** on laws of **nikkur** - in the introduction).

The facts we learn from this quotation are:

In his days, too, the rabbis neglected to study the laws of **nikkur**.

This brought about a grave pitfall, that any ignoramous or lax person became a **menakker**.

No one supervised his work.

The **shochtim** who only learned the laws of shechitah would go into this field without any knowledge.

No one protested this practice.

Concerning **nikkur** of the "inner part" there are pitfalls.

A **menakker** who learned from a teacher is not necessarily an expert at **nikkur**, because perhaps the teacher was also a self-styled **menakker**; even if he learned **nikkur**, perhaps his teacher was also a self-proclaimed **menakker**.

The rabbis must learn the work of **nikkur** from someone who is definitely well-versed in the laws of **nikkur**.

The rabbi should test the **menakker** and supervise his work at all times.

See below 7, 8, that also in Hungary there was much ignorance, in the **nikkur** profession, as one of the great rabbis, himself an expert **menakker**, attested.

- 7 -

Corrective Action taken-pitfalls are common in large and small cities, but because of the fear of G-d they agree to rectify the situation.

For many years I have been engaged in matters of **nikkur**, and I visited many large and small cities in Hungary. I saw that many grave pitfalls occurred, and I called it to the attention of the citizenry. They all thanked me and were very grateful. (**Giv'as Pinchas** on laws of **nikkur**, by Rabbi Pinchas Zelig Schwartz o.b.m., controller

of **menakkerim** in Kleinwerdein, son of the saint and sage, the author of **Bes Natali** o.b.m., the son of the renowned author of **Kol Aryeh** o.b.m.)

We can discern from his words that there were very grave pitfalls in Hungary in his time and everyone who relies on the fact that he learned nikkur in Hungary relies on a fantasy and wishful thinking for there, too, "in many places - many grave pitfalls existed."

Moreover, because of their intense fear of the Lord and their understanding concerning the moral responsibility of causing a public pitfall by feeding them food which carries the penalty of **kares**. They waived the attendant embarrassment and decided that world, which is very temporary and flies away quickly rather than to be embarrassed in the next world for all time to come in the presence of all the righteous and saintly men, when the damage will be irreparable. Also, the shame one suffers in this world atones for his sins, as the Rabbis state: Anyone who sins and is ashamed and embarrassed as a result thereof, all his sins are forgiven. This was the personification of their **menakkerim**, who, despite somewhat moral laxity as exemplified by their engaging in **nikkur** without the proper training, were, nevertheless, imbued with the fear of punishment, and rejoiced when someone showed them the errors of their ways, and accepted his words with gratefulness. Indeed Jews are holy. Who will give us their likes.



- 8 -

Mashgichim (audit supervisors) on the Payroll of the Butchers are Untrustworthy; Lack of Independence.

Although in some towns **mashgichim** supervise the **nikkur**, since they are unaware of **what** to supervise, because their entire supervision concerns matters of trivial importance and not on the main and critical thrust, moreover, **since they are compensated by the butchers themselves, they feel they must close their eyes even if they witness L-A-X-I-T-Y.** Therefore, it is incumbent that the community itself directly pay the **mashgichim and forbid the mashgiach to accept even an inconsequential gift from the butchers.** This will effectuate stringent supervision and review...he will stand over them and they will obey him (**Giv'as Pinchas - ibid.**)

We thus see that **even** in places with designated **mashgichim** to supervise the **nikkur**, the situation at times is worthless because:

Just as the menakker and the rabbis are unfamiliar with nikkur, so is the mashgiach; he knows no more than the rabbi and the **menakker.**

The mashgiach is paid by the butcher and must remain silent about any laxity he witnesses, because his livelihood depends on the butcher, and he is in danger of losing it if he protests.

The holy solution is for the community to pay the **mashgiach** directly and that he receive nothing, not even a small gift from the butcher. Thereby, he will not be afraid to protest any deviation from the proper procedure.

Furthermore, the rabbi as well, should not accept any salary from the butcher, for if he does, the **mashgiach** services are valueless since, if the mashgiach protests and the owner refuses to rectify the matter, he will go to the

rabbi; if the rabbi is bribed, of what avail is the **mashgiach**?

Even when they receive their salary from the community, the possibility for a pitfall exists when the butcher or his relative is one of the communal dignitaries or he donates significant amounts to the community. This, too, is a form of bribe; in such an instance the establishment of the practice of communal payments to the rabbi and the mashgiach is questionable efficacy. A G-d fearing person must consider all possibilities.

The procedure of Nikkur was handed down from one to the other. Great rabbis from Hungary testified that there are pitfalls because of things that have been forgotten.

Many authorities, each of whom presents a different nikkur procedure. The order of nikkur was transmitted by our forefathers to us, generation to generation.. Due to our many sins, I have seen the occurrence of many grave pitfalls, as the subject matter has been completely forgotten (**Giv'as Pinchas** *ibid.*)

- 9 -

Proclamations Issued Concerning the Details of Nikkur and its Pitfalls

In the house of Isarel I have seen confusion. The generations have become spiritually impoverished and the wisdom of the hearts has become lessened, G-d-fearing men are despised. **The truth has become curtailed and strong-armed men raise their heads.** The profession of **nikkur** - even that of the "front-quarters" alone - my eyes have witnessed various pitfalls, each one different than the next, and I decided that this did not present itself before me in vain, but to arouse the hearts of the G-d-fearing with a hue and cry, **"Awake, you sleepers, from your sleep and you slumberers from your slumber, for the time has come to accomplish for G-d and His Torah, and**

for the existence of the future generations. If you are silent at this time, who knows what tomorrow will bring, and who ascended to Heaven and heard the heavenly pronouncements concerning the gravity of the pitfall that accrues from the neglect of **nikkur** of **chelev**.

Anyone who gives this matter any thought, concerning what even inadvertent eating of chelev amounts to, will feel his heart being rent asunder, and he will cry and cause others to cry with him with tumultuous shouts. How do we sit back with folded hands when the deeds of Satan have succeeded so well to create a breach in the sanctity of the Jewish people, who are separated from the nations **via** their abstention from their food and drink.

We learn from the halachah, come as well as from the history books, that since the time of the great Gaon Rabbi Yonason Eibeshutz **the pitfall of nikkur chelev has not left us in any generation, sometimes it is more pronounced and sometimes less.** How can we expect **our** generation to be exempt from this malady? Are we better than the previous generations. In this period of history in which so many breaches in all fields of Judaism have transpired, surely the pitfall of **chelev**, which also occurred in earlier generations has also come about. Anyone who debates the issue does so because of lack of concentration and sensitivity to the situation. It is a stubborn denial of validity. Concerning such people, the prophet ssays: 'Woe to those who make light into darkness and darkness into light.' ((**Lekach Tov, Makarom Weinfeld on Parshas Shemini.**

The difference between the previous and later generations.

This is the trouble: In previous generations, the greatest leaders of our nation who G-d planted in every generation.

to arouse the world about the pitfalls surrounding the L-rd's vineyard did not remain silent, they went from city to city, saw the pitfalls and took corrective action.

The All-merciful One accepted their repentance and their reawakening for His glory. He atoned for their sin after He saw that the people felt remorse for the past sins and effectuated future corrections.

Our generation, however, is different.

The great Geonim and holy men who sought the Almighty and saved the people of Israel have gone to their everlasting rest and have left an orphaned generation to sigh, without anyone to seek the Al-mighty or to desire to save the people. Nonetheless, the Creator, may His Name be Blessed, who lives forever and exists for all eternity, has not removed His kindness nor His truth from us, and as He has saved us from the teeth of lions in whose teeth we were given as prey, and He keeps alive His holy people Israel, to keep His promise, **"I, the L-rd have not changed, and you, the children of Jacob, have not been annihilated."** We see with our own eyes that the Merciful Father has not forsaken our souls and our spirits, and just as in all generations, He awakened the heart of the pure to oversee the pitfalls of the generation and to work for the glory of G-d and the honor of His Torah which had been defiled, so will He do from now on. Do we not daily see people active in all fields of Jewish practice in which breaches have arisen?

As in the case of other pitfalls, the Holy one, blessed be He, has brought about that this pitfall will be exposed little by little, and it will take its position among the main breaches of the era...its voice will be heard from among the leaflets and booklets circulated for many years but unheeded...having remained without a basis upon which to take a position and without a feeling to understand that a

reawakening that comes through a call of the “**bas-kol**” that emanates from Mt. Horeb and announces, ‘**Woe is to the people because of the disgrace of the Torah,**’ ” must be accompanied by deeds in order to be realized...alas, we have no one to reply upon except our Father in heaven...

Satan’s plan succeeded in that the butchers, dealers, and **menakkerim** were able to convince certain rabbis. **In America, as is known and admitted, the rabbis know absolutely nothing about nikkur** — that they have a so-called traditional method of **nikkur**. This, however, does not exempt the G-d-fearing individual from recognizing the truth, as is made explicit in the letter of the rabbis, included here.

- 10 -

Misleading the Public

It is customary that, whenever a reawakening takes place, the individual evades the issue, thinking that this applies only to the great rabbis and the leaders, and as long as **they** do nothing, **he** is exempt. This manner of thinking has many refutations:

1. If, G-d forbid, it would be known that a hurricane or tornado was heading for the city and that the entire city was in danger of destruction would he then wait for the instruction of the greatest people of the city, or would he take his belongings on his back and run for his life?

2. In mundane matters, or even in his own spiritual matters, would he follow the decision of these greats if he knew within the innermost recesses of his heart that they erred in their decision? Certainly not. Now, how does he know definitely that they have not erred in this matter? Can we rely on such weak, wobbly foundations in so serious a matter?

3. It is stated **Horayos** ch. 1. that if the Sanhedrin (in the Chamber of Hewn Stone) erred and promulgated a decision that **chelev** is permissible, and one knew that they had erred, yet he followed their decision, he is liable for a sin-offering. Hence, it is possible that even **they** should err regarding **chelev!!!**

4. There is strong evidence from the author of **Givas Pinchas** did what he could to save the people from the pitfall of eating **chelev**, and his words were cheerfully accepted.

5. What will these people say about the Rabbinic maxim that we do not give honor to a rabbi where it involves **chillul hashem** (desecration of the Holy name)? Is there a greater **chillul hashem** than the constant violation of the prohibition of eating **chelev** by the entire public?

6. One who eats meat must ask himself whether he would lend these rabbis who are silent, ten thousand dollars without a note, relying solely upon their honesty, that they would surely not lie to him and not deny the debt? And if in money matters, his heart would not let him take a risk, how can he do so in matters pertaining to the soul?

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Available Solutions

We cannot say that everyone can enter into discussions with his rabbi in the matter of **chelev** to determine whether he is versed in this matter. Surely, it would be of no avail to enter the slaughter house suddenly to scrutinize the work of the **menakker**, since he would not understand anything anyway.

There are, however, steps — albeit extreme — which an individual can take, viz. complete abstention from meat. Close to thirteen thousand G-d-fearing people known for their piety, and lacking nothing, either spiritually or materially have already done so.

Such individuals will gain advantages in piety both because they separate from ninety-nine cases of permissibility in order to avoid one case of prohibition, and because a person becomes materialistic from "meat of lust" on weekdays (as is explained in the writings of the **ARI** zal. Also, from the standpoint of health, one has extraordinary gains according to the testimony of physicians (see below).

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Difficulties encountered in meat purged of chelev

One who studies the works of halachah authorities (some of which were quoted above) will see that according to the present-day living conditions, it is very difficult to carry out **nikkur** with the proper **hashgachah**. However, as the saying goes: as long as there is a will, there is a way.

According to the **poskim** (**halachaic authorities**), it is **absolutely** necessary that the **menakker** be a scholar, and a G-d-fearing man, versed in the laws of **nikkur** from books, as well as from practical experience, having studied and practiced the tutelage of a teacher who definitely received his expertise from a **menakker** attested to by renowned rabbis. Afer he learned sufficiently, he must receive a written certificate from a great rabbi, versed in matters of **nikkur** and related topics.

A **mashgiach** must check the **menaker's** work, and the **mashgiach's** knowledge must be no less than that of the **menakker** himself.

If the **mashgiach** receives his wages from the butcher or from anyone else who has interests in the meat business, his **hashgachah** is worthless, since he is afraid of the butcher. Likewise, if the rabbi granting the **hechsher** receives his wages from the dealer, his **hechsher** is worthless, since he, too, fears the dealer. The only proper way is that they should receive their wages from another

source, totally unrelated to the meat business, and in which the owner has no interests, so that he cannot cause the rabbi or the **mashgiach** any monetary loss.

The only sure way is to partake only of **fowl**, then one will be safe. In **Customs of Maharam Schick** printed in the introduction to his work on the 613 Commandments, it is stated that he never ate the meat of animals.

I wish to make a startling observation to which I have found no solution. If one is dangerously ill, G-d forbid, he is seriously concerned that he may have to eat on Yom Kippur, and he looks for all forms of methods and means whereby to avoid it by consulting physicians, even though it is definitely permissible according to all authorities. This is no more than a prohibition punishable by **kares**...it contains the possible solution to eat less than the measure required for punishment; it includes the allowing the ingestion of food in an unusual manner, etc. Yet in the matter of **chelev**, which is more stringent (as explained in Tos **Chulin** ch 1.) and they hear the arguments yet they eat and drink merrily and rely on the various answers.



- 13 -

Scheduled differences between meat and chicken.

The following is a listing of the difference between bovine (cattle) and fowl (poultry) meat. It will be observed that by abstaining from eating bovine meats one keeps his soul from troubles as well as the souls of the members of one's household...and causing the salvation from innumerable risks. This schedule was formulated by a group of shoctim and experts in the field.

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>1. The knife is very long and heavy — about 20 inches long thereby making it very difficult to sharpen and make smooth.</p> <p>Onerous and time consuming to sharpen it when it begets a small nick.</p>	<p>1. The knife is relatively small, about 4 inches, and easy to sharpen and make a razor smoothedged as required by law.</p>
<p>2. Because of its extreme sharpness, it is extremely difficult to examine, since the entire length of the long knife requires examination. The</p>	<p>2. The examination is relatively easy and uncomplicated. It does not hurt the nail.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>supervising rabbis are afraid to press their fingernail on the knife because of its sharpness.</p>	
<p>3. Thus, the shochet's fingernails are quickly spoiled. The knife is examined after each shechitah. Hundreds of animals are slaughtered daily.</p>	<p>3. The knife is not examined after every shechitah. The examination does not hurt the nail.</p>
<p>4. The necks of the animals are dirty especially in winter, with sand and dirt (and dirt remains even after rinsing the neck with water) and it nicks the knife immediately. The shochet must spend the time allotted to him to rest between the slaughterings (lest he be tired) to sharpen knives.</p>	<p>4. The fowl's neck is clean and does not ruin the knife's kashrus.</p>
<p>5. The shechitah incision is made as high as possible, so that not too much meat will go with</p>	<p>5. Not applicable.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>the head. This causes hargramos (slaughtering above the proper location).</p>	
<p>6. During th shechitah the shochet only holds the knife, not the animal itself, as such it is sometimes difficult to feel an interruption in the shechitah (known as 'shehiah'), or too much pressure (known as 'derassah'), pressing.</p>	<p>6. The head is grasped with his hand and feels if it moves; he can discern whether shechitah or dera-ssah occurred.</p>
<p>7. If the shechitah is invalid or if the animal is found to be trefah after the shechitah, extreme caution must be taken to avoid mixing the parts, e.g. the head of the non-kosher animal with the heads of the kosher animals (with the body of the kosher animals, etc.) since every part is placed in a different place.</p>	<p>7. The small bird is cast into the box designated for trefos; it is completely separated from other fowl.</p>
<p>8. There are no separate knives for cutting the parts where chelev is</p>	<p>8. Not applicable.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>attached and the other parts that require cutting (Chulin - A shochet must have three knives).</p>	
<p>9. Shechita slaughter is required m'dorayso according to all views. Scriptural ordinance.</p>	<p>9. Some rule that slaughter of fowl is not required by the Torah, but is a Rabbinical enactment (See Kenesses Hagedolah 29, Bdeh, Primegadim).</p>
<p>10. The examination of the food and wind pipes after the slaughter to discern whether it was properly cut is accomplished by feeling (with the hand) and looking (with eyes) to ascertain that, at least, the larger part of the two pipes was cut through.</p> <p>In animal slaughter, this is done immediately after the shechitah, when blood is spurting strongly from the incision...it is not visible to the eye (or, at</p>	<p>10. The shochet presses his thumb and clearly sees the shechitah incision of both organs, ascertaining beyond doubt that they have been properly slaughtered.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>least, very difficult to see). Feeling with the hand, also, takes place when the blood is spurting strong on the shochet's hand, causing him to examine the pipes hurriedly. (See Simlah Chadashah 25; Turei Zahav quoting Maharil; see also Torahs Zevach, Zevach Shmuel, Responsa Keshav Sofer 14.)</p>	
<p>11. The body is large and heavy (from 800 lbs. to 1000 and more) and in many instances depending on the shechita procedure. The animals neck can weigh down upon the knife during the shechitah, thereby causing sheiah or derassah (See Simlah Chadashah 6; Zivchei Ratzon; Responsa Radam, Yoreh Deah 2; Darchei Teshuvah 2 Minchas Zevah indicates that this procedure raises many legal questions.</p>	<p>11. Not applicable.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>12. In many places the animals are shackled, hanging with their feet up and head down. Many halachic authorities prohibit this (See Pekudas Elazar also Responsa Igros Moshe).</p>	<p>12. Not applicable.</p>
<p>13. From the moment of slaughtering until the animal reaches the place where the lung is inspected, it is thrown from place to place by gentiles. Many halachic authorities raise serious apprehensions that adhesions may be ripped during this process (See Responsa Maharsham, Shevet Halevi).</p>	<p>13. Not applicable.</p>
<p>14. The body of the animal is divided and cut into many pieces. If during the lung inspections the animal is pronounced trefah. It is</p>	<p>14. Not applicable.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>often difficult to search and trace for the other animal parts and oft, errors are made by substituting a second animal's parts for the trefah one which remains in its place, as kosher.</p>	
<p>15. Many problems are encountered in the internal and external lung inspection. For example: 1) The inspection is hastily performed...those knowledgeable of the profession are fully aware of the pressure exerted by the assembly-line. Gentile workers, shouting, "Hurry up!!! Hurry up!!!" when their work is by the inspectors, 2) The reporting of the findings of adhesions orally, without taking immediate personal action to remove the suspect carcass from further kosher processing..causing thereby, the possibility of confusion.</p>	<p>15. The lungs do not require inspection. If inspection is desired, it can be accomplished in a relatively short period.(one minute)</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>16. It is extremely tempting to try to avoid declaring many animals trefah (when necessary) due to the implicit financial repercussions. It is impossible to slaughter a large quantity of animals at once...a maximum seventy to one hundred twenty an hour. Moreover, many halachic questions arise from the general shechitah process without need to increase this number by questioning additional procedures. Nails in the second stomach. As such the owner complains loudly and vehemently when too many animals are rendered trefah.</p>	<p>16. Not applicable. Live chicken cost approximately twenty-five cents a pound, if not less.</p>
<p>17. According to Daas Torah, quoting manuscript of Beis Yosef in the name of two thousand great rabbis. Two shochtim must be</p>	<p>17. This procedure is the "preferred" one; it is not essential.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>present at the slaughter of every animal; two must examine the knife; two must inspect the lungs. This is usually not done. (This is required according to Chasam Sofer, Maharam Schick, Divrei Chaim, haflaah, etc.).</p>	
<p>18. According to Rabbi Shlomo Kluger o.b.m. (in his innovations). The owner of the animal may not be present in the slaughter-house during the shechitah and the bedikah (inspection of the lung). ²</p>	<p>18. Not applicable.</p>
<p>19. The supervision is not too good, because most rabbis do not understand what they see. To be a good mashgiach (kashrus audit supervisor) one must learn the practice of lung-inspection, just as if he wished to be a bodek (inspector) himself.</p>	<p>19. Not applicable.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>20. Rabbinic supervision over) shechitah is of little value, since the rabbi cannot understand what is happening unless he studied the laws of shechitah and practiced it under the same system used today. (See Shemirah Tova.)</p>	<p>20. Not applicable.</p>
<p>21. The third and fourth stomachs require inspection since, quite often, nails are found sticking into them.</p>	<p>21. Not applicable.</p>
<p>22. Removal of chelev (fat), which is sadly neglected especially in the U.S.A.</p>	<p>22. Not applicable.</p>
<p>23. There are designated rabbis who visit the slaughter-house from time to time to verify the propriety of the process (according to their understanding). However, butcher shops that have hashgacha from a specific rabbi do not</p>	<p>23. Not applicable. The slaughter-house is usually near the section inhabited by the Jewish population... visits by those who give hashgacha on</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
<p>provide assurance that that particular rabbi witnessed the shechitah or the bedikah, because most of them never even trod over the threshold of the slaughter-house, not even once, because it is usually far away. Moreover, they understand very little of what transpires there. Those who rely on the store mashgichim as supervising the shechitah are making a huge mistake, since their hashgachah only covers the meat salting and rinsing process performed in the store.</p>	<p>the sore, are more frequent.</p>
<p>24. We find at present the majority of animals are not kosher. The assumption prevalent in earlier years, that most animals were kosher does not apply today (Bnei Yissoschor, month of</p>	<p>24. Not applicable.</p>

MEAT	CHICKEN
Adar, p. 99b. Responsa Hisorerus Teshuvah 1:107)	
<p>25. The procedure of affixing a seal on the animal is not too helpful. In the slaughter-house a kosher seal is affixed to a large "cut" pounds of beef (approximately two hundred pounds.)</p> <p>When this cut arrives at the butcher shop, it is divided into smaller pieces suitable for retail sale. At this stage, the seals are no longer existent. When the customers purchase this meat; he must rely on the honesty and integrity of the butcher whose independence is tainted by his pecuniary interest in his merchandise.</p>	<p>25. An entire chicken to which a seal is affixed after the slaughtering can be purchased.</p>
<p>26. It is very difficult to find an animal that is kosher according to all authorities (Poele Yoetz, trefah.)</p>	<p>26. With fowl, it is possible.</p>
<p>27. It is called bosor Ta'aveh ("meat of lust,") and those who eat it on weekdays become materialistic (Writings of Ari).</p>	<p>27. Not applicable.</p>

Regarding Meat By-Products

One who eats meat, probably eats the derivative products (e.g. sausages, salami, pastrami, etc). It is axiomatic that any product consisting of a compendium and combination of ingredients and where the individual component ingredients are not inspected in their pure state, requires more stringent kashrus review, since the mixture may contain ingredients which are deemed kosher only in instances of emergency and extenuating circumstances. Were the eater aware of this, the inclusion of those particular ingredients, he would positively abstain therefrom and many times even become disgusted by it.

These by-products include animal fats; the probability of chelev inclusion is much more possible (bordering on near certainty) since it is not visible in the end product. Moreover, it includes all sorts of inferior meat cuts and fats...ingredients to color it red...to make it appear fresh. See response Minchas Yitzchak starting that sausages are colored with small black African flies, which are dried and pulverized. The powder is added to the sausages while it is being cooked. Reliable and note worthy physicians have criticized the inclusion of this ingredient that is very harmful to the stomach and blood system, hence detrimental to well-being. Who needs it?



Saved from inadvertent sin

- One who abstains from eating meat of animals all the days of the week will be saved from sinning even inadvertently. (Shullchan Aruch HaAri).

• It is extremely difficult to find meat that is kosher according to all views. I, therefore, derive much pleasure from the pious who are careful not to eat meat. (**Pele Yoetz, teref**).

• Whoever wishes to avoid all risks, should be smart to eat only fowl (poultry) and not bovine meats - because the pitfalls are all too common and numerous with them **Shulchan Hatahor**, Rabbi Aaron Roth o.b.m. (author of **Shomer Emunim, Tohoras Hakodesh**, etc.)

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Which Halachic Authority to Follow

• Regarding substances we should be careful to be stringent even according to the view of a single authority, even though all other authorities may rule leniently (**Siddur HaAri**, by **Rabbi Shabbatai**, cited by **Yehuas Chochmah**, Shalah's will, 64).

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Medical Admonitions

• Physicians testify that nowadays animal bovine meats are not healthy since the animals do not feed nor grow naturally. **Animals receive various inoculations** to fatten them quickly after birth; to hasten the growing process, etc. This is liable to have side effects resulting in sickness and ailments to the person ingesting those foods (including cancer G-d forbid) thereby doctors being unable to detect from whence its origin. May the L-rd guard his people from any harm. **Now you know why...** Israeli and the Arab countries buy no meat from U.S.A. They travel further to South America for their **uninoculated meat purchases**.

The Beis Hamikdosh

In these days, when our hearts and our minds are too clogged by any anguish over the exile of the **Shechinah** or

to experience deep pain for the destruction of the **Beis Hamikdosh**, what can be done about the Talmudic maxim: **Anyone who does not mourn for its destruction does not merit to see its reconstruction**, even when we fast on the prescribed fast days, it is done in a cursory manner; to fast all year is beyond our strength. If our sages admonished that whoever does not see the Temple rebuilt in his time, it is considered as though it were destroyed in his time¹³, it appears that it is absolutely obligatory not to take one's mind off the Shechinah's exile and its anguish over its children who were exiled from their Father's table. The Shechinah wails about this three times a day. This is implied in the **Holy Zohar** and the **writings of Ari zal**, who dwell at length on this matter..for every Jew to rise at midnight and join in the anguish of the exile of the Shechinah. See **Shulchan Aruch 1**; ch. 4160, many things to do so as not to forget the anguish of the destruction of the Temple.

I believe that a possible rectification, in accordance to the state of this generation: as explained by **Shaar haKedushah**, that everything is counted according to the generation to abstain, at least from bovine to show his pain (as we do during the Three Weeks) one should maintain this intention in mind and specifically reflect upon this intention, which will be credited to him by the Heavenly Tribunal as a sacrifice fragrant for the Al-mighty (**Sodei Hadevarim, parshas Terumah**, on the verse: And they shall make Me a Sanctuary s.v.



Chapter 2

Concerning nikkur (removing the fat from animals)

by the Chofetz Chaim z.t.l.

- 1 -

It is written in the **Torah: any fat of an ox, a sheep, or a goat you shall not eat.** All species of kosher animals are included in these three general species, and whoever eats fat of an animal that died by itself or became **trafe**, i.e. suffered a wound or an ailment from which it would die within twelve months, is liable for stripes both for eating fat and for eating **neveilah** or **trafe**. Although the rule is that one prohibition does not fall upon another, this case is an exception, since the prohibition of **neveilah** or **trafe** includes both the fat and the rest of the flesh of the animal. This is known as **issur kolel**, an all-inclusive prohibition. Since it falls upon the rest of the animal, it also falls upon the fat previously prohibited.

It is not within the scope of this monograph to provide a detailed explanation of all the laws regarding **nikkur**. The prohibition of chelev includes:

The fat for which one is liable to **Kares** (excision) (termination of life): Heaven help us...This refers to:

- Fat on the innards.
- Fat on the flanks
- Fat on the kidneys.
- Fat on 2nd or 3rd stomach (of the ruminants, which is part of the "fat that is on the innards,")
- Fat on the membrane (located on the thick part of the spleen)

In addition there are many other varieties of fat prohibited by the Torah.

- Fat on the 4th stomach.
- Fat on the intestines at the site where they begin to come out of the stomach - about 22 inches.

All this fat must be scrapped off...In order for one **not** to be incurred the penalty of Kares - G-d forbid. Others feel that this refers to 22 inches removal is required at the end of the intestines. We must therefore, be strict and scrape the fat off both of these parts.

There are also many membranes and threads prohibited as chelev or as **Dom** (blood).

There are many laws involving the **gid hanasheh** (the hip sinew) which are too numerous to relate here. The serious student can find them all in **Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah**, chs. 64 and 65..

It is impossible to know them thoroughly unless one is experienced in the practice of **nikkur**. It has, therefore, been established in all Jewish communities that householders do **not** perform **nikkur** for themselves rather, meat should not leave the butcher shop until it has been **menakkered** by an expert in this field.

The Rabbis admonished the **menakker** to be extremely cautious in his work lest he cause pitfalls for Jews by causing them to eat fat, blood, and **gid hanasheh**. They were very strict with the **menakker**, to the extent that they stated that one who is charged with this responsibility and subsequent review discloses that a membrane was found in the meat after he had supposedly removed all the fat, is given a stern warning **not** to make light of prohibitions.

If upon a subsequent review fat is again found (after his work of so-called **Nikkur**) regardless of the miniscule size of the chelev, he is immediately discharged from his position. **The tolerance error rate is Z-E-R-O**. If the amount the size of an olive is found, even if it is composed of pieces found in several places, he is severely punished and

then discharged. Reinstatement may be possible only if he repents and follows the instructions of the rabbinic judge, who takes into consideration whether the infraction was committed intentionally or unintentionally (Yorah Deah) ch. 64). In order to impress upon the reader the stringency of this subject matter, we cite an early halachic authority, the **Ohr Zarua: The Laws of gid hanasheh**, ch. 448 (quoted partially in glosses on Rosh **Beis Yosef, Darchei Mayshe**, and **Yoreh Deah**, end of ch. 64).

...The final ruling is that if a miniscule piece of chelev, as much as a barleycorn, be found in one place, the menakker is discharged. If as much as an olive is found, even in two or three places combined, he is severely punished (corporeal) and immediately discharged, until he accepts upon himself the fear of heaven (**ohl malchus Shomayim**) and rectifies his iniquity according to the instruction of the Torah scholars of his city...

An announcements should be made in the synagogue on Monday, Thursday, and the following Monday: **"So and so, the butcher, was discharged from his position because a barleycorn of fat was found after his work."**

Subsequently, he must not be allowed to engage in his work, for a month. After the month has passed, he must approach the Torah scholars of his city or the neighboring city, and say: "I committed such and such a sin, which I now regret." Then, they will judge him according to their discretion, and shall announce in the synagogue: "So and so, the butcher, whom we discharged because a barleycorn of fat was found after his work, has regretted his misdeeds and renounced his erroneous ways in the presence of the Torah scholars concerning the sins he committed.

He has taken upon himself to repent and accept the penalty the scholars levied upon him. From this day forth he is considered a penitent and has been reinstated to his position: he is reckoned reliable as he was in the very beginning.

Until the people hear this announcement, they may neither rely upon nor purchase meat processed by him.

His exhibition of improper conduct consisted of the sale of non-kosher meat as kosher or the sale of prohibited fats as permissible ones, he has a different status. In the previous case we dealt, he was guilty of negligence...he was not careful. In the latter instance, however, he committed the sins wantonly and intentionally, we must be very stringent with him. Such a situation is depicted in **Bechoros** (29b): A butcher was suspected of selling the fat of the thigh instead of that of the small intestine...Rava, the town Rabbi, fined him until he performed the requisite penitence...

The only remedy available to one who is suspected of selling **treifos** is to go to a place where he is not recognized and return a valuable lost article or dispose of a **treifah** causing himself a substantial loss...Therefore, one who sells **treifos** as kosher meat, or prohibited fat as permissible fat, must accept upon himself the ruling imposed upon him by scholars. Even when the perpetrator complies with the law, we may not rely to consider him trustworthy until he undergoes the requisite "character test." Suppose he was selling **treifos** as kosher meat...or he was selling prohibited fats as permissible fats, and he died before he was able to repent, we may not participate in his burial. Even if dogs were eating his flesh and licking his blood. We may not chase them away because he sold to Jews (nevalos and treifos) what belonged to them (the dogs.)

There is a similar incident in **Terumos Yerushalmi** of a butcher in Tzippori.

If the perpetrator repented, nothing stands in the way of the truly penitent. For our sages taught **Yerushalmi Peah** and of ch. 1: If one was wicked all his life, but repented at the end, the Holy One, Blessed be he, accepts him.

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Hence, we can deduce the stringency of the sin of those who cause the public to sin in these matters. Unfortunately, in some localities, there are ignorant butchers who are completely unaware of the stringency of the sins involved in eating fat, and **gid hanasheh**, and believe that it is merely a praiseworthy custom of Israel...they think that **neveilos** and **treifos** bear a more severe penalty than eating fats. Recently, I read in the newspaper, where many butchers joined forces to complain about the local rabbi who had prohibited them from selling fats. They claimed that it was a burdensome decree which they were unable to endure...were they to comply, they would be forced to shut down completely...Jews would by perforce have to eat non-kosher meat. **Woe to these emptyheads, who believe tht the prohibition of eating nevaleh and trafeh is more stringent than the prohibition of eating chelev, and think that its origin is merely their rabbi's innovation.**

The Torah explicitly states that for eating **chelev** there is a penalty of **kares**; whereas, for eating non-kosher meat there is no **kares**, merely a negative commandment desecration incurring the penalty of malkos (stripes). Woe to our brethern who live in localities where they become defiled with non-kosher meat sold by these boorish butchers.

Accordingly, a G-d-fearing person should not eat meat from any butcher unless he knows that the **menakker** has definitely removed the fat and blood veins as well as the **gid hanasheh** in the hind quarters (**Nidchei Yisroel** by **Chofetz Chaim**).



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The Menakker

Rabbi David, son of Samuel Halevi, author of **Turei Zahav**, was the rabbi and head of the rabbinical court of **Ostraha**, whence his reputation spread throughout the Jewish world. Everyone accepted his decisions; there is no rabbi today who does not constantly utilize or study his discourses. His words are the words of G-d, as though they were handed down from heaven, replete with wisdom, understanding, and knowledge..

In those days, when his position was well established, he decided to leave his Yeshiva (study hall) and wander amongst the Jewish settlements for one year, as was the custom of the great rabbis in those days. Since he was well-known as the author of "**Turei Zahav**," he disguised himself as a beggar, donning tattered clothing, slinging a knapsack over the shoulder, taking the wanderers staff in hand, and leaving the city clandestinely. He wandered from city to city, from village to village, not lodging in one place more than one night. On Mondays and Thursdays he fasted; on other days he ate only dry bread. He did not taste cooked food except on Shabbos, in honor of the holy day.

In this manner he wandered for six months, until he was completely exhausted. He arrived in Lemberg, fatigued and faint, broken and splintered, unable to continue his travels. He therefore, decided to rest there a few days to regain his strength and then resume his wanderings. The days of his sojourn turned into weeks, but he had still not regained his strength and could not execute his original plan. Whenever he placed his pack on his back, he felt an overpowering weakness; his hands trembled and his legs buckled. He saw that the matter was not in his power. He thought, "The Rabbis taught us that everything is in the hands of Heaven except the fear of G-d ¹ **Berachos** 33b). Perhaps I must

remain here since Divine Providence has detained me here? On the other hand, I imposed upon myself to wander for an entire year, and I must fulfill my vow. He therefore, decided to remain in Lemberg and experience the trials and tribulations of exile in the city.”

This unknown man sat in the synagogue, occupying himself with the study of Torah. It was a large city with many synagogues, and, from time to time, he changed his place. He went from synagogue to synagogue, gaining new knowledge in each one. Because of this constant change of location no one knew that he had been in the city for quite some time. It was thought that he had just arrived.

When he had been in the city for a few weeks, he began to think of ways and means of earning a living. He did not want to be supported by charity. He decided to subsist on bare minimum rather than become public charge. Consequently, he started looking for a job even for a meager wage, just enough to live on. However, even this he could not find. Once, he entered the large synagogue in the city and noticed an announcement that the community needed a butcher to perform **nikkur**. He said to himself, “This occupation is neither clean nor easy. Neither is it respected. The Rabbis taught: ‘The most pious butcher is a partner of Amalek’ (**Kiddushin** 82). People spread rumors about them that animals or dubious kashrus come into their hands, and to save themselves from monetary loss, they sell them to their fellow Jews. I am sure that there are not many candidates for such a job. I’ll apply for it and see what happens.”

He applied for the position, was tested and accepted.

He worked in the slaughter-house and butcher shop, but mainly he was occupied with **nikkur**, for he had acquired a reputation as an expert **menakker**. **He was well acquainted with the fine threads, and knew where the**

small veins were found; (those hidden from the naked eye, which only an expert can locate and remove together with the small particles of fat hidden in the meat, without cutting up the meat. Sometimes he stood in the butcher shop next to the block with a knife or a butcher's cleaver in his hand, cutting meat for all customers. In order not to neglect his studies while working, he found something to study in every slaughtered animal that came into his hands. He studied every limb and every organ. Many difficulties that he had encountered in his studies of the laws of **shechitah** and **treifos** were cleared up when he butchered the animals. One cannot compare the knowledge one gains from books to the knowledge one gains from studying the animal itself. He gained thorough knowledge of the animal anatomy, and how to practically apply this knowledge. At times, he would interrupt his work, ponder over a difficult passage in the Talmud "**Elu treifos**", in the **Rambam's** code, or in the works of other authorities, in which he was well-versed. he would become completely engrossed in their words and forget about his customers. They would often humiliate him as though he were a peon. He heard their insults, but did not reply. He accepted his punishment as part of the wandering tribulations he had imposed upon himself. They were tortures of love; tortures suffered because of his love for Torah, which he would not neglect for even one minute.

All his sufferings at the hands of the customers were of little significance compared to those he suffered from his colleagues, the other **menakkerim**. Being well-versed in all the laws of **nikkur**, including the minutest details and ramifications, knowing the length of the veins, until they become surrounded by flesh, in every form of bovine animal, and all that is prohibited and permissible areas he often quarreled with the veteran **menakkerim**. Sometimes

he prohibited what they permitted, and sometimes vice-versa.* Endless quarrels ensued.

Once an animal was slaughtered, which they ruled to be **treifah**. The **Taz** claimed that they had erred, and immediately declared it kosher. They commenced to argue but could not reach a conclusion. They took the question to the rabbi of the city, Rabbi Meir Zak who, heard their arguments and declared the animal **treifah**. The **Turei Zahav**, however, remained steadfast in his opinion that the animal was indeed kosher. He brought many proofs and references to support his ruling. During the controversy, he made a statement which the rabbi construed as defiant. He became incensed against the **Taz**, and in accordance with local custom, ordered him confined to the pillory in the large synagogue, with iron chains on his hands, as a deterrent for the rebellious.

The **Taz** accepted this punishment, stood in the pillory with his hands chained, mumbling words of Torah. He could not, however, accept the rabbi's ruling concerning the kashrus of the animal. He made up his mind that after his release, he would bring additional proof that the animal was kosher. While standing there, he saw a lad pass with a package wrapped in paper. "What have you there?" he asked. "I have a chicken," he replied.

"I went with it to the Rav to ask a **shaalah** (legal decision)."

"What was the problem?" asked the **Taz**.

"I don't know; my mother sent me to the rabbi to ask a **shaalah**. I showed him the chicken and he said it was **treifah**."

He asked the boy to show him the chicken, which he did. Since his hands were tied, he could not open it to examine it properly. He asked the boy to open it, whereupon he examined it.

He tapped all over with his fingers, and then said to the boy:

“Go back to the rabbi and tell him to look in **Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah**, in chapter such and such and, in the **Turei Zahav** paragraph such an such.”

The boy returned to the rabbinical court, approached the rabbi and said:

“This is what the man in the pillory told me.”

The rabbi again took the chicken from the boy, examined it again, and realized that he had overlooked a paragraph of the **Turei Zahav**. Since he was an honest man, he admitted his error and felt remorse for having dealt so harshly with a great Torah scholar, by putting him into the pillory like a common sinner. Immediately, he sent the beadle to release the prisoner and to bring him to him. The beadle complied with the rabbi's order, went to the pillory, and released the prisoner. When the prisoner wished to go home, the beadle told him that he must first appear before the rabbi. The **Taz** went to the rabbi. As soon as he crossed the threshold, the rabbi greeted him cordially. He offered him a seat and they began conversing like two scholars debating matters of halachah, without any intent of defeating one another, but to clarify the truth. The rabbi saw that his opponent was gifted with unusual erudition, divine inspiration, and that everything he said was true. He finally begged him for forgiveness for the disgrace he showered upon him, and asked him:

Why did you conceal your identity? Since you were in a place where you are unknown, you should have disclosed your true identity so that people would not sin by ridiculing you...most people judged you to be a butcher, at best a **menakker**, and regarded you as most men of this craft, as Tradesmen and not Torah scholars.

The **Taz** replied; "Must I disclose my identity? Didn't the Rabbis say that anyone who derives benefit from the crown of Torah is uprooted from the world? Only one Talmudical sage, Rava, opines that one may disclose his identity where no one knows him as Obadiah said, 'And your servant was G-d-fearing from his youth (Nedarim 62a).

It is written in **Ramo** in **Yoreh Deah**, laws of Talmud Torah 246:21 . . . An individual may make himself known in a place where they do not know him, **if it is necessary**. I, however, did not think it was necessary!

After this incident, the rabbi summoned the dignitaries of the city, and said to them:

"Gentlemen! Please be advised that this man is a scholar of great acumen and erudition, fit to occupy the position of rabbi. I advise you to give him my position. He deserves to occupy the rabbinate of a large city in Israel, for he is a man of many good deeds and much knowledge."

The dignitaries were dumbfounded by their elderly rabbi's statement who was willing to abdicate his position in favor of this stranger. They were at a loss for words. The **Taz**, too, stood dumbfounded. Hearing these words of humility emanating from the mouth of the rabbi of the great city of Lemberg, a man of outstanding wisdom and piety, admitting his shortcomings and commanding his constituents to appoint someone to succeed him during his lifetime. He stood there quaking.

He opened his mouth and addressed the rabbi: "My master! I am dust under your feet. Your name is greater than any title, and you are as humble as Hillel. You occupy an exalted position; who am I to succeed you during your lifetime?"

But the elder rabbi insisted, "I an old and infirm, and my eyes have become dim. I am already unable to lead my

flock. The L-rd has sent you, a man endowed with the spirit of the L-rd to this city. Let him occupy my place.”

The congregants recognizing their rabbi's sincerity, that he had no ulterior motives, retained him in the position of rabbi, but accepted the **Taz** as head of the **beis-din**. When Rabbi Meir Zack passed away, they accepted the **Taz** as their rabbi, the head of the **beis-din** and the Rosh HaYeshiva of Lemberg.



Chapter 3 Laws of Shechitah (slaughtering), Bedikah (examining the lungs), and Selling

- 1 -

Kosher Meat

Based on a compendium of (**Tur, Yoreh Deah**, ch. 64; **Tur Choshen Mishpat**, ch. 34; **Matteh Yosef**, vol. 1, ch. 8) Any **shochet** whose actions indicate that he is unscrupulous causing pitfalls for people by providing with **treifos** to eat, and knowingly allows a **treifah** animal to be sold to Jews as kosher meat, or that his customers purchased it believing that it was kosher because he was accepted as a reliable **shochet**, and then it was discovered to be **treifah**, e.g. he tore off a **sircha**, (an adhesion of the lung to another organ) or falsified some other condition, he is immediately discharged and banned from this profession. He cannot excuse himself by saying that he did so inadvertently...Immediately upon discovering that a **treifah** animal went out of his hands...the community leaders must immediately discharge him when they see that he has no fear of G-d and that he does not hesitate to give Jews non-kosher meat for their consumption. Similar action must be taken against anyone who sells non-kosher

food, whether they have done so intentionally or unintentionally. Especially, in the places where the slaughter-houses are owned by non-Jews, and all the meat produced both kosher and non-kosher are sold by gentiles. The kashrus supervisor must be a G-d-fearing man. He must be warned not to absence himself from the butcher store until the owner has finished selling **all** his kosher meat. He may drink neither wine nor whiskey, so that he be sober. When a Jew enters the store, he must be assured that the gentile does not sell him non-kosher meat. Before accepting the mashgiach for this position, he must be clearly advised that he shoulders the responsibility of the whole city.

He must be alert...this position is not a trivial matter. If the pious Jews notice that this supervisor is lax in his observance of the tenets of Judaism, they should refuse to buy meat processed under his supervision; if there are kosher and non-kosher meats in the same store, it is impossible to rely on the word of a supervisor who is lax in his personal observance of the tenets of Judaism.

Once an incident occurred to a messenger travelling from place to place, who happened to stop in a certain town where it was customary that if any member of the community made a party or had guests, all prominent members of the community would come to his house to partake of the Shabbos repast. Everyone would bring hot food, wine, and fruit eating together to create a cheerful atmosphere for the guest and occasion. They would place all these foods on the table so that everyone could eat what he preferred. On **Shabbos** they would all bring a hot broth made from animal feet. The messenger wondered about this practice and inquired about it. The natives, being ignorant people, replied that, since there was no local **shochet**, they would eat this dish to avoid eating from the

meat of the non-kosher animals slaughtered by the gentiles. Apparently, until then, many people did not know that they were eating non-kosher food, a thing which even the school children know.

Therefore, everyone must be extremely careful to ascertain who his host is.

- 2 -

When such an unscrupulous person is found, he is discharged and public announcements are made that no one should purchase from him, so that everyone recognized him and avoid pitfalls. He has no chance of being reinstated to his position or occupation until he goes to another city where he is a stranger, and resists monetary temptations. For example, if in this city, a Jew loses an article of great value, and the penitent sinner finds and returns it, this action indicates that he has repented sincerely without any trickery. Prior to this indication, however, he has no chance of being reinstated and cannot function as a **shochet** or butcher. Even if he wishes to open a store to sell nut or dried fruits, we may not buy from him for, if he sold **treifos** to Jews, he is regarded as one who left the fold...Even if he endures many fads and suffers mortifications, it is of no avail...for it is always possible that he did so to fool the public so that they reinstate him to his former occupation.

If it is obvious however, that he cannot leave the city, it is possible to arrange a penitence in the city, on the condition that he impose upon himself a certain type of mortification for the rest of his life, e.g. fasting on Mondays and Thursdays, or abstaining from eating meat or drinking wine, or the like, for the rest of his life. This will help even if he remains in his own city..

The Eager Are Quick to Fulfill Mitzvos

Rabbi Yoel Sirkes, author of the famous halachic work, known as **Bayis Chadash**, or by its initials, **Bach**, had a disciple, a very wealthy and charitable man. The rabbi taught him the laws of charity daily, since he feared he would not fulfill his obligations in that field. Indeed, study is required in order to practice charity properly and adequately. He was wont to say, "Let us not be ashamed or stumble in our deeds, either in quantity or in quality," and all this wealthy man's deeds of charity, both the known ones and the secret ones, were performed according to the counsel of the great Rabbi Joel Sirkes, the author of **Bach**, o.b.m.

Once a tavern keeper came to the rabbi with the following tale of woe:

"For a number of decades I have rented my tavern from the **poritz** (lord) of the village, and now, one of my fellow Jews has come forward to compete with me for the contract. Every day he goes to the **poritz**, knocks at his door, talks to him persuasively, and promises him a substantial raise over the rental he had been receiving from me for the past years for the tavern. Rabbi! This man is threatening the health of the members of my household. Please have pity on me and save me from this calamity."

The rabbi replied, "Go to such and such, a wealthy man, and ask him to do you a favor, and go to the **poritz** and speak highly of you so that he favors you."

The tavern keeper left the rabbi and went directly to his wealthy friend, repeating to him everything he had told the rabbi and the rabbi's response. He also begged him to intervene for him, as the rabbi had said that he would. The wealthy man listened to the whole story and promised to speak to the **poritz**)1, as the rabbi had instructed him.

The tavern keeper, however, was not satisfied and begged him to hurry to speak to the poritz before his rival would come and persuade him to give him the contract for the tavern. The rich man, however, excused himself and said, "You will have to wait several days until I take care of my business matters at the big fair in Leipzig, which will soon be over. If I don't take care of them now, I stand to lose most of my property."

Upon hearing this, the tavern keeper burst out crying and said, "If so, where can I turn? Meanwhile, my opponent will surely beat me to the **poritz** and take away my livelihood."

The rich man then started to allay his fears and to encourage him with words of faith and trust, and said to him, "You're a Jew, aren't you? Don't you believe in the words of the Rabbis, who said that a person's income is predestined on Rosh Hashanah, and that no one can take away what is in store for his friend? If you believe in the words of our Sages, you will believe that all the conniving in the world will not avail your rival. So, don't be afraid of him. As soon as I return from the fair, I will not enter my house until I speak to the **poritz**, and with the help of the Almighty, I will be the agent for your success."

Thereupon the wealthy man called his friend to join him with a drink, in keeping with the verse: "Give strong drink to one who is lost and wine to those with bitter souls." They drank to their life and success, and the wealthy man sent the tavern keeper home.

The latter came home relayed to his wife how the wealthy man had promised to go to the **poritz**, and that he was confident of his success. However, his wife found no consolation in the promise her husband had exacted from his rich "benefactor." She wept and cried and derided him.. Her heart was full of despair and fear. She imagined her

husband's rival going to the **poritz** and destroying her husband's livelihood. Her husband sat down and tried to appease her. When he tried to give her encouragement and faith, she burst out crying and wailing, and blamed him for any misfortune that might befall them. "No one else would have been satisfied with such an answer. Someone else would have insisted that he go to the **poritz** immediately and straighten out the whole matter." The tavern keeper knew no peace. There was no longer any harmony in his house.

His wealthy benefactor, however had not forgotten him. The fair was over and he returned to Cracow. As soon as he stepped out of his coach, even before he trod over the threshold of his own house, he went directly to the **poritz** and appealed to him to renew his friend's contract for the tavern. The **poritz** was impressed favorably and renewed the contract for ten years.

Several years later, the wealthy man passed away. The people of Cracow eulogized him as befitting his charitable deeds and escorted him to his final test.

Once he came to his rabbi, the **Bach**, in a dream, and said to him: "Rabbi, I have come to tell you how I was welcomed by the ministering angels after my death.

When I first arrived, I found many souls awaiting their judgment. Among them were two whom I recognized from the lower world. These were the souls of two butchers who had fed non-kosher meat to the Jewish people of Cracow for a considerable length of time. One of them had come to you during his lifetime and confessed his sins, begging you to tell him how to repent and rectify his evil deeds."

"Yes," said the Rabbi, "it is true. One of them repented sincerely, but the other one felt no remorse, and died a wicked man."

“But then, suddenly I heard a voice announcing,” continued the wealthy man. “The voice resounded throughout all the worlds, saying, ‘Such and such a man is summoned to appear before the heavenly tribunal!’ Suddenly a man entered with dogs running in front of and behind him, barking loudly and complaining that this man had robbed them of all the **nevaloh** (carcasses) and **treifos** that rightfully belonged to them and sold them to humans. Suddenly there was complete silence, and a heavenly voice emanated and announced: ‘Putrid drop, how dare you feed my children nevaylos and **treifos**? Did you not fear the day of judgment?’ The butcher was so perplexed that he could not reply. Seconds later, he was seized and cast into the depths of hell, never to be seen again.

“Then they announced again, ‘So and so is summoned before the heavenly tribunal!’

His colleague entered, quaking with fear, and stood before the court. Immediately an angry voice was heard, ‘Putrid drop, how did you dare to feed my children nevaylos and **treifos**?’

Before the question was finished, a faint voice was heard, a defending angel came forward to resuit the “bill of complaint”. Immediately they opened the scroll and read the following: ‘So and so, who fed non-kosher meat to the people of the L-rd, sinned doubly, to G-d and to people. As regards people, he robbed the public by charging them for kosher meat, while selling them non-kosher meat. The only way to rectify this crime is to dedicate all his property for the benefit of the public as regards G-d, he must abstain from all food except a meager ration of bread and water, and if he repents his sin will be forgiven.’

“Witnesses testified that from that day the butcher dedicted all his property for the benefit of the public until he was left destitute. He spent all his days in fasting and

praying to G-d. After these testimonies, they took the man and brought him into the temple of the repentent sinners.

Then I heard my name called. My knees started knocking together. Thank G-d, my verdict was favorable. Peaceful angels came and led me with song to my palace in Paradise. The gates of Paradise opened before me with light and joy, and a fragrant aroma entered my nostrils. Such a pleasure I never experienced in my lifetime. As soon as I stepped over the threshold of Paradise, an angel came toward me, walking with very small steps. Moaning and groaning, he came before me and stood in my way, preventing me from entering Paradise. I asked him who he was and what I had done to merit the way to Paradise being blocked before me. He replied, 'I am the angel who was created from the favor you did for the tavern keeper when you went to the **poritz** to speak on his behalf.' When I heard this, I was frightened. I asked him 'Is it possible that an angel created from kindness should stand in my way? Didn't I hurry to the **poritz** as soon as I returned from the fair? I saved a whole family from poverty!'

He replied, 'Indeed you performed an act of kindness for that Jew, but do you know how many tears were shed because of you, before the salvation came? Do you know of all the quarrels that took place between the man and his wife before you went to the **poritz**? You should know that all these things are recorded, and they demand retribution from the heavenly tribunal; you must be judged the consequences of every one of your deeds.'

I retorted, "But I didn't do it out of cruelty, only to save my money. Had I not gone to the fair, I would have lost most of my money." But, my arguments and my pleas were of no avail. I was returned to the Heavenly tribunal for a retrial. After the case was heard, the court promulgated a new verdict, that I was **to sit in the gates of Paradise** and not to enter within **for the same number of days that the**

tavern keeper waited for me to return from the fair in Leipzig. Before they finished reading the verdict, two angels seized me and brought me to the gates of Paradise. How long I sat there I don't know. But it seemed like years. My anguish in those days is literally indescribable; I yearned so much to reach my resting place, which I saw from a distance but was unable to reach..."

The following day, the rabbi related the story to his congregation and said, Learn ye how people must be scrupulous in their observance of **every mitzvah**, not to delay it. How much more in the case of mitzvos between man and man, such as charity and kind deeds, upon which people's lives depend, we must always be among the eager ones who rush to do a **mitzvah!** ¹ (**Teshuos Chen**, Jerusalem 5685).

- 4 -

The saintly **Baal Shem Tov**, "After he shows you his knife and you find it fit, he pounds it with a hammer to make nicks in it."

The rabbi returned to his city, maintained a close watch on the **shochet**, and investigated his behavior until he was convinced that the Baal Shem Tov was right (**Shivchei HaBesht**).

- 5 -

Once the Baal Shem Tov came to the rabbi of a community and requested that he put him up for Shabbos. The rabbi ordered his wife to honor this great man, as befitted his station. She replied, "We have bought meat for **Shabbos**. I will give our guest the choicest cut." To her consternation, when she went to bring the meat, she could not find it. She went to her neighbor to borrow a portion of meat. The neighbor agreed to lend her the meat, but when she went to bring it, she too was astounded to find that her meat had disappeared. The **rebbezin** conferred

with her husband about the matter. Just then, she looked out of the window and spotted the **shochet** passing the house. She called him and told him her problem. He told her that he had just slaughtered a tender calf.

The **Baal Shem Tov** said, "I prefer the head, but I beg you to bring it here when it is whole and remove the veins in my presence." The **shochet** went quickly and brought the head to the rabbi's house. The **Baal Shem Tov** began to converse with the **shochet** and said to him. There are differences in the number of teeth in a calf. Count this calf's teeth." The **shochet** opened the mouth of the slaughtered animal and inserted his hand to count teeth. But, lo and behold! As soon as he had inserted his hand into the calf's mouth, it closed on him and he was unable to extricate his hand from the trap. The teeth pressed into his hand and caused him such excruciating pain that he screamed.

Said the **Baal Shem Tov**, "Wicked man, confess your sins! You never examined the lungs of an animal. You arbitrarily declared them kosher or **treifah**."

After the **shochet** confessed, he begged the **Baal Shem Tov** to instruct him how to repent.

Then the **Baal Shem Tov** accompanied the rabbi to the synagogue. He passed his hand over the rabbi's face and showed him how many destructive angels and spirits were sitting on the roof of the synagogue. The rabbi was astounded at this. The **Baal Shem Tov** said to him, "You should know that your cantor sins every night." They discharged the cantor and hired another in his place (**Shivchei Baal Shem Tov**).

- 6 -

During the course of my work, I gained insight into the rabbinic maxim **Mishnah**, the end of the tractate **Kiddushin**: The most pious butcher is a partner of Amalek, **Rashi** explains: If an animal of questionable

kashrus comes into his hand, to save himself from pecuniary loss, he sells it as kosher.

Let me relate to an incident that occurred in one of the settlements in the Haifa vicinity. Twenty years ago, there was an extremely pious Yemenit butcher who performed **nikkur** by himself and sold the meat in his own butcher shop. As all familiar with the procedure know, the **nikkur** procedure commences with separating the joints. This simple butcher, however, was unaware that there was anything involved in **nikkur** other than the separation of the joints, thinking innocently that the joints separation, in and by itself, comprise the entire **nikkur** procedure.

For years, he sold meat in this manner, until he once met a professional **menakker** in Haifa. He boasted that he was very fast in his work and could perform **nikkur** on a side of beef in fifteen minutes. The Menakker from Haifa who knew from experience that the **nikkur** of a side of beef takes four to five hours, was astounded at this phenomenon and decided to witness this marvel with his own eyes. He accompanied the butcher to his place of work to see him in action. He immediately realized, that, to him, cutting the joints apart was called **nikkur**. **The menakker explained to him the terrible mistake he had been making during all the years he had been selling meat, and how he had led countless Jews to sin by feeding them prohibited foods.** The Yeminite, who was a G-d-fearing man, went to the rabbis and begged for a method of rectifying his transgressions..

- 7 -

(From Sefer Gevul Rishonim, ch. 3)

(Nagid Umetzavveh, Yalkut, Reuveni, Shevet Mussar, Yalkut Me-am Loetz):

One who feeds people nevaylos and **treifos** is reincarnated into the leaf of a tree, which the wind blows up

and down and in all directions, causing him great pain. He has no rectification until the leaf falls down. For this sin, he must fast at least one hundred times and even more, based on the quantity of non-kosher meat he fed the people.

- 8 -

Toledos Kol Aryeh (Biography of **Kol Aryeh**, Rabi Avraham Yehudah Hakohen, rabbi of Bergsaz and later of Mahd): Once the **Kol Aryeh** said: If I would know the place in my body, nurtured by the meat that I ate in my youth in a certain city in Oberland, I would personally excise that flesh with a knife.

- 9 -

A Frightening Incident in Slovakia of a Butcher Who Fed Treifos to the Public

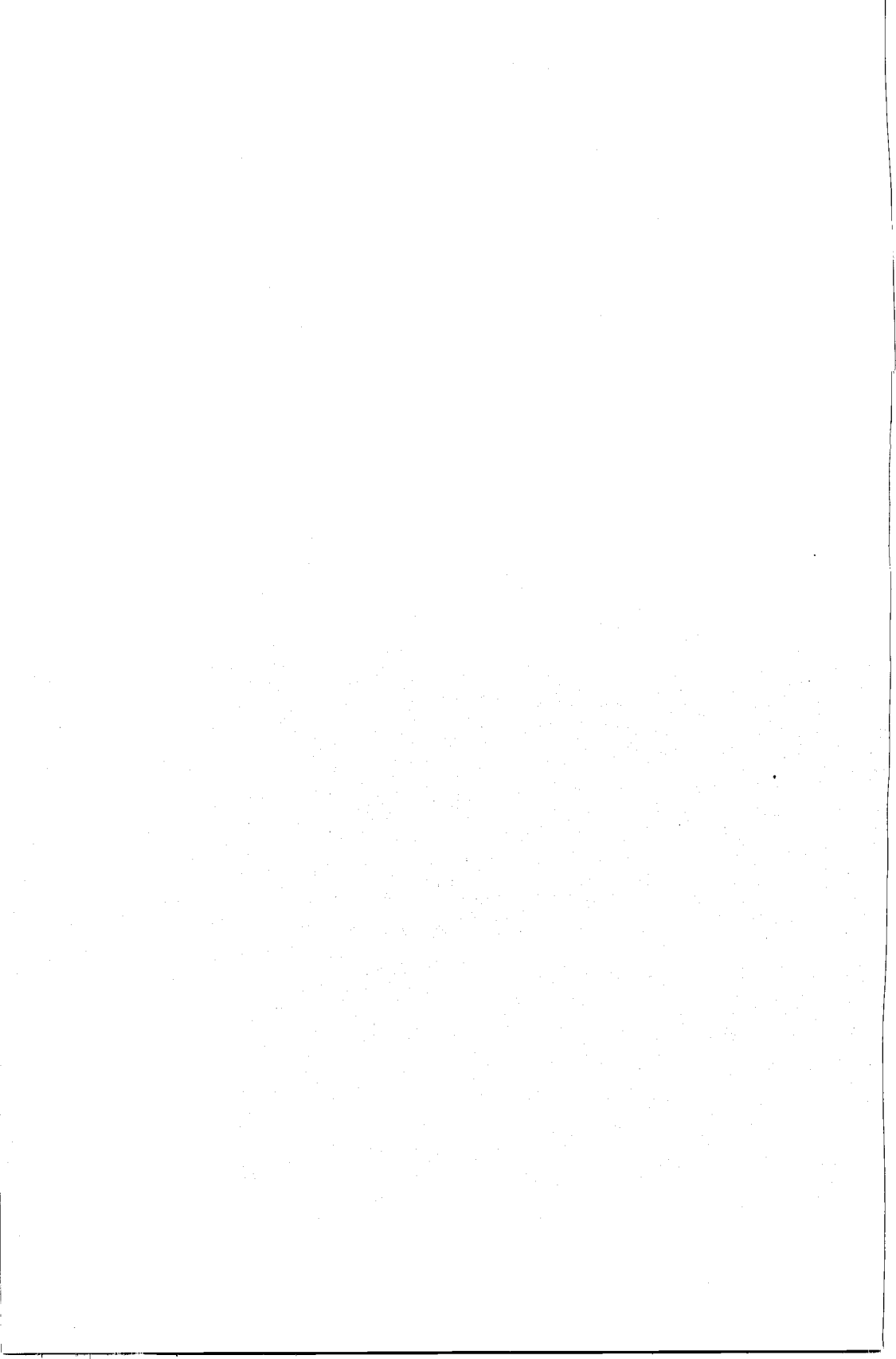
About forty years ago, in a village near Vishnitz, Slovakia, the local butcher sold to the prominent residents of the village. The butcher became critically ill, and before his death, summoned the **dayan** (ecclesiastical judge) of the community and confessed to him that for many years he had been selling non-kosher meat in lieu of kosher meat. Then he died.

When the Chevra Kaddisha (burial society) started to dig away but were unsuccessful, no matter how much they tried. They consequently dug another grave, but that one too became full of mice. They threw straw and wood into the grave and made a big fire. Upon hearing sounds of weeping and wailing, the members of the **Chevra Kaddisha** fled. Immediately, the grave again filled up with mice.

They turned to the rabbi for advice. He instructed them to lay the body in the grave. They followed his instructions and buried the body in the mice filled grave. They could not resist weeping over the disgrace to the dead.

As soon as they placed the body in the grave, it was attached by the mice, who devoured it voraciously until nothing remained. This incident was publicized throughout the region, causing many to repent (See **nefesh Yeshayah** pp. 47-48).





Chapter 4

Av-Elul 5741 Guide to Nikkur of the Inner

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I

To reinstate the previous glory of G-d

1. An open letter concerning the stringent prohibition of chelev.
2. Pre Holocaust.
3. Present Status of Nikkur in America.

II

An Urgent Call to the Torah Greats of the Diaspora

1. Non-defilement by eating forbidden foods.
2. The **menakkerim** in the Diaspora cause pitfalls to the public by permitting **chelev**.
3. Establishment of a **kolel** and a yeshivah for the study of **nikkur**, to train learned **shochtim** and **menakkerim**.
4. A decision by the Beis Din Zedek (Rabbinical Court) of Jerusalem concerning biblically prohibited chelev in the inner part of the animal.
5. Call for assistance.

III

Alarm From the Beis Din Zedek of Jerusalem

1. A **menakker** must have a valid certification.
2. Serious pitfalls in the matter of **nikkur**.
3. Skill required in the **nikkur** of the fats.
4. Avoidance of lenient opinion in this matter.
5. Requirement for **menakkerim** to learn only from another duly certified **menakker**.

IV

The General Rule for One Who Wishes to Eat Meat Without Any Risk or Prohibition of Chelev Blood

1. One should ask the butcher to show his **nikkur** certification. Better yet, the butcher should publicly display this certificate in a place for all to see.

2. Investigate the possible presence of any **menakker** who has **no** certificate, to be assured that he does not perform **nikkur**.

3. One should not purchase meat from any butcher store where **nikkur** is not performed properly.

4. The butcher **and** the **menakker** must be known as G-d-fearing men and scholars.

5. Publicize the pitfalls in the matter of **nikkur** in order to save your friends and neighbors etc...

Whoever saves one Jewish soul is considered as though he saved the entire world, because by doing so he saves entire generations from the prohibitions punishable by **kares**; even to save a single soul it is worth it.

There is no difference between Eretz Yisroel and the Diaspora regarding **nikkur** of the inner-part.

V

Letters of the Ruling of the Great Rabbis of Eretz Yisroel in the Matter of Nikkur of Chelev

1. Decision, Rabbinical Court, Jerusalem.

2. Testimony of Rabbi Jacob Landa, Bnai Brak.

3. Decision, Chief **Menakker**, **Edah Chareidis**, and the other **menakkerim** of the **Edah Chareidis**.

To Reinstatate the Previous Glory An Open Letter Concerning the Stringent Prohibition of Chelev

To our brethren wherever situated, rabbis, together with those engaged in holy work, the **shochtim**, **menakkerim**, and **mashgichim**:

Supervize, with great effort, to ensure that the Jewish people do not defile themselves with unclean foods and keep all Jewish tables pure of defilement!

The **Torah** exhorts us: **“And you shall separate between the clean animal and the unclean one, and you shall not defile your souls.”** The **Netziv** comments this verse as follows:

Just as I have separated you from idolatry, so must you be separated from them in their life-style. Just as in spiritual matters, it is proper for Jews to conduct themselves according to the commandments of G-d, likewise must you act in material matters to behave properly according to the **Torah** and its mitzvos. In days gone by the rabbis of all localities were the eyes of the community, upon whose decision every private or commmunal event was carried out. The rabbis, with their exemplary behaviour, exalted character traits, and contempt for hypocrisy, were the guiding lights of their flocks. Utilizing the **Torah**, they gathered many followers who respected them highly. Like a pillar of fire, a fortified wall and shield. They erected a bulwork against assimilation with the nations.

The pure table was strictly preserved in every Jewish home, thanks to the local rabbi, who stood at his watch day and night. The lights in the rabbi's house which burned until the late hours of the night testified to his vigilance. He studied the **Torah** assiduously, ready to rule on any

question in religious matters and to assist everyone in personal matters. He was the spiritual father of the community; in all communal matters his word was law and respected. This was the secret of the existence of our people in the most trying times which passed over the Jewish people during the long and dark exile.

Sorrowfully, after the Holocaust, which destroyed a large portion of our people, when entire communities were destroyed, the first victims were always the great scholars and the G-d-fearing men, the rabbis and the communal servants. With G-d's help, the survivors succeeded in re-establishing Jewish communities anew — synagogues, **botei midroshim**, **yeshivos**, **kolelim** where many engage in G-d's Torah — the evidence that G-d's promise to preserve the Jewish people will never be broken. The trouble is however, that the rabbinate has been destroyed.

The great rabbis have ascended to the heavenly academy, having sacrificed their lives in sanctification of the Divine Name, and many of the surviving communities seek a spiritual leader, a guide in halachah, a **shochet** and **bodek**, a **menakker**, but they are not available. Hence, there are many pitfalls in kashrus; in eating non-kosher food. The result, therefore, is that it is very difficult to find a scholar who can be relied upon. The young men who study in the yeshivos and the **kolelim** choose to be lecturers, heads of yeshivos, judges, but not rabbis. The rabbinate remains deserted. Very few of the students of the **kolelim** engage in the study of **Isur V'heter** (permissibility and prohibitin), **shechitah**, and **nikkur**. The result is that it is very difficult to find rabbis capable of replying when asked questions in these subjects or who are able to guide our people in these fields. The few found are in the camp of the pious, and mainly those in the Beis Din of Jerusalem, headed by **Hagaon Rabbi Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss shlita**. We have taken upon ourselves this difficult task, to

rejuvenate the rabbinate and restore the glory to its previous splendor, under the banner of the Beis Din Zedek of Jerusalem. We have established, with G-d's help the **Beis Hamidrash Halachah L'maaseh** in Bnai Brak, whose function is to train pious scholars who will engage in the practical application of the **halachah**, in issuing rulings of **Isur V'hetar** and perfect themselves in the fields of **shechitah**, **bedikah**, and **nikkur**. With G-d's help, we have succeeded in acquiring many students outstanding both in piety as well as in their general erudition in Torah; who are engrossed in their studies, the Talmud and the codes of Law. They are assisted by great rabbis and experts in the field of **shechitah** and **nikkur**, and practice these professions. Every student is capable of being examined by the Beis Din after completing the course of studies.

In order to be prepared to train young men for these positions, to engage in holy work and to lead our communities, they must fulfill the commandment — 'You shall not fear any man.' In order not to be influenced by anyone except those great rabbis whose piety is above reproach, we have decided **not** to accept any financial support from any political organization or governmental agency.

The L-rd loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob (Psalms 87). The Rabbis expound this to mean that the L-rd loves the gates that excel in **halachah**, for therein lies the permanence of the **Torah** and its instructions every day. Since the Temple was destroyed, the Holy One, Blessed be he, has in His world only the four cubits of **halachah**.

We know very well that the path we have chosen is not an easy one, but we trust that we will succeed. Our Rabbis teach that when the Jews said, "We will do," before they said, "We will hear." 600,000 ministering

angels came and tied to each Jew two crowns, one corresponding to "We will do," and one corresponding to

"We will hear." When they sinned, they removed them. Said **Rabbi Chama bar Chanina**: "In Horev they put them on and in Horev they took them off." Said **Reish Lakish**, "The Holy One, Blessed be He, is destined to return them to us." The **Ridbaz** asks, "What difference does it make where they took them off?"

He answers that the Talmud teaches us that we should not think that the angels returned them to heaven. No! The crowns are found in Horev, i.e. in the **Torah**. We have the power to retrieve them...however it is entirely dependent upon us.

We appeal to all Jews to help us restore the crowns, the crown of the rabbis. Let us renew the true Torah rabbinate to its previous state, and in the merit of this, we will make ourselves worthy to welcome the **Messiah** speedily in our days.

Respectfully,

Beis Hamidrash Halachah L'maaseh
 Rabbi Zalman Brizzel, Pres.
 Rabbi Mordechai Malachai, Dean
 Rabbi Menachem Roth, Head of Graduate School

The following is the text of a letter sent by the Beis Hamidrash Halachah L'maaseh to the American Rabbi

- 2 -

An Urgent Call to the Torah Greats of the Diaspora

First of all, I wish to cite the words of the holy Sefas Emes o.b.m., who said that the world (**olam**) is called thus because it is derived from **he-elem**, things overlooked, which one must rectify in this world, and according to the rectification of those things overlooked, he merits the hidden light, according to his spiritual stature.

The Rabbis teach us that one can acquire his share in the world to come in one hour.

Through self-sacrifice one merits that one hour.

This causes great satisfaction to every Jew.

There is no person who does not have **his hour**.

We must toil all our life to merit this one hour.

The Holy Torah states:

“You shall not defile your souls and you shall not become contaminated by them.” By eating prohibited foods, one’s mind becomes clogged and contaminated. Prohibited foods imprison the soul to be subjugated to the body and to materialism. Through one’s awakeing himself and acting to fulfill the Torah’s commandment, **“And you shall separate the clean animal from the unclean,”** we merit a similar reaction by the Most High: **“And I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine.”**

We heard from many trustworthy, G-d-fearing people, well trained in this field, that in America you inadvertently eat **chelev**, forbidden by the Torah, punishable by **Kares**, G-d forbid! We sent messengers to investigate the matter and found it, unfortunately, to be true.

We have discovered that your **menakkerim** who do not know how to properly remove **chelev** prohibited by the Torah, thereby causing our brethren to be guilty of infractions of the low punishable by **kares**, G-d forbid.

An expert **menakker**, serving today as **menakker** in the Diaspora, was examined him in the presence of: the Rabbi of Strassbourg; member justice of the Din Zedek of Jerusalem, the chief **menakker** of Jerusalem, and other expert **menakkerim**. They unanimously agreed that this individual serving as a chief **menakker**, knows nothing at all about **nikkur** and brings the public to sin by eating **chelev**. I decided not to rest until I alarmed the entire world Jewry concerning this outrage.

Save yourself from eating chelev:

“Anyone who eats chelev, that soul shall be cut off from his people.” The Jerusalem Beis Din has promulgated a decision that in the front half of the animal there is chelev forbidden by the Torah, punishable by **kares**. They also reinstated the rule that every **menakker** desiring to engage in **nikkur** must be certified by expert **menakkerim** and from a reliable rabbinical court.

Since there is a dire shortage of expert **menakkerim** who can be relied upon, we established a **kolel** — a school to learn **nikkur** in its practical application — **shechitah**, **bedikah**, and laws of Isur V'hetar. With G-d's help, we succeeded in organizing a **kolel** with young men well-versed in **halachah**, great scholars, able to promulgate **halachic** decisions. The lecturers are men of piety, great rabbis beyond reproach.. Now we will have, thank G-d, young men who know the laws of **nikkur** in its practical

application and who have been ordained by the Beis Din Zedek of Jerusalem.

I, therefore, appeal to you to assist us in our war.

I have implicit faith that in the merit of this **mitzvah** we will merit seeing the **Messiah** speedily and in our days, amen.

Respectfully,
Rabbi Zalman Brizzel, Jerusalem

- 3 -

No. 1

Beis Din Zedek
of the Orthodox
Jewish Community
Jerusalem

dated: Jerusalem, Elul 18, 5741

A warning in the matter of **nikkur**.

It is accepted and practiced in all Jewish communities to appoint expert, G-d-fearing **shochtim** certificated by a reliable rabbi. On the other hand, **nikkur is very sadly neglected**. Any **menakker** teaches anyone who wants to learn, and in a short time the disciple undertakes to engage in the profession of **nikkur** without any certification or ordination. Indeed, the teacher himself required certification.

Thereby, many pitfalls have come about, and many people have been led to eat fat and blood, a sin punishable by **kares**. Their excuse is that **Ramo (Yoreh Deah 64:7)** writes that in the front half of the animal there are no non-kosher fats except a small portion of the membrane on the fat of the flanks, etc. — this itself, too, requires study and erudition, otherwise they will very easily stumble into the prohibition of the **chelev** of the liver, spleen, and the veins of the tongue.

Moreover, one must know the ruling of **Nodah Bihudah** (Vol II, **Yoreh Deah** 31,) how much of the ribs must be left to the front-part. It is customary according to what the **Responsa Beis Shlomi**, vol. 1, **Yoreh Deah** 107, to cut toward the front part, close to the twelfth rib, and the meat after the twelfth rib is left with the hind quarters. Only **nikkur** performed by an accomplished **menakker**, familiar with **nikkur** of the hind-quarters may perform **nikkur** on this area. It is impossible to explain all the details, as is mentioned in Ramo (ibid).

We do know, that it is improper to seek lenient rulings when others rule stringently. For this reason, **we come to warn you** that anyone who wishes to study **nikkur**, must do so only under the tutelage of a pious, expert **menakker**, noted for his piety. Only after the latter grants him a certificate that he is progressing in his studies and performs well, may he appear before a beis din or an accepted rabbi to be examined. Only then will he be ordained as a **menakker**.

Jerusalem, Menahem-Av, 5741

Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss,

Rabbi and Chief Justice

Rabbican Court, Jerusalem

P.S. We find Responsa, Rosh (printed in the second decision of Mahari Sarzina,) that in Cracow, Germany, Poland and Russia, a **menakker** was required to present a written certificate of **nikkur** attested by a qualified Rabbi, just as shochet. Some are even more stringent, ruling that **nikkur** is more stringent than **shechitah**. (See Responsa "Divrei David," Rabbi David Milduba. chapter 35). This is the custom of the Holy Land for many generations.

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No. 2

Tammuz, 5739

Jacob Landa
Rabbi and Head of the Rabbinical Court
of Bnai Brak
Eretz Israel
The Topic: Nikkur of the inside

As is known, here in the Holy Land, we perform **nikkur** and **shpondres**.

This depends, however, what is considered the inner part. If we include in the front part what is behind the diaphragm, therein lies biblically prohibited **chelev**. What **Ramo** states in **Shulchan Aruch** ch. 64, (that there is no **chelev**) refers only to the inner part before the diaphragm, where the lungs lie.

If however, we include with the front part, some of the meat of the diaphragm, **Ramo's** ruling does not apply, because there we indeed find **real chelev**.

Likewise, **Darchei Teshuvah** quotes a booklet by **Sema**, that above the diaphragm there is no **chelev**, but below it begins the **chelev** of the kidneys and other types of **chelev**.

J. Landa
Rabbi of Bnei Brak,
Israel

No. 3

**The following is a statement by the menakkerim of the Orthodox Jewish Community of Jerusalem.
Sunday, Tammuz 20, 5739, Jerusalem**

We, the undersigned, verify everything written in Rabbi Mordechai Malachi's book. In the **nikkur** of the inner front portion: First remove the membrane on the red meat until the end. This is called **rippola**.* The membrane under this membrane must be removed as well. He cuts to the length of the vein as far as the breast and removes it. He peels the fat from the vein until the end of the flesh which extends along the length off the flanks of the thigh, and then he separates the red meat from the ends of the ribs from the place they are attached to the soft bones and their cartilage from all the **chelev** upon them. Likewise, he peels the red meat underneath it with that which corresponds to that which covers the soft bones, and similarly, from the other side he peels the **rippola**, opposite that which covers the vein through which blood flows, along its entire length. **Everything written here is the final halachic decision and is to be followed without deviation, throughout all Jewish communities, both here and in the Diaspora.**

Thus we verify that in the inner front part of the animal there is biblically prohibited chelev, which bears a prohibition punishable by Kares.

**Rabbi Gad Sorovitz - chief menakker of the Orthodox Jewish Community of Jerusalem
Rabbi Joseph Zvi Hirschman - menakker
Rabbi Moshe Leib Kornblit - menakker
Rabbi Meir David Kornblit - menakker**

Sefer
SHEMIRAH
TOVAH
(Good Watch)

Describes in detail the inferiority of the shechitah in New York and in the United States in general, according to what the author saw with his own eyes during the eighteen years he served as a shochet and a ritual inspector in this country.

**by Chaim Meir son of Mordecai Ball o.b.m.
shochet and ritual inspect**

**510 Sutter Avenue, Brooklyn
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✧ ✧ ✧

Introduction

We are presenting before you a reprint of the book titled Shemirah Tovah, written by a G-d-fearing **shochet**, who was employed in this field for forty years, the last twenty of which were in New York City, where he saw many pitfalls in the slaughter-houses, caused by the workers, the rabbis who grant **hechsherim**, and the rabbis who indirectly undermine the kashrus, and since the pitfalls that he recounts are applicable in our times as well, the procedure of the **shechitah** having changed very little, and the people upon whom the responsibility lies, used various excuses, which they still use today, as the reader will readily see, I deem it beneficial to reprint this book for the benefit of the public. I have added some important notes in brief according to the subject matter.

Also, for the benefit of the public, we have broken up the material into parts, with a title over every new topic, in order to give a general overview of what is written below. I hope that many will become aroused by this and that the eyes of "the blind" who tap in the darkness, will be enlightened. May the darkness that has darkened the eyes and the heart of Israel, because of the many trials and tribulations visited upon them, be speedily removed, and knowledge be increased!

May the Al-mighty cause a spirit of wisdom and purity to rest upon us to serve Him wholeheartedly, united as one, out of purity of soul from now and forever!

P.S. We have not added anything to the text of the sefer Shemirah Tovah except the titles, and the notes below it. **Anyone who wishes to see the book in its original print, may do so at the end of this book.**

SEFER SHEMIRAH TOVAH

1

In all Jewish communities, the city supports the rabbi, and the rabbi supports the shoctim, but in New York it is the opposite

(p. 20)

Moreover, from the proof I bring you concerning eating animals of dubious kashrus, you will see and understand by yourselves that the blame lies on the heads of our people, who do not follow the procedure of the cities set down in earlier times and followed in all Jewish communities, that the city would hire the rabbi and the rabbi would hire the **shoctim**.¹ Here, in our land, even though New York City is an important center of Jewish population, the city knows nothing of the rabbi, nor does the rabbi know of the **shoctim**, and the entire matter is very lax both for the rabbis and the **shoctim**, and whoever has the ability to control the situation through stealth, trickery or concealment, has the upper hand.

1. The author decries the change between the custom of New York City and the tradition in all Jewish communities in previous generations. Years ago, in all countries, the congregation would hire the rabbi, who would, in turn, hire the **shoctim**. In this manner, the **shochet** feared the rabbi, and the rabbi feared the Al-mighty. In New York City, the situation is the opposite. The owners of the slaughter-house support the rabbi (together with several other factories that manufacture foodstuffs and beverages) and the **shochet**, both of whom fear the owners of the slaughter-house. This alone would be enough to render useless the **hechsher** of the rabbi (and although the author describes the matter of the rabbi and the **shochet** in a slightly different manner, it is, nevertheless, so in our times).

2

In New York, anyone who wants to becomes a rabbi and anyone who wants to becomes a shochet.

The Tanna says: Engage for yourself a rabbi and acquire a companion. This means that the leaders of the city must select a competent and honest rabbi, as the Torah says, "Righteousness, righteousness shall you pursue." The rabbi must supervise the **shochtim**, who must always be under his strict supervision. ² This is especially true in a large city as ours, and if one rabbi is insufficient, they should hire two or more, so that they should be considered as the chief rabbi, not without whose sanction no rabbi should dare to raise a hand to grant **hechsherim** on any product. Under these should be many other ³ rabbis affiliated with however, and assisting them, but only under their sanction.

2. The author means to convey that in a large city it is easier to falsify, and, therefore, special precautions must be taken. Moreover, in New York City it is easier to support the rabbi, so that he can supervise the **shochtim**, even more so than in earlier times, when poverty reigned and, even so, they supported the rabbi, surely in a large city such as New York, that can afford to support the rabbi, and he should not have to turn to the owner of the factory for his check, since, in such cases, his need for money will cause him to overlook violations of the law.

3. The author brings to light an important point, that, unlike the current practice, that one rabbi is appointed over many divisions of kashrus, and also litigation, etc. for then it is impossible for him to supervise this work properly. Also, he should not appoint ordinary **mashgichim** under him, but there should be many rabbis, each one appointed over one division of kashrus, which he can control, and over these should be a **chief rabbi**.

In our city, anyone who comes along, acquires for himself a congregation through trickery ⁴ and becomes a rabbi; similarly, any **shochet** acquires a wholesaler who pays the **shochtim** according to what they agree upon, and he becomes a **shochet** whether the rabbi agrees or not. ⁵ If he foreman of the **shochtim** recommends him and claims that he is capable, he remains a slaughterer and thus he slaughters the city.

4. He alludes to the current practice in the United States, that whoever wishes to practice the rabbinate, finds for himself a group, opens a synagogue, and puts out a shingle, that this place belongs to such and such a synagogue. The author decries the situation, that this causes a terrible deterioration, because thereby, any empty headed individual can take the staff of the rabbinate into his hand, whereas, in earlier times, the community would select the rabbi, and before selecting him, they would examine and test him to discover any flaws in his knowledge, and if they found any flaw in his piety, they would refuse to accept him. In those days, it was extremely difficult to be accepted as a rabbi. In our times, however, one opens a synagogue as one opens a store, and whoever is dissatisfied with the rabbi, goes to another synagogue. The rabbi, on the other hand, feels that he is exempt from preaching and admonishing the congregants, since they never accepted him as a leader and guide. He appointed himself as a rabbi, since this is a clean and easy way of earning a livelihood. The generations, thereby, become spiritually impoverished.

Through this, the rabbi's income is very meager, since the worshippers never accepted him as rabbi, and never agreed to support him, and since he cannot go to work in a factory or do other menial labor like tailoring, or peddling in public, as this would impair his image as a rabbi, he becomes a slave to the producers of foodstuffs and to the owners of the slaughter-houses, to certify their products in exchange for a sizable salary.

5. Not only do they not ask the rabbi whether he approves of the **shochet**, but even if the **shochet** is lax in his piety and causes pitfalls for the public, the rabbi has no power to do anything, because the **shochet** and the butcher attack him with "iron spears" and silence him with a reprimand.

3

Rabbis beautify themselves so that the people will like them.

Consequently, such rabbis and **shochtim** can command the respect of the people only by conforming with the populace, i.e. by shaving their beards and their **peyos**; then the people will enjoy them, seeing that they conform with them and probably, it is perfectly permissible. Although there are some famous rabbis from Europe, who are as reliable as any rabbis in any Jewish communities, they are powerless to do anything, since the other rabbis have control ⁶ of the city, and since they are not supported by the city, the city cannot tell them anything. This is what the tanna means by, "Make a rabbi for yourself." That is, that the rabbi should be responsible to you, to the pious of the city, not that the rabbi should be the boss over you to do what he wants. Fortunate is the generation in which the greater ones listen to the smaller ones, because then the small ones will listen to the great ones. Then he concludes, "And acquire for yourself a companion." I.E., he is explaining how this can come about, only through acquisition. Just as it is impossible to acquire anything except directly from the seller, so should it be with the acquisition of a companion, that all children of Israel should gather together in unison and in one accord concerning the companion then everything will be done in the proper manner.

6. See above note 4, and you will understand what he means here.

4

The foundation of a proper hechsher is the investigation of the source of everything involved

Everyone knows the Talmudic maxim: "Throw a stick o the air, and it will land on its root." Although this is a ort or popular proverb, nevertheless, the mundane conversation of a scholar requires study, and we can learn from this that when a person comes to study anything, he must study the root of its essence. That is the meaning of "it lands on its root." King Solomon, too, stated, "The wise man - his eyes are in his head." That means that the wise man looks at everything from its head, i.e. its beginning; if he can rectify the thing from its beginning, it will be satisfactory in the end. In the holy Torah, we find, too, (Deut. 29): "Lest there is among you a **root** producing gall and wormwood." This indicates that the Torah warns us that our root must be good, and if it is not good, ⁷ we must uproot it, for so is the truth of what avail is it to cut off the

7. He means that if one wishes to make improvements in the slaughter-house with things that do not appear proper, he is considered a fool and he resembles one who cuts the branches off a tree whose roots are rotten, since more rotten branches will grow from the rotten root. So it is in this matter; the wicked will think of plans, and, for each improvement one makes, they will endeavor to create many more kinds of deterioration. The only solution is to search for the root of the deterioration, how it came to be as it is; perhaps the **shochet** is inferior, or perhaps the supervision is inferior, or the owner exerts pressure, and there to institute improvements.

bad branches if the bad root remains? The branches will grow again from the bad root, as everyone can understand.

5

Rabbis' visit in the slaughter-house - a mere sham

I will explain to you what I think is the root of the evil according to my knowledge in this field, and especially now that we have famous rabbis who have just come to our country and are unfamiliar with the procedure of the land and especially with the procedure of **shechitah**. Even if a rabbi explains it to them, ⁸ and even if he takes the famous rabbis to the slaughter-house and points out with his finger how the **shochtim** stand and how everything is done in the best manner, do not listen to him, because all this is a sham, a fraud, counterfeit.

8. Apparently, the author wishes to illustrate the tactic of those lax in piety, to bring rabbis to the slaughter-house to show them how everything is conducted in the best possible manner, and the cunning hidden in this trick, because in the majority of cases, the rabbis are unaware that they do not know, what is happening. This author did a great service to make the rabbis aware of this fact, that in order to understand what is happening in the slaughter-house one must be there at least three consecutive months. This is very important for every pious rabbi to know, so that no pitfalls will come about through him, and especially rabbis who just came from Europe, who are totally unfamiliar with the character of America, and when they are invited to visit a slaughter-house, they think that it is run like those in the countries of their origin, and with a short visit they can become completely familiarized with its running. This is a fatal mistake, through which many people have led to sin.

6**It is impossible for a rabbi to determine what is being done in a slaughter-house unless he stays there for three consecutive months**

It is impossible for any person ⁹ to know and to understand the root of what is going on in the slaughter-house until he stands there and engages in the work itself with all the laborers, both Jews and gentiles, no less than three consecutive months steadily from the beginning of the work day until the end. Then he will understand whether the working of the slaughter-house is good or otherwise. Because one person cannot possibly see from a distance what the next person is doing there and to understand what he sees by himself but is not doing with his own hands, and if he sees one thing, he does not see what is being done in the next room at that time, or in the third or fourth room, etc., for the slaughtered bull is divided into seven parts, each of which is processed in different rooms. Therefore, seeing the slaughter-house as the rabbis do, is worthless¹⁰, because a person does not have seven eyes to see seven places at once, or to know what is happening there.

9. He emphasizes that it is impossible for anyone, even if he be as wise as King Solomon and as pious as Moses, to understand the activities of the workers just by looking at them..

10. The confusion and the complication exist today too. The animal is cut into many parts and separated to many rooms. In some particulars, it is much more involved now than when this book was written.

7

A shochet in a slaughter-house who would not even taste meat

Everyone knows Rava's statement that one may tell about himself in a place where he is not known. I will, therefore, publicize today that I am, thank G-d, seventy-two years old, and until I was sixty I worked as a **shochet** and an inspector. At the age of twenty, I worked in the city of Nevel with famous **shochtim** who were very learned and pious. One was Rabbi Moshe Leib o.b.m. the son of Rabbi Peretz, the rabbi of Nevel, who served at the end of his days in Cherninov, where he lies buried.. After him there was none like him. For about twenty years I worked in New York at slaughtering and inspecting, and now for more than ten years I am not working in that field, and, thank G-d, I have sufficient to live on, and I do not have to work in my old age. May the L-rd grant me my sustenance for the rest of my life on this earth! I have not tasted meat neither from cattle or sheep for the past fourteen years, for even in the last three years that I was working in the slaughter-house, I did not eat what was slaughtered there,*¹⁰ because the other **shochtim** did not follow the rules, and I could not oppose them. I, therefore, eventually left my position there.

*¹⁰. We learn from here many things: 1) that the status of the **shochet** does not attest to the status of the meat, that one should deduce that if there were any doubts, that **shochet** would not work there, for here we see a **shochet** who would not eat the meat of the slaughter-house because of the other **shochtim**.

I too, testify that I heard from a very competent **shochet** who testified about himself that, since there are many pitfalls, he limited himself to eating only from the animals that he himself slaughtered and took home.

8

Why they complain about the pitfalls to the dignitaries of the city, they say, "Go to the rabbi."

I told this to many of the wealthy and respected members of the city, and they gave me their answer, "We don't watch for that. We have rabbis there who say that everything is all right, and we must rely¹¹ on them.

9

Rabbis certify meat of doubtful kashrus with the excuse that otherwise they will sell definitely non-kosher meat

When I spoke to a certain famous rabbi and advised him that he should remove his **hashgachah** from a certain slaughter-house so that people should know that the slaughter-house has no **hashgachah**, and he would not be responsible for the shortcomings of its kashrus, he said to me, "What would be the use of my removing my **hechsher**? The owners will take a worse rabbi. They are the bosses to decide which rabbi to choose, and they introduce him to the wholesalers and make up his salary. Thereby, he becomes the rabbi and is in control of the entire city and the metropolitan area, because his name is attached to meat sold in the city and the country, and he is

11. There is nothing new under the sun, and today, you will hear this excuse from everyone, from the greatest to the smallest. I was really astounded when someone told me, "Although I know that meat production has many problems since I worked there I, nevertheless, continue to eat meat on the account of the rabbi who give **hashgacha**." Is such an excuse acceptable to any sensible person? Will it be accepted by the Heavenly tribunal?

known as the great rabbi in the city.¹² Therefore, manufacturers come to him for **hechsherim** on all products sold with a **hechsher**. For this they pay a goodly sum, because the **hechsher** they receive from the rabbi will be inherited by their children and grandchildren throughout all generations, attesting to the fact that the product was made under the supervision of the rabbi and is kosher for the most scrupulously observant. I have seen such **hechsherim** in places where the rabbi never entered, neither he nor his **mashgiach**. Even in some places where there is a **mashgiach**, they have one where they need five!"

12. The author calls our attention to the fact that the lax rabbis profit doubly through their **hashgacha** on the slaughter-house; first, with the money they receive for the **hechsher**, and second, the honor they receive, through which they become famous as great rabbis, without which they would be totally unknown. Obviously, in such a situation, the temptation is double and the pitfall very great. This is a lesson that wherever there is danger that the rabbi is looking for fame, the greater the possibility that his hashgachah is inferior. In this respect, we have sunken tremendously. Years ago, the rabbi of the city did not need any fame, because he was famous in his city (in addition to the fact that the rabbis were engaged in holy work and were not looking for false honor). Moreover, he did not receive a higher salary because of his **hashgachah**. It was, therefore, very easy to refuse to certify any foodstuff whose kashrus was doubtful. Not so in our times, when the rabbi is paid for each food individually, in addition to the fame he receives, that his name is known all over the section. What fool would give up such a lucrative profession as long as he has any kind of excuse to give a **hechsher**?

13. He alludes to the practice of many manufacturers to attach labels on packages of food, bearing the name of a rabbi who has passed away twenty or thirty years ago. The **hechsher** is like a monument for his soul, and thereby they mislead the public. This is in addition to the **hechsherim** that are given by rabbis who have never seen the product, only the money sent to them for their **hechsher**.

10 The procedure of Shechitah here in New York

I will tell you the procedure of **shechitah** here in New York.

About thirty years ago, the Jews of New York decided to send to Vilna to bring over the famous Rabbi Jacob Joseph o.b.m., who as then accepted as chief rabbi. True he accomplished very much and closed many breaches in this field, introducing beneficial innovations for the good of our brethren in New York City. But, since he was forced to speak with the dealers, and especially with the wholesalers of beef and mutton, all of whom spoke only German and English, he was unable to communicate with them. Consequently, he found it necessary to take an interpreter, a rabbi who was to serve as an intermediary between him and the dealers. At that time, the Congregation Anshei Ungarn was the most influential in New York because of their wealth. After many quarrels among our brethren concerning who was to be the assistant rabbi, the Hungarians won, and their rabbi, a certain doctor, who spoke a fluent German, was chosen, since he could converse easily with the wholesalers, and what involved decisions in **halachah** did not belong to the assistant rabbi, since all questions of **halachah** were submitted to the chief rabbi.

The chief rabbi summoned all the **shochtim** of the city to appear before him to be examined, and any **shochet** or inspector who failed the examination was summarily dismissed. Also, he enacted a rule that lead seals be attached to the kosher meat, also on the fowl slaughtered in the kosher manner was to be a seal signed by the chief rabbi. Everything was done in the best manner, both in the

field of kashrus as well as in the field of synagogue practices. All this continued until the chief rabbi took sick and was bedridden for five years. All this time, he could not go out of his house where he was confined until the day of his death. During these five years, his wife conducted the household, and unknown to the rabbi, many changes took place. During these years, the assistant rabbi, who was doing everything according to the instructions of the chief rabbi, and for the latter's benefit, to support him, became stronger and stronger.

After the demise of the chief rabbi, the assistant usurped the rabbinate by force, for he was respected by the wholesalers, who refused to accept another rabbi, since he spoke their language and was from their city. Consequently, he became the rabbi of the city to grant other **hechsherim** since that was the practice here in New York, that the one whom the wholesalers considered the rabbi was the true rabbi of the city, since they would pay his salary. Also, the **shochtim** obeyed him, since he made it easier for them with his lenient rulings. They started shaving their beards just as he did, but they would try to beautify themselves even more. Unfortunately, this practice has remained with us until this day.

The **shochtim** were held in such esteem by the wholesalers that eventually they had more power than the rabbis, and the rabbis were compelled to listen to the **shochtim** in the entire procedure of the **shechitah**. Also, the **shochtim** united and formed a union, like the tailors, and no **shochet** was accepted to a position until he would pay what the union demanded, and then he entered the union to be a **shochet**. The rabbi had no voice in this matter. The power of the **shochtim** with the wholesalers came about because of one thing, that after the passing of the chief rabbi, the **shochtim** made it more lenient for the

owners and also for themselves, viz. that whereas previously, they would pay the **shochtim** a weekly salary when, obviously, it made no difference to the **shochtim** how many **trefos** came about - now they changed the practice, that the **shochtim** would get paid only from the kosher animals and not from those that turned out to be **trefah**. Surprisingly, the number of kosher animals multiplied many fold. This I cannot attest to definitely, since I did not work in the slaughter-house where that doctor was rabbi. I was in a slaughter-house that stood under the supervision of the rabbi of Moscow, Rabbi Jacob Vidrevitz o.b.m., where I worked for eighteen years and five months. As long as Rabbi Vidrevitz had the **hashgachah** on that slaughter-house, the owners, i.e. the wholesalers, begged him to allow them, too, to pay the **shochtim** only for the kosher animals, but he did not allow this under any circumstances. He insisted that the **shochtim** receive their salary as workers hired by the day, who receive salary every week according to the time they worked. May this merit stand him in good stead, since he did a great thing.

Consequently, all Jewish workers, who would differentiate between the kosher and **trefah** animals, such as those who affixed the seals on the meat and on the "small stuff," i.e. the innards, the heads, and the feet, also received their salary every week, and hence had no business with the **shochtim**. It was, therefore, possible to do everything according to the law of the Torah.

11

The process of Shechitah, Bedikah (inspection), and Butchering

In those days, the number of animals slaughtered weekly was about three thousand, and in one hour everything was slaughtered and all the work finished on sixty large bulls. According to our figuring, this means that in one minute a

large bull would be slaughtered and all the work involved, completed, i.e. the flaying, butchering, cleaning the innards, and bringing each part to the place it belongs. One who did not witness this will wonder how it is possible that all the work involved in the preparation of a large bull can be done in one minute. Yes, indeed, it is possible. Immediately¹⁴ after the bull is slaughtered, six workers come simultaneously. Four flay the feet, one to the head, and one commences (he only commences) to flay from the neck to the stomach and leaves it as it is without flaying it. He just makes the place for the other workers to continue to flay after the bull is hung by his forelegs and his hind legs. With the assistance of a machine, this is accomplished very quickly, and then the workers come to complete the flaying and to butcher the animal. Other workers stand ready with wheelbarrows. In one they put the innards and in one they put the lung and the liver, and in one they put the stomach only, because it is big. In another wheelbarrow, they put the heads; in another they put the feet, and everyone goes to its place, to a designated room where they clean the insides from the excrement and the fats, and the intestines are separated into three parts, the small intestine separately and the large intestine separately, the last stomach separately and the first stomach separately, because each part is sold individually, and the heads are separate, and the tongues are separate and everything is cleaned with a stream of water for each part, since gentiles are strict about cleanliness.

14. This system is still used today. Concentrate on his words, because from them you will understand the procedure of slaughtering and inspecting that is practiced today..

Only the first row, the ones that are slaughtered at the beginning of the day, the first twelve animals that are slaughtered at once, takes approximately one-half hour, because the workers must stand in line waiting until one finishes his work so that the next one can start his. The second row of slaughtered animals, however, does not require this waiting, since, before the first row has finished its work completely, the second row, the next twelve bulls, are already slaughtered and lying on the ground, and the workers are flaying the head and the legs and doing their work on the ground and making sure that everything is ready to hang with the assistance of the machine in place of the first ones. There are innumerable workers, and one does not know what the others are doing; they start their work and call the next ones to complete it, and the foreman stands over them so that they should not rest even a second. There were times that the owners needed to slaughter more. Then they would finish eighty bulls in one hour, for the gentile workers are plentiful, and when he needed more, he would hire more.

While the bull is still lying on the ground,¹⁵ the inspector must examine the lungs with an internal examination, i.e. while the lung is still inside the animal, and if he takes one minute too long with his inspection, he loses the inspection of the second bull¹⁶ lying then on the ground, because there is one worker whose job is to go from one bull to the next and to saw open the breast from beginning to end, so that



15. I.e. the short time from the beginning of the flaying until the animal is hung by its feet.

16. **Responsa Levushei Mordechai** rules stringently concerning a lung that has been thrown from place to place.

when they hang up the animal, it will be easy to throw out the lung and the liver. The worker does his work quickly because of the foreman who stands over him. The foreman doesn't care whether the inspector examines the lung or not, and if the one who inspects the lung inside the body does not fix up all the adhesions that must be left intact on their places so that they are not ripped off, virtually all of them are lost by the workers who throw the lung with force, from the bull to the floor and from the floor to the wheelbarrow by another non-Jewish worker. Very often, they ride over the lung with their wheelbarrow, and the adhesions are completely destroyed. Then they come to the one who makes the external inspection. If he dwells on one lung for at least fifteen minutes, he can determine where it is cut, but it is impossible to do this, because the table will immediately fill up with lungs from the second row, and it will be impossible to tell which lung is from which animal and from which row, so that the complete process is handled according to the **halachah**.

Gentlemen, pay attention and try to understand how fast the **shochtim** and the **bodkim** (inspectors) have to work because of the haste of the non-Jewish workers, who work like lightning because they are accustomed to doing it quickly, and they do not have to be concerned with kashrus, nor how many are needed for it, to separate the kosher animals from the **trefah** animals to affix the seal of "kosher" on them, since every kind of meat is in a separate room where the work is completed, and there they are mixed, the kosher and the **trefah**, and there must be a Jew standing there to separate them. This Jew, when he is in one room, cannot see what is happening in the next room. In order to avoid confusion, they mark the parts with a crayon on the intestines and on the stomachs, and on the other parts of the bull. This, however, helps very little and is quite unreliable, because the meat is washed and rinsed

several times, all but obliterating the crayon mark. In any case, the Jew must be the responsible party, because it is in his power to feed us with **trefos** as with kosher meat, and the owners warn and threaten him, and the **shochtim** warn him **not** to lose even¹⁷ one of the kosher animals. Look who these "trustworthy" people are, not learned men, nor scholars, not even people with common sense. Whomever the **shochtim** can hire cheaply, they take.

One, I remember, was a flagrant Sabbath desecrator. His name was Isaac. He would affix the seal to the "small stuff," *¹⁷ until I finally had him discharged through much trouble and intervention. In any case, while the rabbi of Moscow was in charge of the slaughter-house, there were eleven **shochtim** and **bodkim**, five who affixed seals, and one **mashgiach**, a total of sixteen (sic) men. The owners paid everyone his salary at the end of the week according to the time he put in. Immediately after the rabbi's death, however, the **shochtim** took the aforementioned rabbi so that everything should be under his **hashgachah**, and lest the public complain that it was not proper to rely on one man for the **shechitah in all the slaughter-houses: Swartzels, United, and New York, the three main slaughter-houses in Metropolitan New York, they appointed another rabbi to share the hashgachah for**

17. It is self-understood that the fear of the owner, who gives him his bread and butter, is upon him. Therefore, if he loses the numbers of the kosher animals and the **treifos**, he must make up the missing ones from those that come into his hand, as long as he does not lower the proportion of the kosher ones, because then the owner will be angry with him and may even discharge him from his position.

*17. The small parts of the animal, e.g. the head, the liver, the tongue, the lungs, the intestines, etc.

his name only.**¹⁷ in the United slaughter-house. They stipulated with him explicitly that the **shochtim** would be his bosses, and that they took him as their rabbi. They made this clear to him according to all the rules of stipulations.

Then the leaders of the **shochtim** agreed with the wholesalers to change the wages, to take only from the kosher animals, as they had wanted previously, because in every slaughter-house the **shochtim** have two representatives: one known as the foreman and one known as the secretary. They speak with the owners and decide all matters. Then the number of **trefah** animals that was

"17. Hence, we can judge how much we have retrogressed, for, in the days of the author in America, when the situation of **shechitah** and **bedikah** was so inferior, as anyone can see from these lines, people, even those lax in piety, understood that one rabbi could not accept the responsibility for three slaughter-houses (apparently, he had no responsibility for other products) and the pious Jews and those who are scrupulous in their observance would complain when they saw the seal of the same rabbi on three slaughter-houses, and in order to fool the religious people, they found it necessary to add another rabbi for the sake of appearance, as is related in this book.

In our generation, we have sunken so low that the owners of the slaughter-houses and factories don't see any loss of business if they hire the same rabbi who is responsible for several slaughter-houses and several hundred food products of various kinds, scattered in many cities.

It is very frightening, because this proves conclusively that the observant Jews are extremely lethargic, inattentive in the field of kashrus, and no one raises a hue and cry. If the observant Jews would protest against this terrible breach, the manufacturers would, perforce, hire several rabbis so as not to incur a business loss (remember that then, too, there were many **mashgichim**, as is related in the text).

previously about forty out of a hundred and no fewer than thirty-five, remained that way for the three years, I stayed with them after the death of the rabbi of Moscow.

Originally, if a **shochet** came to me and told me secretly that he was afraid that a certain bull had become **trefah** because he stopped in the middle of the **shechtah** or he pressed the knife instead of drawing it, because of the pressure of the workers, which is sometimes impossible to avoid under the circumstances, I would declare it **trefah**, **since I was the external inspector. Since they started paying only for the kosher animals, this stopped completely. Many times, I approached the rabbi and told him that certain animals I found to be trefah while the other shochtim claimed that they were kosher. He went to them and asked them about this difference. They answered him point blank, "We know more than you about shechitah. Who brought you here to be a rabbi, anyway? Weren't we the ones? If you don't like the way we run things, you can get out of here! Tomorrow we'll take somebody else."** The rabbi turned pale and went away disappointed.¹⁸ From that day on, he was a different

In one slaughter-house alone were eleven **shochtim** and six **mashgichim** compared to the present day slaughter-houses labeled "Glatt kosher," where the same number of animals are slaughtered, if not more, and there are but three **shochtim** and two **mashgichim**), and, even so, the owners feared that the public would be dissatisfied if three slaughter-houses were under the supervision of one rabbi.

18. We see here that a G-d-fearing rabbi who was troubled by the pitfalls that came about in the slaughter-houses, as soon as he heard the owner threaten to dismiss him and take another rabbi, became another person. Surely, in our times, this prevails, when the hiring and dismissing of the rabbi are solely in the hands of the owner.

person. If sometimes the meat of a **trefah** animal was mingled with the meat of a kosher animal because of the mistake of the one who affixes the seals, the foreman would go into the refrigerator where the animals were hanging, pick out one, make it **trefah**, and made the rest kosher. When I asked the rabbi, "Is this possible?" he replied, "In a week three thousand animals are slaughtered. If one or two **trefos** become mingled in, according to the **halachah** they become nullified by the majority of the kosher ones." When I heard this, I became frightened and could not talk to him, because what would my words help if he agrees with them? The truth of the matter is that everything that is in its place is counted like half and half and the law that it becomes nullified by the majority does not apply. Then I decided to leave my position.

11

The Mixture of Organs of Kosher with Trefah is Very Common

The mixture of "small stuff" is very common,¹⁹ and everything is made kosher by the foreman of the **shochtim**, who is the witness and the judge. No questions are taken to the rabbi.*¹⁹ The **shochtim** judge everything for themselves. But this is true, that the salary of the **shochtim** increased tremendously from what it was previously, because the owners make one computation of how many animals were found to be kosher, and this amounts to, let's say, eight hundred dollars, from which

19. He means that many separate organs of the animal, such as the tongue, liver, intestines, lung, two sides of the body of the animal, etc. can very easily be mixed up.

**19. Nowadays also, according to what we hear, no questions come from the slaughter-house to the rabbi's house.

everyone receives his check according to the distribution made by the foreman of the **shochtim**, this one fifty dollars and this one forty dollars, and the workers according to what the **shochtim** pay them. If the grand total amounts to only seven hundred fifty dollars, each one's check will be so much smaller.

The salary check will not be the same every week, as it was previously, and it is obvious that, since everything is paid from the money of the **shochtim**, the more the number of employees is diminished, both the number of **shochtim** and the number of workers, they will profit more.²⁰ From this practice, the wholesalers gained millions of dollars and the **shochtim** thousands, but, may G-d forgive such wealth! The source of this law is in the **Gemara (Bechoroth 28b, 29a)**: If one takes pay to see firstlings, we may not slaughter them according to this ruling (that they have a blemish that permit their slaughter outside the Temple), even if he was like Ila in Yavneh, who was truly pious, and would not pervert the law, the Sages did not permit him unless he takes the same amount for those not permitted to be slaughtered as he takes for those permitted to be slaughtered. **Rambam** applies this ruling to **shochtim**, that they may not receive more for kosher animals than for those that become **trefah**. All the later authorities agreed to this ruling. Even if you find one opinion that it is permissible if the difference is small, this does not apply to America, because it applies only if there are one or two **shochtim**, but in our country, because of the tremendous amount slaughtered, even a penny is considered a large sum, because, even in one week, it amounts to a large sum, and, according to the law, such

20. The author explains here that when they divide the money among the **shochtim** according to the number of kosher animals, the

shochtim may not promulgate any such lenient decision.

It is understandable that, because of the tremendous number of **shechitos**,²¹ many questions arise daily, especially regarding the second stomach, which is sometimes punctured by large nails found there. No day

shochtim gain more when there are fewer of them, since thereby, there is more for each one. This applies nowadays as well, since the owners of the merchandise pay the **shochtim**, and they are too stingy to hire more **shochtim**, inspectors, and **mashgichim**, and, as long as the work can be accomplished with a minimum of personnel, they suffice themselves with that minimum, and they consider this work like any other work, that, as long as the work can be accomplished with fewer workers, they do not hire more. The same applies to **shechitah**: as long as it appears to be going properly, the **shochet** slaughters, **the inspector inserts his hand, one inspects outside, one affixes the seal, euphemistically called a "mashgiach."** Everyone is happy, both the rabbis and the owners, since they don't blatantly kill the animals in a non-kosher fashion, they don't declare any animal kosher without inspection or without a **mashgiach**, G-d forbid, they attach a seal, sealed with Jewish blood, and religious Jews eat and are satisfied.

Were they smart, they would realize that the situation is terrible; the **shochet** is rushed to slaughter to examine his knife and then to examine the two slaughtered pipes in the neck of the animal, to wash his hands, and prepare for the next shechitah all in one minute. The same is true with the **bodkim**. Then they would understand that the work of the **shochet** differs from the work of the flayer, for in that job, everyone sees that it is being done properly, but in this field it is not dependent on the vision of the eye but on the understanding of the heart, and the **shochet's** presence of mind is robbed from him when he is rushed.

It already occurred that when the **shochtim** complained about the rush and demanded a raise because the work was very hard, their argument was rejected, and everything continued as before.

21. A method of slaughtering that is constantly performed in a rush, causes many questions, but no one cares.

passes without many such questions, yet everything is decided by the workers, sometimes it is brought to the **shochet** to look at, and is made kosher by them. Although there is one²² **mashgiach** in the slaughter-house, he stands in the room where the **shochtim** sharpen their knives. he never leaves that room; he sees neither the **shechitah** nor the **bedikah**, and never is a question brought his way, because he has no time, since everyone has his job to finish.

Also, in the slaughter-house are many open barrels without tops, filled with water from the faucet opposite them. Some are full of hot water, and some are full of cold water, whatever the workers need. In winter, almost all of them are filled with hot water, as is understandable. The workers who flay the carcasses are given large new rags, and everyone dips the rags in the barrel and washes and wipes the meat and the fats of the kidneys to cleanse them of filth and blood. Also, the knives with which they flay are always dipped into the barrel. Obviously, the hot water washes off the fat from the knife, and when they wash the meat with the water, it is noticeable that oil from the fat floats on the water in the barrel, and then the meat is still warm, and water is warm, and the warm water becomes absorbed into the warm meat. This is done daily; it is impossible to wait until the meat cools off, because, due to the large number of animals slaughtered, everything must be done quickly.

There is another time during the winter, before the holidays, that the dealers bring their merchandise to the large markets to show off the beauty of their area. Meat dealers, too, during the last few weeks before the holidays,

22. One **mashgiach** does not suffice, and surely if there is no **mashgiach** because the owners are stingy, as it is nowadays.

start making pictures on the meat to decorate and beautify it. The pictures are made in the following manner:

Immediately after the flaying, when the meat is still hot, they take the best fat and smear it on all the meat. Then, while it is still hot, they engrave various pictures into the meat, such as a tree with branches. The nature of hot meat is that when it is cut slowly, the meat separates immediately at the place of the cut, and the picture becomes beautiful and white from the fat on the meat. They do this every day before their holidays. Perhaps the honest butchers remove the fat from the surface of the meat, but the fat that they take pains to smear on the meat while it is still warm, and which becomes absorbed into the meat when they both are hot, **is impossible to remove**. Moreover, not all butchers are the same; some are particular about this, and some do not bother, for they are satisfied with the tags hung on the meat, with the rabbi's signature stating that the meat is kosher for the most scrupulous, and what more do we need? *22

It is very doubtful whether the meat is kosher for the most scrupulous. One who is scrupulous wants meat without any doubt of its kashrus, and does not spare expense, as long as it is definitely kosher.

Therefore, Jewish brethren, I present you with this brief account of the procedure of the kosher slaughtering in our country.²³ It is impossible to write everything explicitly,

*22. From here it is apparent that meat sealed in the slaughter-house as kosher (as it is done nowadays all over) causes a terrible pitfall and an opportunity for the butcher to omit **nikkur** because the customer sees the seal and is satisfied, not knowing that it does not attest to **nikkur**.

23. The author states that he had much more to write.

We can learn a lesson from here that the punishment the Rabbis

because I am old, and my hands become weary from writing. But this you should know, that it is not without reason that people eat meat of doubtful kashrus. Perhaps it is not doubtful but definitely unkosher. However, I do not want to say that it is definitely unkosher, because there may be variant views on certain questions, but in practical application, when they came to me, I would declare them **trefah**. Therefore, although the Rabbis gave us a time for searching out **chometz**, viz. the evening preceding the fourteenth of Nissan, and only with the light of a candle, but searching out this **chometz** is obligatory upon you daily, and you are guilty of its being found in your midst. Moreover, the light of a candle is unnecessary, because it is not hidden, but is in open view to the public, without the shadow of a doubt, as the Rabbis use the expression, "The

ascribed to anyone who has the ability to protest and does not do so, applies to anyone, even a plain person. No one is absolved from it. Let us think about the matter. In early times, the butchers were the roughest, coarsest, most brazen, worst tempered men, who had no respect for anyone, even for the greatest rabbi. In addition to this, in America laxity prevailed in the field of kashrus in those days.

Moreover, it is known that for monetary gain, anyone is apt to commit the worst crimes, and in those days, any Jew who left Europe for the United States was regarded lax in observance and one who cast off the yoke of heaven (and many families mourned for such a person), and was satisfied with laxity.

Because of each of these factors, it was possible for the owners of the slaughter-houses to cause breaches in the field of kashrus and **hashgachah**, according to their heart's desire, surely, with all of these factors combined, and yet, there was pressure from the observant laymen, at least to limit their laxity so that (at least it should appear as though) they hire enough rabbis and **mashgichim** as were needed. Hence, it is obvious that the owners are dependent on the public, because, if there are no customers, there are no sales.

ox is slaughtered before you.." *23 There is no remedy except that everything should be controlled by the city. The rabbis should be paid adequately by the city, and all their income should go to the city. The same should be true with the **shochtim**. Then we would be sure that everything would be kosher. The way it is today, however, that each one must fend for himself, each one listens to the one who makes it easier for him. In every Rabbinical prohibition, they are lenient, saying that a doubt of a Rabbinical prohibition calls for a lenient ruling. Everything that requires a measure, they say is permissible, because measures are a **hallachah** to Moses from Mt. Sinai. From this, all the lenient rulings originate. If you really follow the true path, you will succeed, and the Creator will surely provide all your needs, for one who wishes to purify himself is helped, and we and all Israel will be blessed with peace. Amen.

I have related here the procedure and the payment for **shechitah** as it was then. It is up to you²⁴ to ascertain whether it obtains nowadays. For approximately ten years I am out of this field, and it has possibly changed. But this I know, that when I asked the rabbis why the **shochtim**

In our times, too, if the strictly Orthodox would make a public protest and refuse to buy meat or any other products unless they are definitely kosher for the scrupulously observant, the owners of the slaughterhouses and the factories would be compelled to obey their cry.

*23. The author found no remedy other than to put the ritual slaughtering under the jurisdiction of the city.

24. This is important in our days as well.

25. Unfortunately, in our times they say the same thing.

should receive pay only from the kosher animals, they denied it and told me that the difference is very small, only two cents more from the kosher animals than from the **trefah** animals. This was completely untrue. In any case, in America there is no such thing as a small difference, because even one cent amounts to a sizable sum when it comes to the end of the week, when the **shochtim** are paid. Furthermore, many say that in America everything is kosher, because, whenever an adhesion is found on the lung, the animal is considered **trefah**, but this is totally false. On the contrary, they are very lenient with all such questions, much too lenient.



To Expose the Truth in the Marketplace from the introduction of "Vayoel Moshe"

The prophet Jeremiah in Ch. 5 states: "Go around in the streets of Jerusalem and see now and know, and search in its streets, if you will find any man, if there is anyone who performs justice, who searches for faith, and I will forgive it (the city)." The exegetes wonder, do we not find that there were many righteous and holy men at that time? How does the prophet say that there were none? **Redak** cites his father, who explains that the righteous of Jerusalem were all hidden in their homes and could not appear in the streets because of the wicked. **Shelah**, too, explains that for this reason the prophet states, "in the streets," because if they were not afraid of the wicked and would appear in the streets to expose the truth, they would have been able to protect the city. Ibn Ezra, (Gen. 18:26) "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous men in the midst of the city, I will forgive the entire place for their sake," explains that this means if they fear G-d in public, they will be able to protect the cities. He refers to the verse in Jeremiah. Hence, Ibn Ezra, too,

explains the verse like **Redak**, that only if the righteous come out in public and are known in the streets of the city, will they be able to protect the city from destruction. Our father Abraham, too, prayed that if there were fifty righteous men in Sodom who did not fear the populace, that G-d should save the cities. Now, why didn't Abraham start off by praying that even if there were fifty righteous men who were afraid to come out into the open, that G-d should save the cities for their sake? Apparently, he knew that such righteous men did not have the power to save the cities, and there was no use praying for them. Now, it was obviously very dangerous to go out into the streets of Sodom and protest the evils of that city, because the people harassed anyone who followed the way of G-d. This is made plain by the story of the girl who gave bread to the pauper and by the Torah's account of the Sodomites surrounding Lot's house because of his hospitality to the angels. Consequently, they were known as people who would not accept admonition. Yet, Abraham prayed that the city be saved only if there were fifty righteous people who did not fear the people of the city.

Shabbath 55

Anyone who can protest against the members of his household, is seized for the members of his household; [if he can protest] against the citizens of his city, he is seized for the citizens of his city; (if he can protest) against the whole world, he is seized for the whole world, etc. The Divine Attribute of Justice said before the Holy One, blessed be He, "L-rd of the Universe, why do these differ from those?"

He replied, "These are perfectly righteous."

She retorted, "L-rd of the Universe, they should have protested and they did not."

He replied, "It is known to me that if they had protested, the people would not have heeded them."

She retorted, "L-rd of the Universe, if it is known to You, is it known to them?" That is what Scripture says: "And you shall commence from My sanctuaries..." Rav Yosef taught: Do not read this as: And from My sanctuaries, but as: And from My hallowed ones. These are the people who fulfilled the Torah from A to Z (Heb. from **aleph** to **tav**). (**Shabbath** 55).

The following is a quotation from Rabbenu Yonah (**Shaarei Teshuvah** 3): "(Deut. 22:3) You shall not hide yourself," — We were warned with this commandment not to be lax in saving our fellow's property and to devise plans to save them in their time of distress. King Solomon said: "(prov. 24:10) If you were lax on a day of distress, your strength will be lessened." This means that if you were able to save someone with a plan or with intervention, and you pretend that you have no strength, your strength will indeed be lessened, payment in kind. The following verse reads: "If you say, but we did not know this, the One Who counts the hearts — he will understand, and the One Who guards you should — He knows, and He will recompense man according to his deed."

We learn from this that if a person can help his fellowman — in matter of eternity e.g. to guide him on the straight path, the path of the Torah, through admonition, and he did not do so; it is regarded as though he had harmed his friend, as mentioned above. This is because of the stringency of the sin of failing to admonish, as the Rabbis said: Jerusalem was destroyed only because they did not admonish one another (**Shabbath** 119). We see that the Rabbi overlooked many serious sins of that generation and mentioned only this sin of failure to fulfill the positive commandment of: "(Lev. 19:17) You shall admonish your friend." Why were they so severe? Because they found this to be the key to all the sins, as we stated above.

CLARIFICATION

The world was shocked over the new revelation that in the last few days a massive counterfeit and fraudulent mailing to all Rabbis and distinguished members of the laity consisting of letters with the forged signatures of the venerated Sage Horav Hagoen Rafoel Blum, Shlita and his distinguished sons of Bedford Hills, N.Y.

These letters purported to claim the Kashauer Rov retracted and rescinded his previous declaration concerning the absolute prohibition of using animal meat due to the major questions, problems and halachic doubts in the **NIKKUR** (deveining) which is known to be an absolute biblical precept and negative prohibition of biblical origin; as stringent in law as the consumption of chometz on Pesach.

Several prominent Rabbis became suspicious concerning the sudden retraction — the consistency of the terminology utilized surprised as the appearance of such abrupt about face by the staunchest vigilantes in the forefront in the battle for proper adherence to the **NIKKUR** laws, immediately contacted Horav Blum to discern the voracity publicized under his name. They were shocked and appalled to discover that the letters carrying the Kashauer Rov's name are total forgeries and issued with evil intent by irresponsible and wicked purveyors of meat provisions to cause to and bring about a sense and feeling among public of complacency until the objective of instilling a sense of security in the heretofore practice of the **NIKKUR** procedure as followed by the disreputable Hechsheirim givers.

Horav Blum emphatically stated that since the issuance of his first letter in the week of Rosh Hashanah 5743 — no change has come about neither in his decision nor in the practice and procedures of **NIKKUR**. He continues to exhort his followers to refrain from using any bovine meat products and provisions.

All legal means will be utilized to prevent the dissemination of forgeries and fraudulent correspondence.

This is the 6th in the series of scandalous scurrilous and fraudulent letters issued by various segments of the meat industry.

All the distinguished Rabbis and halachic sages who have issued prohibition against the use of meat during the past year have reiterated their position and have emphatically stated — that they have **NOT** changed their ban. They warn the general populace to refrain from eating meat due to the serious prohibition of *Chelev*; since no one should be willing to gamble with his life, as well as of his wife and children by the incurrence of the penalty of *kores-excision*, Heaven forbid.

Yeshiva & Mesivta Toras Yirmiyeh, Brooklyn, N.Y.

RABBI RAFAEL BLUM
165 HAINES ROAD #2, BEDFORD HILLS, N.Y. 10507
(914) 666-6800

ר' בלום

By the Grace of G-d
Boruch Hashem:

Parshas Hazinu 5743
Bedford Hills, New York

Peace and blessings to the honor of all my dear pupils and may the AL-mighty bless you.

This letter is directed toward the matter which I was asked many times about — in reference to meat — about which many people have raised the question — that the forbidden fats (called *chelev*) are not properly removed.

According to personal inspection this very week in the presence of highly qualified specialists in the art of *chelev* removal; it was clarified that unfortunately due to our great sins the meats which was bought in these past few weeks from butcher stores renowned for the highest quality in *Kashrus* was not separated from the forbidden fat properly.

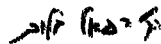
There remained upon the meat *chelev* which is strictly forbidden according to our Holy Torah. We found in the meat forbidden fat (*chelev*) according to our Torah including part from the hind quarters in tact with it's fat.

This by no means a matter dependent upon various customs or differential opinions of Halachic authorities whatsoever. Hence it is unanimously forbidden according to the edicts of our Holy Torah beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Therefore, I sincerely appeal implore, beg and beseech you all to refrain from consuming any more meat whatsoever until this deplorable situation becomes completely and properly rectified with the help of the Al-Mighty according to all laws of our Holy Torah.

May the Al-mighty send us his blessings to be inscribed in the book of good life amongst all of Israel with a year of redemption and salvation.

For a verification I hereby attest my signature.



Rabbi Rafael Blum

The Status of Nikkur in the United States

A collection of letters, written to proliferate to the public, to expose the bitter truth, that has been uncovered concerning the status of nikkur mainly in Williamsburg — Boro Park — Monsey — in the United States and in fact the whole wide world.

The following are delineated:

- 1) Religious, G-d-fearing people stumble on the prohibition of chelev prohibited by the Torah.**
- 2) There are no qualified menakkerim; the butchers themselves are the menakkerim.**
- 3) The butchers know very little about nikkur.**
- 4) They have no written certification.**
- 5) They leave over Torah-prohibited chelev in many parts of the meat.**
- 6) They feed the public with many parts actually belonging to the hind quarter — without the proper nikkur.**
- 7) There is no supervision on nikkur.**
- 8) The situation is decidedly worse in salami, frankfurters, and other types of delicatessen.**
- 9) Detailed testimony.**
- 10) Decision of Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem.**
- 11) Decision of the menakkerim of Edah Hachereidis.**
- 12) Instructions and exhortation in the matter of nikkur.**

First edition

Menachem - Av, 5742

Second, enlarged edition

Elul 5742

2

**The Status of Nikkur
Seminary "Halachah Lemaaseh"
for the study of shechitah,
nikkur, and decisions
regarding prohibition and
permissibility.**

2 Elisha St., Bene Beraq

★ ★ ★

Rabbi Zalman Brizel, Jerusalem
Head of Administration

Rabbi Mordecai Malachi
Head of seminary and dean

Rabbi Menachem Roth
Principal in charge of lectures, member of
Administration

Rabbi David Auerbach, rabbi and head of
rabbinical court of Tiberias

Member of Administration

Rabbi Abraham Biederman
Member of Administration

★ ★ ★

General overview of the essence and aim of Seminary "Halachah Lemaaseh" which stands on the highest level in studies of the practical application of laws of prohibition and permissibility.

Shechitah - slaughtering

Gemorah Chullin and commentaries - Tur, Beis Yosef, and Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah with commentaries - Sharpening the slaughtering knife - Slaughtering fowl - Study of tereifos - Slaughtering large animals and inspection.

Nikkur - removal of forbidden fat and blood vessels

*Study of Tur and Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah with commentaries chs. 63-65 - source Gomorah, early and late commentaries and books devoted to **nikkur** - practical study of **nikkur**.*

Prohibition and Permissibility

Study of Tur, Shulchan Aruch and Yoreh Deah with commentaries, laws of blood, salting, meat and milk, mixtures - clarification of the halachah from early and late authorities.

Aim

*To train knowledgeable G-d-fearing **shochtim** and **menakkerim** - well-versed in shechitah, inspection of the lung, laws of prohibition and permissibility - worthy to serve in such a holy position in Jewish communities both in the Holy Land and the diaspora-doing so they will sanctify G-d's name.*

The Status of Nikkur

Faculty

Rabbi Zalman Brizel of Jerusalem, head of faculty;
Rabbi Mordechai Malachi, head of seminary and dean;
Rabbi Menachem Roth, principal in charge of lectures,
 member of administration, **Rabbi David Auerbach**, son
 of renowned gaon, **Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach**,
 rabbi and head of rabbinical court of Tiberias, member of
 administration, **Rabbi Biederman**, member of
 administratio.

Lecturers

Rabbi Mordechai Malachi - Yoreh Deah and
 clarification of halachos, **Rabbi Menachem Roth** -
 Chullin, Yoreh Deah, **Rabbi Isaac Zuckerman**, shochet
 and inspector - Shechitah and inspection.



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INTRODUCTION

1

To the many millions of Jews, faithful to G-d and His Torah, residing in the Holy Land, Europe, Australia, Canada and America.

It has become internationally known in public the great scandal regarding the neglect of nikkur of chelev in America; hence we enclose herewith a book published by the Seminary "Halachah Lema'aseh," from which you yourself can determine to what extent this deterioration has reached.

In this book, you will find a complete evaluation and explanation of the extent of neglect and its causes thereof. This is very important for those who live in other countries as well, since nowadays many people travel from country to country and from city to city and inadvertently fall into the snare of eating **chelev**, prohibited by the Torah and punishable by Koris (excision) thereby causing sins unknowingly.

We have spared neither toil nor expense, although it amounts to an astronomical sum to print and proliferate this book throughout the world. It gives a general overview of the extent of deterioration that dominates the situation of **chelev** in America, so that anyone touched by the fear of G-d will use extreme caution upon setting foot on American soil, to avoid eating any animal meat, so that he will heed not fear stumbling on eating **chelev**.

Let it be known that this book has been compiled after deep thought, much deliberation and discussion with

menakkerim and rabbis of high repute, all of whom agreed unanimously that this book should be circulated the world over in order to save Jews, the only seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, believers, the children of believers, from this horrible devastation, until "the earth will become full of the knowledge of G-d as the water covers the seabed."

Regard well and digest thoroughly all that is recorded in this book which you should read many times for everything mentioned herein includes information for even the most religious sections in America, such as Williamsburg — Monsey — Boro Park and others.

P.S. We have received the gladdening news that many rabbis and grand rabbis have already become inspired by this and have ordered their disciples and their followers to abstain from eating the flesh of animals. Some made public statements, and others told it personally to their followers, but all mean it sincerely to be strictly followed.

For the benefit of the matter we present here a brief list of the contents of the book on what it is based.

- 1) The hind quarters are sold and eaten, something never done in Hungary or certain other countries, where it was strictly prohibited.
- 2) They perform **nikkur** on the hind quarters without any knowledge of the process, without certification for **nikkur** of the hind quarters, and without supervision.
- 3) They perform **nikkur** on the front quarters without certification and without correct knowledge and with much laziness.
- 4) They leave large quantities of **chelev** forbidden by the Torah and some forbidden by the Sages.
- 5) They leave over **chelev**, membranes and sinews.
- 6) There is no supervision on **nikkur**.
- 7) The rabbis who grant the **hechsherim** know nothing

about **nikkur**, but rely on the butcher-**menakker**.

8) The great extent of neglect of **nikkur** has been exposed before the public.

9) The rabbis fear the butchers rather than vice-versa.

10) Loud outcries from the greatest **menakkerim** of our generation, who cry out bitterly about what became known to them through testimony, that **chelev** is being eaten in America.

11) Testimony sent to us from America, from what expert **menakkerim** personally saw.

12) The great obligation upon every G-d-fearing person to avoid even a doubtful case of **chelev** to save himself from the day of reckoning.

13) The great ruin resulting from those who learn **nikkur** from books without serving under the tutelage of great **menakkerim**.

14) The great pitfall of the rabbi or the rabbinical court to grant certification to **menakkerim** without one of the following: 1) The rabbi studied and engaged by himself many years in the field of **nikkur** under the guidance of **menakkerim** who have certification transmitted from a gaon and tzaddik known for his wisdom and fear of G-d, and who has certification on his knowledge. 2) A **menakker** whose fear of G-d precedes his wisdom, who studied and engaged in **nikkur** for many years under the supervision of **menakkerim** who have certification transmitted etc. and received from them a writ that he knows his work thoroughly, both on the front quarters and on the hind quarters, and he shall examine the new G-d-fearing **menakkerim**, who receive certification and attest their knowledge, and on his testimony the rabbis will sign he is fit to engage in the profession of **nikkur**.

15) The explanation of the pitfall resulting from lack of supervision of **nikkur**.

16) Explanation of the pitfall resulting from having the

butcher serve as a **menakker**, contrary to the previous practice that **nikkur** was a distinct profession, as the shochet in his shechitah and the inspector in his inspection of the lungs.

17) The greatest and the most erudite **menakkerim** in Jerusalem have certification that dates back to Rabbi Joshua leib Diskin and Rabbi Samuel Salant o.b.m. and their rabbinical court. Such certification does not exist throughout the entire world today, and all their deeds are printed in books with all details.

18) **According to the menakkerim in America:** In Hungary there were tens of customs (which are not mentioned in any book), there were even various customs of **nikkur** of the hindquarters, (although they did not use the hind quarters), and whoever yells, "That was the Hungarian custom," as the upper hand, (although he has no certification as proof) and although he attests to this after being caught like a thief with neglecting to remove **chelev**, (he is, nevertheless, believed to testify of something in a faraway land that was the Hungarian custom), and he need to testify only that he himself practiced that in Hungary, and he is already believed (something always considered a joke), and on these an entire Jewish community relies (as is explained within).

19) If there is perhaps a **mennaker** who has certification from Hungary, his qualifications need qualifying because of two reasons: **1) Whether the rabbinical court knew nikkur** (for in Hungary also, there was gross neglect, see within, quotation from Giv'as Pinchas), **2) Whether he received certification for what he does now, for in the writ of certification there is no mention how to practice. In the procedure of nikkur in Jerusalem, however, everything is prescribed in writing (as above).**

20) Products known as salami — sausages — bologna. The situation here is even worse than other meat, and they

contain a concentration of six things, any one which would be enough to cause cancer, G-d forbid.



To the Heads of Yeshivos and Principals of Institutions for Education of Boys or Girls

We have been convinced that a large percentage of souls and bodies of Jews, whether or not they will come to the World to Come, is dependent upon the administrators of the educational institutions.

According to the way of life in our times, the boys and girls are educated in their childhood years and in the years of their maturity in institutions of Torah and education, and in addition to the spiritual food they absorb there, they are also nourished physically through lunches and usually also breakfast. This has gone on for many years.

*After investigation resulting from much toil and work of rabbinical judges and **menakkerim** under the control of rabbis, we were able to publish a book that evaluates the situation of **nikkur** of **chelev** of animals in America, in such communities as Williamsburg, Boro Park, Monsey and others.*

(We enclose herewith a copy of the book).

*It is superfluous to emphasize that after carefully reading this book, the reader will find that one who eats animal meat in America today, puts his soul and his spirit into danger of excision and destruction from this world and the World to Come. The body also is in this danger, for eating **chelev** is punishable by Koris, which includes*

cutting off the body from this world and cutting off the soul from eternal life.

Indeed, we wish to awaken the hearts of the administrators of these institutions, that the great responsibility that lie on them in feeding the children; that they give them food of top quality of kashrus is many times more than the responsibility that lies on individuals, since many thousands of children are fed under their auspices daily for many years. It is well known that food given a child at the beginning of his education in his childhood years, in his formative years, has a much greater effect on him than that given in later years.

And now, if the administrators and principals of these institutions will take a little time to think into this matter, they will realize that the responsibility for the packages of myriads of tens of thousands of olive-sized pieces of **chelev** with which Jewish children, who never sinned, were fed, lies on their shoulders, since it is common to serve salami or frankfurters for lunches and it has been explained (in the enclosed book) that this food contains a large quantity of real **chelev** and that it is worse than ordinary animal meat sold in the market.

Moreover, according to the information from the Food and Drug Administration, salami contains a combination of six ingredients, any one of which can cause cancer (see our book).

In conclusion, the principals of the educational institutions have the possibility to lead the public to righteousness and to remove from the pure table of the young, such food products as salami — frankfurters — pastrami — and the like, that destroy the body and soul of Israel, and to replace them with pure, kosher food, and through this they will be assured that no sin will come about through them.

On the other hand, if they continue to feed salami, the result will be that a school with an enrollment of three hundred children, the amount of **chelev** they are fed amounts to approximately three hundred olive-sized pieces in one day (where this is served every day, 1500 olive-sized pieces a week, six thousand a month, sixty thousand over the months of the year, and you can figure from here).

Anyone who is honest will understand that feeding Jewish children, who never sinned, and whose learning keeps up the world, such a large quantity of **chelev**, will not be overlooked by the Al-mighty, and for every **barleycorn** he will be brought to task. Who can imagine the punishment he will suffer!

The wise man shall pay attention to all this, and not be lenient in any of it, because he is risking his life, as is stated in Sefer Rav Tavchia (laws of **nikkur**) that one who causes others to stumble on **chelev** gives his life and the life of his children as security.

And not only, that they are fed with prohibited food, but also the dire results.

Not only is he punished for feeding them prohibited food, but he is also responsible for the dire results of eating **chelev**, as the Pri Chadash (Yoreh Deah 81) states that through this they come to apostacy and they are the brazen people of the generation, and it is known that in Heaven, every thing is counted on the account of the one who caused it.

Be aware we have warned you! In so doing we have dispensed our responsibility!

Administration of the Seminary "Halachah
Lema'aseh' Elisha Street, Bene Beraq

**Since Rabbis too, are human and
therefore do also make mistakes
thereby causing the public to
transgress**

The public asks many questions:

1) *How is it possible that rabbis can grossly err by saying that **chelev** is shuman, that it is kosher?*

2) *If the rabbi is believed regarding other prohibitions of the Torah, why is he not believed regarding **chelev**?*

3) *Do we have to worry about those who contest this matter, saying that there is **chelev**, since we are not learned in this matter?*

4) *Is it possible that a large segment of the Jewish people should stumble upon eating such a stringently forbidden food, punishable by Koris?*

5) *May one who is not learned in this field remain silent and not do anything?*

6) *Are the rabbis who give hechsherim allowed to ignore the contention lest their finances and prestige suffer therefrom?*

7) *Indeed, why did such a pitfall emanate from great rabbis?*

8) *Why did such a deplorable situation exist, causing, thereby large segments of Jewry to stumble on **chelev**? **It and by itself..devastation***

The answer is: On the first question first, 1) How is it possible that rabbis can err — This is an explicit verse in the Torah (Lev. 4): “And if a thing be hidden

from the eyes of the congregation,” which the rabbis explained (see Rashi) to mean that it was hidden from the Sanhedrin, who are the very eyes of the congregation. These words are explicit in Horios “If the court rendered a decision to infract one of the commandments, and it is explained there (3b) that the court is obligated to bring a sin-offering for their erroneous decision.

Rambam (hil. shegagos 12:13) explains that this refers to the Great Beis Din that convened in the Chamber of Hewn Stone (concerning whom Scripture states: “You shall not turn away from the word they tell you, either right or left). ” It refers to the case that all of them erred in their decision and decided leniently. Again we quote Rambam: Anything for which the error requires a sin-offering, if the Great Beis Din erred in their decision and rendered it erroneous to permit it, thereby causing the people to err...and consequently it became known to them that they had erred, the Beis Din then are in duty bound to bring a sin-offering for their erroneous decision, although they themselves committed no act, for it concerns us not at all Beis Dins act whethey they did it or not, but on their decision alone.

Further (13:1) he continues: “And similarly, if they rendered a decision one of them who knew they erred in this decision said to them, ‘you are in error,’ subsequently those who permitted overruled him, the Beis Din is exempt...as it says: **And if the entire congregation of Israel errs — until the entire Sanhedrin errs.**’ ”

It is stated explicitly (Horios 2a) in the Gemara that it refers also to a decision of permitting chelev, as the Gemara words it: This comes to include the case that the Beis Din decided that chelev is permissible, and Rashi on the Mishnah states: Beth Din decided — E.g. that they

decided that **chelev** or blood is permissible. Rambam *ibid.* (13:4): “Beis Din decided that a certain **chelev** of the many different types is permissible, and one ate etc. and afterwards they decided that a certain idol worship is permissible, and he performed that idol worship.” One who studies the Talmud and the Rambam thoroughly will see that the usual example is the decision concerning **chelev**.

Now, all we have to do is think into this matter a little. If the Sanhedrin, who were comprised of the greatest of the generation in Torah, in wisdom, in fear and love of G-d and in admirable character traits, without any personal interests, as is explained in Rambam (Sanhedrin ch. 2), that the members of the Sanhedrin were wise, humble, friendly, mighty in their observance of mitzvos, exact with themselves and controlling their temptation; they should have no disgrace, and no bad name, and should have a good reputation from their youth despising gain, and even their own money excites them very little; they love truth, hate theft and avoid all kinds of injustice and are totally devoid of iniquity or bodily blemishes.”

Yet, after all this, it was possible for a pitfall to occur to them in their decision and they permit chelev and say that either all of it or certain types of it are permissible, even though Scripture says: G-d stands amongst the congregation of the judges — and also, they sat in the Chamber of Hewn Stone, in the Holy Temple, the main place of the resting of the Shechinah, it was still possible for this to occur, when seventy-one tzaddikim were sitting together with their crowns on their heads. Now what can we — mere hyssops on the wall — answer today, when we are so far from having any concept of the holiness of the Sanhedrin, how much more is it possible for this to take place with us.

I found a marvelous statement of any early Sage, that, on the contrary, whoever is greater than his friend is more apt to stumble upon sin. Scripture states: That a prince will sin — Since he is accustomed to greatness, and so much pomp, that he is the king over all Israel, he will surely come to haughtiness, which will bring him to sin without a doubt. (Zohar Vayikra p. 22a, Shach, Rabbenu Bechayah, Toldos, Yitzchak, K'lil Y'kar)

Accordingly, one who comes with such an argument indicates that he has forgotten an explicit verse and an explicit Gemara.

2) *The second argument: If the rabbi is believed for other things, why is he not believed concerning this? My dear friend, your complaint is not to me but to the holy Torah of G-d. How does the Torah say that the congregation errs? If we believe them concerning all Torah prohibitions, as the Torah screams and says: "You shall not turn away from the thing that they tell you," how did he err in this law? Apparently, we cannot compare matters like this, and it is possible that he is well-versed in the entire Torah, and yet a pitfall can occur through his error.*

3) *The third argument: Does the unlearned have to worry about those who contest the decision of the rabbis? Let us not enter a discussion of Torah to clarify this matter according to the halachah, since this is not the place for it and the matter is rather lengthy. We wish to give a brief simple answer as follows: Two strong arguments counteract this argument, one for the populace, and one for the G-d-fearing and pious.*

First of all, did not the Sages teach us that one who causes us to sin is worse than one who kills us? With this, the Rabbis taught us that our souls are more important than our bodies, and a Jew is required to sacrifice his life for his faith and his sanctity, for the

soul is immortal, and the body is of secondary importance to it. It is the tool with which we serve the Al-mighty and this world is like a vestibule before the inner chamber.

*If so, let everyone who posses a clear mind give serious thought regarding hypothesis: If people claim that by eating a certain food one will become deathly sick and die, every sensible person will certainly abstain from eating that food, because why would he look for trouble even if there is only a possibility of danger? Similarly, if people come and tell you not to travel on a certain road because murderous bandits lie in wait for travelers on that road and in opposition to them, others declare; **“Don’t worry; you may travel that way on my responsibility,”** no sensible person will risk his life. Neither will he send his children or other relatives on that road and as much as he can, he will warn others against going that way.*

*Now isn’t the case of **chelev** analogous to this? **Eating chelev, even inadvertently, clogs the heart and cuts off the soul from its Heavenly root,** as is explained in the works of the ancients and the later authorities (See **Iggeres Hakedushah** by Ramban, ch. 4, **Pri Chadash** and other later authorities on **Yoreh Deah**, ch. 81) and also when all people err, this brings Jewish souls into the powers of contamination and causes them to leave the faith (See **Responsa Divrei Chaim**, Vol. 1, **Yoreh Deah**, ch. 7) and he will never merit to see light even in the World to Come (as in **Yesode Veshoresh Ha’avodah**, ch. 7, which see), and accordingly, **what fool will turn there to fatten his body with something which people contest and say that it contains poison, lethal to his body, spirit, soul and will lower him to depths of Gehinnom. Who will then take the soul of his sons and daughters and cut off their souls from their heavenly source, even if it is a doubt?***

Also, in the part concerning the body, the penalty for which willful infraction is Koris. Inadvertently, it is an unintentional infraction of a sin punishable by Koris. Now who went up into Heaven and came down to testify before us that whoever heard contesting on the matter of **nikkur** of **chelev** and closed his ears to it, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? is regarded as unintentional? Is it not so that every day, incidents testify that the time has come to search our deeds for sins punishable by Koris at a time that young people and even children are snatched away suddenly at the dawn of their childhood? **Is the Holy One, Blessed be He, suspected of punishing without due cause?** It is not time to seek justifications for everything and to deal leniently when we see that each day's curse is worse than that of the preceding one, when small children are left without father or mother and no one answers. They cry bitterly for their parents and parents cry bitterly for their children who were snatched away before they knew to distinguish between good and bad. Heaven safeguard us.

For the pious and scrupulous in their performance of mitzvos, we say the following: Where do you find the yardstick to measure that abstaining from eating kneidlach and soaked matzah on Pesach or purchasing an expensive esrog for several hundred dollars with all types of beauty, purchasing an aliyah of high status, a beautiful tallis, are things worth striving for, more than essentials of Torah itself, which are the foundation of the living soul of Orthodox Judaism and its guarantee of existence, like avoiding the consumption of meat that people contest as not having the **chelev** removed properly?

The fourth argument: Is it possible that a large segment of Jewry stumble? The answer is the quotation from **Rambam** mentioned above (hil. shegagos 12:1):

*Whether all Israel in Eretz Israel committed the sin according to the ruling of the Beis Din that ruled, whether the majority of Israel did it...whether the majority of the tribes etc. and further (13:2): How so? If the inhabitants of Eretz Israel were 600,001, and 300,001 committed the sin according to the ruling of the Beis Din...Beis Din is liable. According to this all Israel were 600,000. See **Talmud and Rambam** and you will conclude that the same applies if all Israel committed the sin, see **Zohar Yayikra 22:1**.*

The fifth argument: Is there any way to permit a rabbi or anyone to remain silent if he knows of the contesting? This is explicit in the Talmud (Shabbos 54a): Whoever has the power to protest and does not protest, he is responsible for that sin (as though he himself did it). And so did the Rabbis say (Sanhedrin 27b): "And they shall stumble each one upon the sin of his friend. This teaches us that all Jews are responsible for one another. Accordingly, whoever knows something and remains silent, will be held responsible for that sin as though he himself had committed it to stumble.

*I found a remarkable explanation in the book entitled "Yalkut Me'am Lo'ez," v.14, where he quotes **Baal Ha'Itur and Shach**, who explain the verse in conjunction with aforementioned maxim, that whoever has power to protest and does not do so, is responsible for the sins of that generation. They derive this maxim from the section dealing with the prince who sinned. They expound this to mean that the prince himself did not actually sin, but since he did not admonish the people who sinned, it is counted as though he himself transgressed. They state: You should know that if there is a great man in a place, who has the power to admonish the people and protest a certain sin or injustice being committed by the people of his generation*

and he does not do so and does not wish to become involved in the matter, lest people hate him, all the sins that the people of the city commit are regarded as his sins hence the sins of all of them are accounted to him. Therefore, the verse commencing, "If a prince sins," is written immediately after the last verse of the preceding section, which reads, "It is a sin-offering of the congregation," to hint that if there is a sin being committed by the congregation, the cause is, "That a prince sins." **I.e. the sins are attributed to the greatest of the generation who have the power to protest and admonish but do not do so. (K'lil Y'kar, Baal Ha'itur, Shach).**

Sixth argument: Whether rabbis and other famous people are permitted to ignore the great pitfall, lest their prestige suffer. See what the Rabbis say (**Toras Kohanim, Vayikra; Horios 10**, quoted by Rashi on aforementioned verse): This is an expression of **אשרי**, fortunate. Fortunate is the generation whose prince puts his heart to bring an atonement on his error; surely he regrets his willful infractions.

See **Vayael Moshe** (essay on Three Oaths, 152): If the eyes of the congregation are in this trait to admit their errors, this is nothing but an expression of joy. Unfortunately, we have not yet merited this joy.

Seventh argument: Why should this pitfall occur to the great rabbis of the generation? This has already been explained in the various books that this is due to the sins of the generation. See **Haflaah** in sefer **Panim Yafos, parshas Vayikra** (on the aforementioned verse): The inadvertent sin of the anointed priest is due to the guilt of the people who cause his error. He brings the Rabbinic maxim that when the shepherd is wroth with the sheep, he makes the leader blind (**Baba Kamma 52a**). Rashi

explains: **When the Omnipresent punishes the wicked of the Jews, he appoints unworthy leaders.**

Nezer Hakodesh (Beresishis Rabbah 60:11) questions why we find that certain rabbis of the Talmud stumbled upon prohibited foods (and it is explained in the **Talmud Chullin 5b**, and in **Tosafos ad loc.** that the L-rd does not bring a pitfall to tzaddikim in the field of prohibited foods). He replies that since the generations became spiritually lower, even though men can still be found of superior spiritual stature, since the generation is not worthy, they, too, fall from their spiritual level.

Eighth argument: Why should so many stumble at once? The answer is that it is customary that one stumbles easily upon any sin he sees others stumbling upon. Each one draws his friend. Therefore, since many eat meat and do not wish to abstain therefrom despite all the contesting, because of their clogged-up hearts, the rest of the community is drawn after them. This is explained clearly in **K'li Y'kar, Lev. 4**, on the verse: And if one person sins, it is quoted in **Yalkut Me'am Lo'ez, Lev. 4:14**, "If it is a sin that a person sees others doing, he is apt to think that it is permissible and he will easily come to transgress it, for there is reason for one to err. A sin that he sees no one committing, however, is highly unlikely that he will commit. Therefore, Scripture states: And if one person sins. It says here, "One," something not mentioned in any section dealing with sacrifices above, to denote that only he sinned in that manner, that he did not see anyone else committing that sin (**K'li Yakar**).



דעת תורה

*The Holy Spirit manifested itself in our Rabbi's study hall. I refer to the **Grand Rabbi of Satmar o.b.m.***

In his holy work, "**Divrei Yoel**" (**Berachah, p.201**): But, what we say that the Torah is not in Heaven and that a prophet can no longer add any new thing to the Torah, that is now the foundation and the root of the entire Torah, for otherwise there would be no Torah, for it was meant forever, as the Talmud states in **Shabbath 116b**...And perhaps he will perform signs and wonders through tricks and sorcery and prophets will tell you to do this or that and Shabbathai Zvi, may his soul and spirit be obliterated, said that negative commandments became positive and positive commandments became negative and even if we do not believe him concerning the Torah as a whole, no mitzvah will remain in its true status, for everyone will say, "I dreamt a dream that this **chelev** is prohibited and this **chelev** is permissible." And this one will say this and someone else will say that. Therefore, the Torah gave a rule that no prophet can add or subtract anything to the old commandments.

*Note: See how the Rabbi's holy eyes saw so far and when he wanted to give an example of what would happen in the end of days, to change a mitzvah of the Torah, he chose **chelev**, and in this he did not say that a prophet would rise who would say that **chelev** is entirely permissible, but that this **chelev** is prohibited and this **chelev** is permissible, just as it indeed took place in our times.*

INTRODUCTION

Exposing the truth in the matter of nikkur to all inhabitants of America

Blessed be the Creator and extolled be He who formed all worlds, through whose help we approach the task of publishing (in a second edition — expanded) the present book, aimed to save our brethren the children of Israel who live in the United States: Williamsburg, Boro Park, Monsey and other communities, of the great pitfall upon which they stumble inadvertently every day viz. eating chelev, the severity of which is explicit in the Holy Torah, and which any beginner, when he starts to learn Leviticus, reads with fear and trepidation the explicit verse in the portion entitled "Tzav," which reads, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: Any fat of an ox, sheep, or a goat, you shall not eat...for whoever eats fat from an animal from which you may sacrifice an offering to the L-rd, the soul of the eater shall be cut off from its people." This verse is well-known and every small child understands it, but its practical application is unknown to many great rabbis in many places, and especially in the United States, even in the most Orthodox Circles, beginning with the simple laymen even to the greatest Torah scholars, and because of our many sins, the innocent G-d-fearing follow them blindly with implicit faith to buy meat upon which a large seal is affixed, bearing the legend, "Glatt Kosher meat, kosher for the most observant," without giving thought to the severity of the pitfall into which they are being dragged into and without understanding how to save themselves from the snare spread out at

their feet through the fault of butchers, meat sellers and those who stand by their right hand to support and defend them.

For this reason, we have dedicated this book to arouse the serious attention of the public and to shout to all our brethren with an unending heart rendering appeal, "Wake up, you sleepers, from your lethargy!!! Stand up now! to extinguish the fire that burns all the way up into the high Heavens. Gird yourselves to fight against the enemy who wish to destroy the surviving remnant, G-d forbid, by feeding them forbidden food in general and particularly through eating chelev, for eating chelev warrants greater severe penalty than all other forbidden food, it being of equal stringency as eating chometz on Passover and eating on the Holy Day of Atonement. Everyone knows how much the Chofetz Chaim o.b.m. warned our brethren in his time, when they were forced to wander to various places because of the terrible decrees of that period. He warned them that if they have, G-d forbid, no choice but to eat pork and animals that died without being properly slaughtered, they should, G-d forbid, not eat meat from which the **chelev** was not removed, but rather pork and animals that died without being ritually slaughtered, whose prohibition is merely a negative commandment, rather than, G-d forbid, to stumble upon the prohibition of **chelev**, which is punishable by Koris. Yet, in our times, the situation has reached such an alarming low that without a decree by the government or any other coercion, they feed our brethren meat from which the **chelev** is either not removed at all or at best not properly removed and in their innocence, many innocent G-d-fearing people are trapped in a terrible snare, whose results are so far-reaching, that it is utterly

unbelievable even catastrophic in many instances testifying to the terrible occurrences of devastation we daily witness. Heaven have mercy.

The Origin of the Breakdown of Nikkur in the United States

We, the students of the seminary, are forced to become tale spreaders and reveal the secret of the origin of the gross neglect of leaving meat with **chelev** forbidden by the Torah. Every elementary student knows that, there were various customs in various countries regarding the consumption of animal flesh. Some would use even the hind quarters of the animal, and would appoint expert **menakkerim** over this function, such **menakkerim** whose expertise was attested to after they studied and served as much time as was necessary, who were then tested and received certification for their expertise in the field of **nikkur**, all this in conjunction with very strict supervision.

On the other hand, there were places, first of which was Hungary, where, even after all this, because of the grave responsibility involved in the **nikkur** of the hind quarters, where there are two difficulties, viz. the large quantity of **chelev** and the great effort together with the expertise it requires, disregarded the monetary loss, (even though, at times it was considerable) caused by refraining from eating the hind quarters, since they know that it involved their soul and they cared more for Jewish souls (since forbidden food clogs the heart, the brain and cause people to leave their faith, G-d forbid — later authorities on ch. 81 in Yoreh Deah) also for their physical being (for the penalty for eating chelev is Koris) and so they surrendered the entire hind quarters.

Nowadays, the populace, as well as the most erudite scholars and as well as most great rabbis of the generation have no knowledge whatsoever of the craft and art of **nikkur** (and this being a fact that can easily be proven). The reason for this is very simple; those who came from Hungary and certain other places did not use the hind quarters at all, and took only front quarters, where there is very little **chelev**. It was, therefore, not necessary for practical application, consequently, it is commonly stated by everyone that, we in America, eat only the front quarters, as we did in times of old, in Hungary and other countries and therefore, there is very little application of **nikkur**, as is delineated in Ramo in Yoreh Deah ch. 64. The truth of the matter is, however, that this is a deadly error, from which the terrible ignorance in this field originated (from one side), for the place of demarcation between the front quarters and the hind quarters in the United States, as well as in Eretz Israel, where the front quarters are separated from the hind quarters in the slaughterhouse, does not coincide with the way it was divided in Hungary and other countries and according to the method used today, there is a considerable amount of **chelev** on the front quarters that is taken into the store and sold to all Jews, a very considerable amount, regarded by all the authorities, without exception, **as the hind quarters with all the stringencies of the hind quarters**, viz. that an expert **mennaker** is required with certification for **nikkur** of the hind quarters, and a second mashgiach to supervise it. Moreover those who are stringent in their observance do not use it as they do not use other parts of the hind quarters. That part was never sold as part of the front quarters, and in those places where the butchers did so on their own initiative, the authorities complained vehemently that they cause the public to stumble on the prohibition of eating **chelev**. This belongs to the hind

quarters and the butchers are not trained in the nikkur of this part, since they never learned the craft of nikkur of the hind quarters.

As an example, let us cite words of the poskim who complained very vehemently not to cut as we do today (Sefer Tohoras Aharon, Ohel Yitzchak, Zevach Shemuel, Zinah David, Givas Pinchas, Darchei Teshuvah, and other books on nikkur, all made this a fundamental factor, before entering the craft of nikkur, that they know exactly what is called the front quarters and what is called the hind quarters) and see also Sefer Givas Pinchas ch. 65, par. 19, where he writes as follows: Moreover, one must warn that when he cuts the front quarters and reaches the end of the rib, and cuts on a slant, he must be very careful to cut on a slant above up the navel, and the navel he must leave to the third quarters etc.

You should know that nowadays they do not cut on a slant at all, and they leave the navel, called "shpunders," and what is below the navel, to the front quarters, contrary to what is written in Givas Pinchas and other aforementioned books on nikkur.

Beis Yitzchak in his introduction to nikkur, states as follows: Most butchers commit two evils: They leave the meat between the twelfth and the thirteenth ribs to the front quarters and also that they cut straight in the flanks under the navel which belong to the hind quarters and which they leave to the front quarters and cause the public to stumble upon a real prohibition, and there is no one to supervise this outrageous practice.

What shall we say about the entire country of America, where the cut is made exactly in the manner the Givas Pinchas and the other books on nikkur write that it should not be done. Moreover, with such a

cut they commit two evils. Amongst our many sins, these two evils are committed in all states of America and this meat is brought into stores in Williamsburg, Boro Park, Monsey (This we ourselves witnessed) and in all other cities.

For this reason, we are astounded, because the **menakkerim** know, at most, the **nikkur** of the front quarters only, viz. **what the halachah calls the front quarters**, but now, that a part of the hind quarters is there, they know nothing about it, and the evils resulting from this ignorance are the following:

- 1) They sell the hind quarters without knowledge of the **nikkur** of the hind quarters.
- 2) Thereby, they give everyone real **chelev**, forbidden by the Torah, which everyone eats inadvertently.
- 3) Those that are already **menakkerim** but, in any case, perform **nikkur** on the hind quarters without certification, which is prohibited according to all authorities, and they infract this rule. ¹

1. See Responsa Beth Shlomo, Yoreh Deah ch. 96, regarding the question of the butcher who was ordered to perform nikkur on a "**pachviss**" of an animal and he performed nikkur on them and stated that he had done it properly. The rabbi showed the butcher that it was not done properly, and then sent it to the **menakkerim** of Buchuch, who replied that some membranes were left over, as well as the amount of two barleycorns of **chelev**. The butcher who was also the manakker justified himself by claiming that **he had learned that from his father** and you asked the verdict of the butcher, who is a poor man with a family to support. He further writes that although he justifies himself by claiming that he neglected it completely unintentionally and that he had no way of avoiding it, nevertheless, the Simlah Chadashah rules stringently even in the case of an unintentional transgression, to dismiss him for a month or two and to reinstate him after that if he agrees to follow the orders of the rabbis and it is proper to follow this procedure in our

4) Those who emigrated from Europe (as well as those born in the U.S.A.) surely did not eat any of the hind quarters, as it was their custom in days gone by in Hungary, even if **nikkur** was properly performed on it.

Now it will be revealed why this became known especially to **menakkerim** from Eretz Isael, because we learn also the **nikkur** of the hind quarters very thoroughly

case. In any case, he may not resume his work of **nikkur** until he brings a letter from an expert **menakker** that he knows how to perform **nikkur** on those parts customarily given to the butchers and to trust them. I make mention of this concerning not only this case, but concerning all butchers who perform **nikkur** on the "pachviss," for the pitfall is very great in this matter in these times, that everyone authorized by his father, who in turn, needed certification, and I do not know what is meant by "pachviss," whether the intention is the flanks, which need very strict supervision for there is **chelev** forbidden by the Torah and requires **nikkur** by an expert **menakker** and in *Sefer Beis Yitzchak*, he complains bitterly in *Laws of Nikkur*, par. 8, and warned the butchers not to cut only up to the navel and to leave the navel with the hind quarters, for the flanks are below the navel and the navel itself belongs to the hind quarters... Here we have a **shochet** and inspector, who is well versed in these matters, and he supervises this. I, too, announce constantly and admonish very strictly concerning this etc.

It is apparent from his words, that one may not perform **nikkur** on the flanks, which are below the navel, at all (and that is the whole portion called "**shpunders**", which we are dealing with here, in particular) only through an expert **menakker** who has written certification from another expert **menakker**, and it is not sufficient that he has certification from his father on this matter, because his father also needed certification. He also writes that there is **real chelev**, and that the **menakker** who stumbled on this, even if it was unintentional and unavoidable, he must be dismissed for a month or two, even if he is poor and has a family to support, even though he excuses himself by saying that he learned **nikkur** from his father. Listen, my people, understand this, how all the excuses we are accustomed to hear these days from **menakkerim** and butchers, are all alluded to in the language of the *Beis Shlomo*.

and consequently, with one look, we recognized this, as soon as we stepped over the threshold of the butcher shops (in Williamsburg, Boro Park and Monsey,) and the **menakkerim** of the United States know exactly nothing about it.

Now, what the **menakkerim** claim (out of lack of knowledge) that they follow the practice of Hungary, is apparent to the reader that this is an error, for how is it

See also *Sefer Daas Torah* (by the **rabbi of Berzan**, who was known for his lenient rulings) in *Yoreh Deah*, ch. 64, par. 21, where he writes concerning the question of a **menakker** who had written certification that he knew how to perform **nikkur** on the front quarters, and he took a piece of meat from the hind quarters, performed **nikkur** on it, and sold it to others.

15. They took the meat and sent it to a **menakker**, who stated that he found an amount of **chelev**³ as big as a barleycorn. The inquirer wished to decide leniently because, 1) the negligence was not intentional but due to lack of knowledge, 2) the **chelev** that was found was **rabbinically prohibited**, not Biblically and the butcher should, therefore, not be dismissed on its account. The aforementioned **gaon** replied: But, it appears from your letter that he had no certification for the **nikkur** of the hind quarters. How, then, did he undertake to perform **nikkur** and to sell the meat, merely by relying on his own judgment and it is known to everyone that one may not engage in this matter until he is examined by experts to determine whether he is learned in this matter according to the custom and as is done with a **shochet** and inspector of the lungs. Consequently, this **menakker** was irresponsible in his behavior and it is fitting to penalize him for this alone and especially according to *Tevuas Shor* at the end of ch. 1, if there is circumstantial evidence, **even one witness whose testimony is contested is believed**. Here, too, in our case, since he had no certification for **nikkur** of the hind quarters (only for the front quarters), and he intentionally engaged in this craft, we have circumstantial evidence that he is suspected of giving people **treifos** to eat. Concerning the inquirer's desire to deal leniently with him because the **chelev** involved was prohibited only Rabbinically, he differentiates between a learned man, who knows the difference between lenient

possible to make such a claim, when that part was never used in Hungary? Also, in the front quarters, which they did sell and eat in Hungary, there is considerable irresponsibility among the **menakkerim**; everyone does what he wants and relies on false excuses, saying that they followed that procedure in **Hungary**, but **every menakker follows a different procedure** from the next, and what they claim that they do not perform **nikkur** because they follow the Ashkenize practice, is completely erroneous, for they do not know that the Ashkenize custom does not apply to the entire "shpunder" except to one place and everyone holds that there is Biblically

prohibitions and stringent prohibitions, but a simple, unlearned man who is suspected of infracting a lenient prohibition is also suspected of infracting a stringent one. This is true even in the case of **chelev**, that, no matter what kind of chelev it is, he must be dismissed. He concludes that since he practiced **nikkur** without certification, there is an ancient institution that no one may engage in shechitah or inspection of the lung without certification from an expert who is a scholar as well and certainly this applies to **nikkur**, a process much more difficult than any other inspection. This **menakker** is, therefore, "breaking the fence etc." **Now why do we have to pity him if he did not pity his own body and soul. See Yadaim 4:3: You are benefiting them with money and you are depriving them of souls etc. Therefore, if it is as you say, in your letter, that he engaged in nikkur of the hind quarters on his own, I will have nothing to do with permitting him... See further that he dealt stringently with him even though he had a family to support. From all this, you should be astounded, for in our times in America there is hardly one who has certification even for the front quarters and yet they perform nikkur even on cuts that belong to the hind quarters and some do not even perform nikkur on these cuts at all, claiming that so was the custom in Hungary. It is really awesome! See further in Darchei Teshuvah 64:131, where he cites Beis Lechem Yehudah that one may not practice nikkur unless he has certification.**

prohibited **chelev** in the "shpunder." What we are discussing here is the **chelev** that is prohibited according to all authorities, and not only to the **chelev** that is prohibited by custom.

The cut made today in the United States is done because that is the general custom of the country, both for Jews and non-Jews alike and instead of discarding the part belonging to the hind quarters that is left with the front quarters by the custom of the country, they sell everything together.

Moreover, in addition to the front and hind quarters, there is the inside part, which includes the four stomachs of the ruminants, the spleen, the liver, the intestines and the diaphragm, all of which contain chelev prohibited by the Torah, and which did not fall under the category of custom.

It is astounding that this gross error has been made constantly for decades by a large segment of the Jewish people.

We pray to G-d to strengthen our hands and give us courage and that this matter be rectified in all haste as it should be and may our eyes see His return to Zion with mercy speedily in our days, Amen.



CHAPTER 1

**Letters From the Menakkerim
and From the
Rabbinical Court of the Edah Chareidis**

LETTER #1

An Announcement and a Heartfelt Appeal!!!

*From the chief menakkerim of the Edah Chareidis in
Jerusalem*

The contents of the letter

that is America, religious Jews stumble on the prohibition of chelev, G-d forbid!

Ask of the welfare of Jerusalem, your inhabitants shall have peace, for from Zion shall the Torah emanate and the word of the L-rd from Jerusalem. We, the undersigned, a group of menakkerim and the chief menakkerim, turn to our brethren, the children of Israel in all places, to them and to their rabbis and those who decide halachic law in all places, may the L-rd be upon all of them and may they live.

Heartiest greetings to all of you. We appeal to you with a request to listen attentively to the positive halachah we are here writing to you ...

Some months ago, we received information that in the United States* there are large communities of G-d-fearing Jews, who observe the Torah and its

*(This was especially determined toward Williamsburg, Boro Park and Monsey.

commandments strictly, who do not thoroughly learn the matter of nikkur of meat and thus stumble upon the prohibition of chelev, which warrants the penalty of Koris!!!

Since we are extremely alarmed regarding this matter, we, as a group of menakkerim have assembled, for we feel that we have the responsibility for this large community, to save them from a stringent prohibition hence we herewith send them a definite and clear halachah.

And so it is with you, if you have expert menakkerim possessing the required credentials it is very good.

And, if G-d forbid, you do not have, you must leave over the last two or three ribs with the hind quarters for non-Jews. Likewise, the navel with the small ribs where the fat of the flanks extends, with the hind quarters, and surely you must be stringent not to eat the spleen, the intestines, the stomach, and the kidneys, which contain chelev that is Biblically prohibited, and likewise the fat on the liver, for all of these require nikkur by an expert. ²

Doubtlessly, such a serious matter as the prohibition of chelev or even the danger of a

2. *Everything enumerated in this paragraph is commonly used in the United States (even in Williamsburg, Boro Park, Monsey) although they are not well-versed in its nikkur, also the stomach and the kidneys, even though they are not commonly eaten, but they eat organs that come in contact with fat of the stomach and fat of the kidneys, which are prohibited by the Torah and in many butcher shops the intestines are also sold and sometimes even the spleen and as it is well known, they contain chelev prohibited by the Torah.*

prohibition of chelev will quickly be rectified, so that people will be able to eat meat that is kosher according to all views. ³

Rabbi Gad Trobitz - Cheif Menakker of Edah Chareidis of Jerusalem

Rabbi Joseph Zvi Hirschman - Menakker of Edah Chareidis of Jerusalem

Rabbi Moshe Leib Kornblit - Menakker of Edah Chareidis of Jerusalem

Rabbi Meir David Kornblit - Menakker of Edah Chareidis of Jerusalem

-
3. We have deemed it appropriate to convince the reader how far-reaching the earlier rabbis, being as great as angels, sought to stringently deal even with doubtful cases of chelev; even with matters other authorities permit, they taught the people of Israel to follow the more stringent view since the prohibition of chelev is extremely servious, and from this the reader can deduce by a fortiori to be stringent and to avoid anything about which there are claims that there is chelev prohibited by all views, even if he is in doubt whether the claims are justified because of the report spread by some who try to cover up all that is done!

The following quotation is from Ha-agur, ch. 175: (verbatim).

The author states: Since I made my chief aim to clarify the detailed laws concerning chelev, about which our Sages o.b.m. differed, I found there are seven places in the animal that there are varying views, etc., and you, my son, your heart is wise, and my heart will rejoice as well. Do not go in the way of those who rule leniently, for you do not know which is proper and by no means should you put yourself into a doubt of a prohibition punishable by Koris, for it is a doubt of the destruction of a soul, since we find that our Rabbis o.b.m. were very strict concerning even a doubt of a Rabbinic prohibition and even in the case of a double doubt in some cases, e.g. the case of a doubt whether the woman is the sister of the one he granted chalitzah etc. and other places, too many to enumerate, surely, by fortiori conclusion, the prohibition of chelev, the penalty of which is

אין ספק אשר על דבר חמור כאיסור חלב או חשש לאיסור חלב
יקפידו לתקן אשר יהיה אפשר לאכול בשר כשר לכל הדעות*.

ר' גד טרוביץ — ראש מנקר בעדה החרדית ירושלים

ר' יוסף צבי הירשמן — מנקר בעדה החרדית ירושלים

ר' משה ליב קורנבליט — מנקר בעדה החרדית ירושלים

ר' מאיר דוד קורנבליט — מנקר בעדה החרדית ירושלים

Koris, that you should surely not enter into doubts, that he should turn away their way from him, not to follow it. Moreover, that is not considered a doubt of chelev, since these things depend on wisdom and tradition, as the authors have decided that if you cannot figure the amount of the prohibited substance because of lack of knowledge that is not regarded as a doubt etc. and so it is with the differences of opinion concerning chelev mentioned above, which came about because of lack of tradition from the earlier sages, for the Torah became like two Toros because of our sins, and you, my son, whom the L-rd gave a heart to understand and a sharp intellect to discern, stay away from the ways of a doubt of the prohibition of chelev, and you shall prohibit it upon yourself wherever the Rabbi disagreed, and you will benefit by it, and so it is my custom, not to eat of the flesh of the thighs upon which nikkur has been performed except from a menakker who is a scholar, who follows the stringent ruling in all the aforementioned cases, and you, my brother, see and understand the matter.



LETTER #2
LEGAL DECISION

*From the chief menakkerim of the Edah Chareidis of Jerusalem, how to behave with regard to nikkur of the navel, a practical application of the halachah. **

☆

Sunday, Tammuz 20, 5739, Jerusalem

We, the undersigned, verify everything written in Rabbi Mordechai Malachi's book. In the **nikkur** of the inner front portion: First remove the membrane on the red meat until the end. This is called **rippola**. The membrane under this membrane must be removed as well. He cuts to the length of the vein as far as the breast and removes it. He peels the fat from the vein until the end of the flesh which extends

*(*These menakkerim, in addition to their remarkable expertise in the field of nikkur also in the hind quarters, and there is no menakker in the United States who can compare to them, they have a certification handed down from generation to generation originating from the sainted gaon, the renowned, Rabbi Joshua Leib Diskin o.b.m., and his colleague, the renowned gaon, Rabbi Shmuel Salant o.b.m. with their tribunal. (And as it is known, Rabbi Diskin engaged in nikkur also in the Diaspora prior to his ascent to the Holy Land). And how much more are they entitled to testify since they have no interests in the matter. Compare the menakkerim in the U.S. who cry, "Hungarian custom," most of whom have no certification, for there is only one in a city, and that was not transmitted to him from one generation to another, originating from a well-known sage. Moreover, they are authorized only on nikkur of the front quarters and all have interests to justify their corrupt deeds and they are, consequently, disqualified to testify, as the halachah states, that even the judges of a city may not testify concerning a sefer Torah that belonged to that city because of their interests in it, surely not in this case.*

Consider whom you are exchanging for whom.

along the length off the flanks of the thigh, and then he separates the red meat from the ends of the ribs from the place they are attached to the soft bones and their cartilage from all the **chelev** upon them. Likewise, he peels the red meat underneath it with that which corresponds to that which covers the soft bones, and similarly, from the other side he peels the **rippola**, opposite that which covers the vein through which blood flows, along its entire length. **Everything written here is the final halachic decision and is to be followed without deviation, throughout all Jewish communities, both here and in the Diaspora.**

Thus we verify that in the inner front part of the animal there is bibilically prohibited chelev, which bears a prohibition punishable by Kares.

Rabbi Gad Sorovitz - chief menakker of the Orthodox Jewish Community of Jerusalem

Rabbi Joseph Zvi Hirschman - menakker

Rabbi Moshe Leib Kornblit - menakker

Rabbi Meir David Kornblit - menakker

ר' גד טרוביץ - ראש מנקר בעדה החרדית ירושלים *

ר' יוסף צבי הירשמן - מנקר.

ר' משה ליב קורנבליט - מנקר. *אב טרוביץ ישיבת קניון קרית*

ר' מאיר דוד קורנבליט - מנקר. *אב טרוביץ ישיבת קניון קרית*



VERIFICATION OF THE ABOVE

From our rabbis, the greatest Torah authorities in Eretz Israel, Beis Din Zedek of the Orthodox Jewish Community of Jerusalem

From the Holy City of Jerusalem, 14 Rammuz 5742

*We, the Beth Din Zedek of the Holy City, thank Rabbi **Zalman Brisel**, who established a special kolel (post-graduate school) of G-d-fearing scholars to clarify the halachos pertaining to the laws of **nikkur** etc.*

Similarly, we verify that the menakkerim who signed above are G-d-fearing men and are trustworthy in this holy task of nikkur.

Both, those who admonish and those who heed admonition in this matter will be blessed with peace like the water of a river and the blessing of the good L-rd shall come upon them.

(Signed) **The Beth Din Zedek of the Holy City**
Moshe Aryeh Freund, Head of Rabbinical Court
Israel Moshe Dushinsky
Israel Jacob Fisher
Benjamin Rabinowetz
Abraham David Horowitz

★ ★ ★

Approbation of Maran Hagaon, the Halachic authority of our generation, the gaon, head of the rabbinical Court of Jerusalem, author of sefer Minchas Yitzchak.

I join the members of the Rabbinical Court.

We look forward to mercy from Heaven and I hope that the public will be brought to righteous deeds through this, for the head of the kolel, Rabbi Mordecai Malachi is reliable, as the noted rabbis have attested.

(Signed) Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss, Rabbi and Head of Rabbinical Court in the Holy City.

☆☆☆

LETTER #3

Tammuz, 5739

Jacob Landa
Rabbi and Head of the Rabbinical Court
of Bnai Brak
Eretz Israel

The Topic: Nikkur of the inside

As is known, here in the Holy Land, we perform **nikkur** and **shpondres**.

This depends, however, what is considered the inner part. If we include in the front part what is behind the diaphragm, therein lies bibilically prohibited **chelev**. What **Ramo** states in **Shulchan Aruch** ch. 64, (that there is no **chelev**) refers only to the inner part befor the diaphragm, where the lungs lie.

If however, we include with the front part, some of the meat of the diaphragm, **Ramo's** ruling does not apply, because there we indeed find **real chelev**.

Likewise, **Darchei Teshuvah** quotes a booklet by **Sema**, that above the diaphragm there is no **chelev**, but below it begins the **chelev** of the kidneys and other types of **chelev**.

J. Landa
Rabbi of Bnei Brak,
Israel

(And here in the U.S., they take what is behind the diaphragm with the front quarters.



CHAPTER 2

A Voice That Hewes Out Flames of Fire!!

From the man, outstanding among the people, who wages the war of G-d and who preserves the laws of the Torah with self-sacrifice all his life, the renowned Gaon, Rabbi Zalman Brisel, president of the Seminary, "halachah Lemaaseh."

An Urgent Call to the Torah Greats of the Diaspora

First of all, I wish to cite the words of the holy Sefas Emes o.b.m., who said that the world (**olam**) is called thus because it is derived from **he-elem**, things overlooked, which one must rectify in this world, and according to the rectification of those things overlooked, he merits the hidden light, according to his spiritual stature.

The Rabbis teach us that one can acquire his share in the world to come in one hour.

Through self-sacrifice one merits that one hour.

This causes great satisfaction to every Jew.

There is no person who does not have **his hour**.

We must toil all our life to merit this one hour.

The Holy Torah states:

"You shall not defile your souls and you shall not become contaminated by them." By eating prohibited foods, one's mind becomes clogged and contaminated. Prohibited foods imprison the soul to be subjugated to the body and to materialism. Through one's awaking himself and acting to fulfill the Torah's commandment, **"And you shall separate the clean animal from the unclean,"** we merit a similar reaction by the Most High: **"And I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine."**

We heard from many trustworthy, G-d-fearing people, well trained in this field, that in America you inadvertently eat **chelev**, forbidden by the Torah, punishable by **Kares**, G-d forbid! We sent messengers to investigate the matter and found it, unfortunately, to be true.

We have discovered that your menakkerim who do not know how to properly remove chelev prohibited by the Torah, thereby causing our brethren to be guilty of infractions of the law punishable by kares, G-d forbid.

An expert **menakker**, serving today as **menakker** in the Diaspora, was examined him in the presence of: the Rabbi of Strassbourg; member justice of the Din Zedek of Jerusalem, the chief **menakker** of Jerusalem, and other expert **menakkerim**. They unanimously agreed that this individual serving as a chief **menakker**, knows nothing at all about **nikkur** and brings the public to sin by eating **chelev**. I decided not to rest until I alarmed the entire world Jewry concerning this outrage.

Save yourself from eating chelev:

“Anyone who eats chelev, that soul shall be cut off from his people.” The Jerusalem Beis Din has promulgated a decision that in the front half of the animal there is chelev forbidden by the Torah, punishable by kares. They also reinstated the rule that every **menakker** desiring to engage in **nikkur** must be certified by expert **menakkerim** and from a reliable rabbinical court.

Since there is a dire shortage of expert **menakkerim** who can be relied upon, we established a **kolel** — a school to learn **nikkur** in its practical application — **shechitah**,

The Status of Nikkur

bedikah, and laws of Isur V'hetar. With G-d's help, we succeeded in organizing a **kolel** with young men well-versed in **halachah**, great scholars, able to promulgate **halachic** decisions. The lecturers are men of piety, great rabbis beyond reproach.. Now we will have, thank G-d, young men who know the laws of **nikkur** in its practical

application and who have been ordained by the Beis Din Zedek of Jerusalem.

I, therefore, appeal to you to assist us in our war.

I have implicit faith that in the merit of this **mitzvah** we will merit seeing the **Messiah** speedily and in our days, amen.

Respectfully,
Rabbi Zalman Brizzel, Jerusalem

5177 / 113

CHAPTER 3

Decision by the Supreme Rabbinical Court in Jerusalem

The Contents of the Letter

1) How great the pitfall is in the field of nikkur. 2) a Menakker must have a writ of certification from a rabbi, 3) the front quarters, too, require expertise, 4) the flesh past the twelfth rib belongs to the hind quarters, 5) not to look for lenient rulings in the field of nikkur, 6) to learn nikkur only from an expert and a renowned G-d-fearing man, 7) then to receive certification from a rabbinical court as well.

Beis Din Zedek
of the Orthodox
Jewish Community
Jerusalem

ב"ה
בית דין צדק לכל מקהלות האשכנזים
ע"י תקרה החרדית שוריה.
(ועד הקיד לקהלת האשכנזים)
מתיישב ירושלים תשכ"ב
ה. ד. 8006

dated: Jerusalem, Elul 18, 5741

A warning in the matter of nikkur.

It is accepted and practiced in all Jewish communities to appoint expert, G-d-fearing shochtim certificated by a reliable rabbi. On the other hand, nikkur is very sadly neglected. Any menakker teaches anyone who wants to learn, and in a short time the disciple undertakes to engage in the profession of nikkur without any certification or ordination. Indeed, the teacher himself required certification.

Thereby, many pitfalls have come about, and many people have been led to eat fat and blood, a sin punishable by kares. Their excuse is that Ramo (Yoreh Deah 64:7) writes that in the front half of the animal there are no non-kosher fats except a small portion of the membrane on the

fat of the flanks, etc. — this itself, too, requires study and erudition, otherwise they will very easily stumble into the prohibition of the **chelev** of the liver, spleen, and the veins of the tongue.

Moreover, one must know the ruling of **Nodah Bihudah** (Vol II, **Yoreh Deah** 31,) how much of the ribs must be left to the front-part. It is customary according to what the **Responsa Beis Shlomi**, vol. 1, **Yoreh Deah** 107, to cut toward the front part, close to the twelfth rib, and the meat after the twelfth rib is left with the hind quarters. Only **nikkur** performed by an accomplished **menakker**, familiar with **nikkur** of the hind-quarters may perform **nikkur** on this area. It is impossible to explain all the details, as is mentioned in Ramo (ibid).

We do know, that it is improper to seek lenient rulings when others rule stringently. For this reason, **we come to warn you** that anyone who wishes to study **nikkur**, must do so only under the tutelage of a pious, expert **menakker**, noted for his piety. Only after the latter grants him a certificate that he is progressing in his studies and performs well, may he appear before a beis din or an accepted rabbi to be examined. Only then will he be ordained as a **menakker**.

Jerusalem, Menahem-Av, 5741

Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss,

Rabbi and Chief Justice

Rabbican Court, Jerusalem

P.S. We find Responsa, Rosh (printed in the second decision of Mahari Sarzina,) that in Cracow, Germany, Poland and Russia, a **menakker** was required to present a written certificate of **nikkur** attested by a qualified Rabbi, just as shochet. Some are even more stringent, ruling that **nikkur** is more stringent than **shechitah**. (See Responsa "Divrei David," Rabbi David Milduba. chapter 35). This is the custom of the Holy Land for many generations.

BETH DIN ZEDEK
OF THE ORTHODOX
JEWISH COMMUNITY
JERUSALEM, P.O.B. 5006

—ג—
(מכתב א.)

ב"ה
בית דין צדק לכל מקהלות המשכנים
ע"י הקהילה החרדית פריז.
(ועד העיר לקהלות המשכנים)
מנהיג ירושלים תכניא
5006 ת.ד.

מנהיג ירושלים חזי יוסף, להודיע אצל... שנה השמ"א

אזהרה בענין ניקור

נהוג ומקובל בכל חסדות ישראל למנות שוחטים ובורקים מומחים ויראי ר' מרכים שיש בידם כתב קבלה מהם הראוי לסמוך עליהם. ולעומת זה רבה ההזנחה בענין ניקור שכל מנקר מלמד ומורה למי שרוצה ובזמן קצר סמלא את ידו לעסוק במלאכת הניקור ללא שום תעורה וקבלה ובאמת ערביין ערבי צדיק, ועי"ז רבה המכשלה להאביל ח"ו בחלב ורס איסורי כרח ר"ל, ומה שאומרים לסמוך ע"ר הרמ"א כיו"ד סי' ס"ז דבחי הכהמה של פנים אין בהם מחלבים אלו רק קצח מן הקרום שעל חלב הכסלים וכו' - ד"ז גופא צדיק ליסוד ובקיאות האל"כ בקל יכשלו באיסור חלב דהכבוד יש חלב בהחטול וחומי דם בהלשון.

עוד יש לרעה מד' הנוב"ת יו"ד סי' ל"א עד כמה אפשר להניח בהצלעות לחלק הפנים וכפי שסיכס כש"ח בית שלמה ח"א יו"ד סי' ק"ו המנהג בכל חסדות ישראל בגלילוחינו לחתוך לחלק הפנים סמוך ממש לצלע שנים עשר והכשר שאחר צלע י"ב מניחים לחלק אחרים ואין מוסיף רק ניקור ממנקר הבקי לנקר חלק אחרים וא"ל לכאד כל פדטי הענינים כמבואר ברמ"א שם.

אך זאת רענון שאין כדאי לחפש קולוח במקום שיש מחמירין באיזהו חלק כי כלא"ה יש שפע בשר בהכמה, ואשר ע"כ כאלו להזהיר שכל הבא למלאות ידו במלאכת הניקור יהיה זה דוקא אצל מנקר מופחה ויר"ש ספורטס ואחרי שהלז יתן לו הודעה ואישר שלימדוד עלה יטה ובקי זוריו במלאכתו יופיע בפני בי"ד או חכם המקובל להורות הודאה להכתינו ואז יקבל ממנו כתב קבלה לסומכו למשרה מנקר.

מנהיג ירושלים בחודש מנחם אב השמ"א ל"ק.

ישראל יוסף לוי

לוי יוסף לוי

לוי יוסף לוי

☆☆☆

Warning Regarding Nikkur

An expert **menakker** is one who has a writ of certification concerning the holy craft of **nikkur**, also on the hind quarters, a certification transmitted from generation to generation, originating from a renowned rabbi, the greatest of his generation and who still serves as a **menakker** under the adequate supervision of a rabbi who does not receive pay for his hashgachah.

CHAPTER 4

A POWERFUL ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

A living witness of the deterioration of the situation of nikkur of chelev in U.S.A. from the renowned Rabbi Zalman Brisel

President of Seminary "Halachah Lemaaseh"

The custom of the Diaspora.

I received this tradition from my father's house before I knew how to read the letters, aleph beis. I was accustomed to saying the words of Judah ben Tema: Be brazen as a tiger, light as an eagle, run swiftly as a deer, and mighty as a lion to perform the will of your Father in Heaven, and that the great King, the Holy One, Blessed be He, stands over him and regards well his deeds. He should, therefore, not be ashamed before people who mock him for his service to the Al-mighty.

Concerning Moses it is written: "And she opened and saw the child, and behold he was a crying lad." He is called a child and he is called a lad. A child is smaller than a lad. Rashi explains that his voice was that of a lad. This can be explained in the following manner: A child cries if he lacks something or if something hurts him, but he does not feel someone else's pain. A lad, however, already feels his friend's pains; even if he lacks nothing when he sees his friend's pain, it hurts him and he cries.

Pharaoh's daughter recognized that Moses was not crying out of worry for himself, because she saved him. Instead, he was crying for the pain of the Jewish children who had no one to save them. This is the meaning of "his voice was that of a lad." All my life, I fulfilled that statement. I had, thank G-d, enough; G-d's kindness was

always with me. But we must love our neighbor. When the sainted **Rabbi of Satmar** o.b.m. came to Jerusalem, the situation of the Orthodox was very serious in all respects. There was no means of earning a livelihood, and the youth was going in other ways, not to G-d-fearing men. The tzaddik of Satmar called me over and said to me, "**Zalman**, what will become of our children? They are leaving us and going to Hashomer Hazair. We must save them. I was a family man with small children and I had to worry about supporting and educating them in the way of Torah and fear of G-d and I lectured to older boys. The tzaddik said to me, "**Zalman**, leave everything, just sacrifice yourself to save the youth. The rabbi of Brisk and rabbi Reuven Zelig Bengis, the head of the Rabbinical Court, helped me and thank G-d, we succeeded in taking many youths out of the kibutzim. This involved real dedication. We established a Talmud Torah, yeshivos plus other activities and thank G-d, we succeeded in seeing Jerusalem become a glorious place of Torah and the fear of G-d.

I prefaced my appeal with this account, because, thank G-d, we have engaged very much in rescue activities, but what can I say now that this awesome matter has come to our hands! Such a thing never came about. It is really incredible, that it pertains to the rescue of thousands and tens of thousands of our brethren from the serious transgression of eating **chelev**, transgression punishable by Koris, G-d forbid, and this is the story.

When I heard sometime ago that in the Diaspora G-d-fearing Jews stumble on the prohibition of eating chelev, something prohibited by the Torah. I could not believe my ears — Orthodox Jews stumble over eating prohibited foods? To our sorrow, it became clear after we sent reliable G-d fearing experts there.

Indeed, the story is unfortunately correct! Even then, it was difficult to believe this, until a prominent menakker came from the Diaspora whom we invited to cut meat in the presence of the gaon Rabbi A.D. Horowitz of the Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem, the rabbi of Strassbourg, and Rabbi Gad Torowitz, the chief menakker of the Orthodox Jewish Community of Jerusalem, and the young Rabbi Chisdai Sharf of our kolel and who is an expert in nikkur, and others. They testified that they saw that the menakker — from the Diaspora — knew nothing about nikkur of chelev. After this, we saw the worst desolation in the world. They do not know what chelev is. Then the Supreme Rabbinical Court in Jerusalem promulgated the decision: — A warning concerning the matter of nikkur and they write that the neglect is very grave in the matter of nikkur, that every teacher teaches whom he wants and in a short time he is initiated into the profession of nikkur, and because of this, there are great pitfalls to feed the public chelev and blood, transgressions punishable by Koris, G-d forbid.

I publicize this because Darchei Teshuvah 64:21 quotes the Kenesses Hagedolah in the glosses of Beis Yosef, that if a butcher is lenient in matters of nikkur, we must neither pity him, nor cover up for him, but he must be given fitting punishment, and those who are lenient with and permit him to continue his work without punishment, are destined to give an account, for they are helping transgressors.

To my question how the situation came about, they told me that this was the custom in Europe according to the testimony of expert menakkerim. I asked the rabbis of our kolel to clarify the custom

in the cities of Europe, and this was their reply: It is known the question people ask about the expression "The world asks," "I searched throughout the streets and the inns and I didn't find anyone who asked the question. Who asks? **Nobody answered me, but when I entered the synagogue, I found who asked.**" Here too, we must clarify who must establish Jewish custom, the people in the street and in the inns or the rabbis, the greats of Torah and fear of G-d, and let us see what the Rabbis, the halachic authorities, say about the custom of the cities of Europe.

In Darchei Teshuvah, by the great gaon and tzaddik, the head of the Rabbinical Court of Munkacz, **Yoreh Deah 65:93**: "In our places **we do not eat the hind quarters at all.**" In 64:42, he writes that in all the countries of Germany and Poland, they are stricter with **nikkur** than even with **shechitah** (152) and that we cannot depend on women for the **nikkur** of the front quarters, (Par. 47) quotes Sema: "The butchers must be extremely careful behind the diaphragm, because from the diaphragm and above, there is no **chelev**, and from the diaphragm and below, there begins the fat of kidneys and the intestines and other kinds of **chelev**, and from there on, it requires **nikkur**, being considered the hind quarters." The Darchei Teshuvah brings; 'that we must cut away everything up to the navel (meaning the shpuner, that we are discussing) to the hind quarters.' The custom in Munkacz (as too, it is our custom) to leave over, that they do not cut up to the navel, **hence extreme caution must be exercised by the butchers to surely know how to perform nikkur in that area and that they remove completely all white matter found there. The menakker who neglects this —**

should surely be penalized and dismissed in order to prevent people from taking prohibitions lightly. The Darchei Teshuvah quotes the Kenesses hagedolah in the glosses on Beis Yosef, who writes: "If a butcher is lenient in matters of **nikkur**, we must neither pity him nor cover up for him, and those who are lenient with and permit him to continue his work without punishment, are destined to give an account, for they are helping transgressors."

LOOK! THE EXCUSES OF THE MENAKKERIM.. HARDLY BEING NEW.

In **Sefer Tzinnah leDavid** by **Rabbi David Deutsch** — **Fiord 5508** — writes: How many times have the **menakkerim** stood up and said with audacity, "This is what we were taught, and this is our custom from way back." And I appeared to them to be in error, or they said, "If you are right, why don't local rabbis, the sages of the generation, admonish us about this?" I was compelled to conclude that the halachic authorities surely were unaware of this pitfall and concerning their custom, I say, "For they are a perverse generation." Their custom (מנהגם) has become Gehinnom (גיהנם).

Certification of Supervision on his Butcher Shops

Permission and authorization is given to **Rabbi David son of Gershon Deutsch** to supervise the butcher shop and **on the meat of the front quarters** in the hands of the butchers, that they do not defy his orders in this function, and as they see from him so shall they practice, and if anyone is found infracting this edict, he shall punish them according to the verdict of the Rabbinical Court as they deserve. Community of Nickelsburg, Tammuz 5, 5508 — Signatures of rabbis.

Sefer Hanikkur by Rabbi Solomon Altman, rabbi in Warsaw from 5679, on the matter of **nikkur**, "Anyone who wants to know and understand, must study conscientiously under the tutelage of an expert **menakker** and observe when he works. Otherwise, it is impossible to understand. Pertaining **menakkerim** — pertaining to laws — it is felt that some **menakkerim** in our country lack knowledge and wisdom."

A butcher who does not perform **Nikkur** properly, endangers his soul and that of his family.

Sefer rav Tavchiah by Rabbi Meir Elijah Viner of Yedovna, province of Lomza: "The butcher must take to heart the magnitude of the responsibility placed upon him insofar as if he regards the matter lightly, he surrenders as security his soul and the souls of his family, for the penalty of eating **chelev** is **Koris**, and he shall not rely on his habit or on the custom, until he knows definitely that it is in accordance with the **halachah**. Concerning the diaphragm — one must remove the membrane toward the outside, toward the hind quarters, upon which the fat of the covering lies, and is attached in many places, requiring peeling according to **halachah**. Custom requires peeling it on the inside (toward the lungs) as well. In the front quarters, a little of the membrane that is on the fat of the flanks, remains, and there is a boundary and a hint (in the front quarter) in this matter in the diaphragm as if the creation itself hinted to us that up to here you may go."

In Responsa Meshiv Davar ch. 20: Sema writes that from the diaphragm and below, commences the fat of the kidneys and the fat of the intestines and other kinds of **chelev** and from there on **nikkur** is required. This is counted as the **chelev** of the hind quarters. This means only that behind the diaphragm all sorts of prohibited fats

commence, and from there commences the laws of **nikkur** of the **chelev** of the hind quarters. In Responsa Chasam Sofer ch. 68: Surely this meat requires a little **nikkur**, and they flay the **shlim**, the thin skin from it, for that is near the fat of the flanks, and surely the flesh that is near the stomach, which is very near the part of the covering and supervision is required to flay that **shlim** from there and the Jewish butchers are expert in this.

Toras Hanikkur Hashalem by **Rabbi Simchah Mallin**, rabbi in **Bialystock, Poland**: To our sorrow, the lack of knowledge of **nikkur**, especially from the practical angle and that all responsibility is on the **menakkerim** themselves, and in recent times, when the **menakkerim** of the old type, that of G-d-fearing men, are no more and instead we have **menakkerim**, who are not necessarily learned, and many of them are not observant of the tenets of our faith.

Admonition

In **Sefer Giv'as Pinchas** by **Rabbi Pinchas Zelig Hakohen Schwartz**, head of the **Rabbinical Court** of **Kleinverdein, Hungary**, with the approbatic of the renowned gaon and tzaddik, **Rabbi Joseph Chaim Sonnenfeld**.

In **Sefer Beis Yitzchak**, ⁴ the rabbis are castigated for

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4. The author of **Beis Yitzchak** complains that the rabbis have left the **menakkerim** to form their own opinion without supervising them, relying on the fact that they learned from a **menakker**, who in turn, learned from another **menakker**, for a few generations. This is a grave fallacy, for many times the teacher from whom he learned was insufficiently learned in the very first place and in our many sins, the rabbis' relinquishing their supervision on the work of **nikkur** and over the **menakkerim**, produced catastrophic results, and only because of this, do we find ourselves in such a deplorable state.

their relinquishing their supervision over the **menakkerim** and they rely upon the **menakkerim** who learned, one from another, and sometimes the teacher did not learn and if so, how can the pupil know? Also, on the front quarters everyone practices **nikkur**, women, slaves, children and especially the present day shoctim, who have just learned the laws of shechitah and bedikah and took certification from the rabbi. **Nikkur**, however, they never saw, and know nothing about. After they are appointed to slaughter and inspect the lungs, they appoint themselves as **menakkerim** and the public rely upon them without any supervision — and in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 64:21: **“If chelev is found after him in the quantity of a barleycorn, he is dismissed. If it is the size of an olive, even in may places, he is dealt disciplinary lashes and then dismissed.”** In “K’resi” at the end of ch. 65 it is stated **“Nowadays, we cannot rely on the integrity of the menakker. I visited many towns, both large and small* and saw amongst our many sins, many great pitfalls. Furthermore I became well aware that the mashgichim on nikkur themselves do not know, nor do they understand what to supervise upon and amongst our many sins, I saw that there are great pitfalls, for the subject has been completely forgotten.**

*) Study his language and you will see that this problem existed from time immemorial; in both large and small towns, were many pitfalls in nikkur, and it is not unusual that also in America, nikkur is sadly neglected.

My dear brethren, worthy rabbis!

WHO ESTABLISHES A JEWISH CUSTOM?

Those concerning whom the great rabbis of Israel say "that their custom is a perverse generation and that their custom (מנהג) is converted to Gehinnom (גהנום)," and whoever deals lightly with this deposits his soul and the souls of his family as security — that they do according to law.

Or the great rabbis of Israel, the geonim and the halachah authorities, whose light we follow and who illuminate the way of the holy Torah for us given to Moses on Sinai.

Dear Jews, the righteous Messiach awaits us, that we repent, so that he can come to us soon. Amen.

The Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem has decided that all who wish to receive ordination for **nikkur** in the capacity of an expert menakker, who can be relied upon, must be examined by the rabbis, the geonim, **Rabbi Mordechai Malachi and Rabbi Baruch Meisles** and after their confirmation given with their signatures, the Rabbinical Court will ordain them.

Your humble friend,

Zalman Brizel



CHAPTER 5

A special letter to the United States from the head of the Seminary "Halachah Lemaaseh," **Rabbi Mordechai Malachi** (He is the one concerning whom the great tzaddik, **Rabbi Itzikel of Pshevarsk** o.b.m. testified that he has the power to bring great purity by rectifying the matter of prohibited foods and family purity) who testifies in his long letter that there is nothing new under the sun, and that from the days of Maharshal until the present, the geonim have decried the dire neglect of **nikkur** of **chelev** and that 'Satan is still dancing amongst us,' in our many sins.

And I separated you from the peoples

When our forefathers stood on Mount Sinai and accepted upon themselves the famous words, "**WE WILL DO and WE WILL HEAR**" — Moses besought G-d, "When You come with us and Your people and I will be separated from all the people upon the face of the earth." Our Sages o.b.m. state that Moses entreated that the Shechinah rest only upon the Jews and G-d granted it to him (Berachos 7). It is written: "And we will be separated (ונפלינו) I and Your people — The word ונפלינו is an expression of wonders (נפלאות), that when He goes amongst them, He will perform wonders." It is written: "Behold I form a covenant; before all your people I will perform wonders." And it is written: "And I separated you from the peoples. The prohibited food are fitting and proper for the gentiles, not for those who love Me and keep My commandments." It is, therefore, called an abomination. Just as in matters of the soul, it is proper that people behave according to the mitzvos of the Torah, so is it also proper in physical and mundane matters...that people behave according to the Torah and the

commandments.” (Abarbanel, parshas R’eh). Through a person’s inspiration and desire to observe the commandments of the Torah, which requires that one differentiate between the clean animal and the unclean, G-d will perform a similar act, “And I separated you from all the peoples.”

“This is the animal that may be eaten.” The very existence of the non-kosher animal is due to the command that it may not be eaten. With this, His will that the children of Israel not eat it, is competed, and through this, the glory of G-d is promulgated, by the person’s control of his temptation and that is its *raison d’etre*. The sanctity of the soul depends on these foods and that is the meaning of “He who guards his mouth and tongue, guards his soul from troubles.” (Sefas Emes Shemini) on the verse, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY.” It is stated in **Abos d’rabbi Nasan**: The section commences that one can rectify the root of the corruption of the serpent, which originally came about through eating and then he came upon Eve and injected impurity into her. “**And My SHABBOSIM you shall observe,**” for this is the rectification of the deterioration caused by eating, according to the Sages o.b.m., who state that Adam was created on Friday in order to enter the banquet immediately, that everything should be prepared before him, hence, on Shabbos, one can rectify the deterioration cause by eating.

Eating the showbread by the kohanim on Shabbos is to rectify all their eating that it be in sanctity, that they have no accusations by the temptor. After eating and drinking, a person’s heart matches his eating; if he does not eat with sanctity, the evil inclination accuses him. On the other hand, if his eating is with sanctity, the sanctity effects the heart, and he cleaves wholeheartedly to our Father in Heaven — **Pri tzaddik by Rabbi Zadok Hakohen.**

Prohibited Foods Contaminate a Person's Soul

The prohibition of the foods that the Torah prohibited is not due to the harm they cause one's health, for the nations eat all those things deemed disgusting for us, and they are, nevertheless, strong and untiring. The G-dly Torah did not come to cure the bodies of men and to seek their health but to seek the health of the soul and to cure its illnesses. The Torah prohibited certain foods because they contaminate and sully the pure soul and create in the person's nature an obstruction and deterioration of his desires, whence they create an evil nature in a person, from which the spirit of contamination originates, the spirit that contaminates the thoughts and deeds and drives out the spirit of purity and sanctity. Concerning this spirit, King David begged, "And Your Holy Spirit remove not from me (Ps. 51)." And he said, "A pure heart create in me, O L-rd, and a proper spirit renew in my midst." Therefore, G-d said, "Do not contaminate your souls...and do not become unclean through them." For this was the matter of the obstruction and the uncleanness. The reason for its prohibition is that nature of the body be balanced and that from its foods will emanate pure blood, not contaminated thick and coarse blood. (Abarbanel, Shemini).

Light and Darkness Mixed

In all times, the children of Israel preserved the pure table and saw in this the main foundation of Judaism. With real self-sacrifice, every Jew who obeyed G-d's commandments, took extreme precautions that no food (the kashrus of which was questionable) should enter his mouth, G-d forbid. I was, therefore, greatly alarmed to see chassidic butchers, menakkerim, making meat kosher with real chelev — and after a discussion with these menakkerim, I was convinced that they are

totally unversed in the laws and practice of nikkur. I was astounded, petrified — I shuddered and started to cry out!!! How great is the desolation! How great is the neglect! Pious men and people who do good deeds, who observe conscientiously every detail of the law, stumble inadvertently on the prohibition of chelev, which contaminates every Jew's soul clogs the brain and causes many troubles in Israel. On first thought with my great and bitter cry I was not telling anything new, since this is not a new thing, but for many years the greatest rabbis who are acquainted with these matters are complaining about this pitfall and *pri Megadim* in his introduction to *Orach Chaim*, second order, writes: Amongst our many sins, we do not learn the laws of nikkur and is entrusted to people in all walks of life. **Mahari Sarzina** at the end of the Rosh's responsum, praises the custom of the city of Cracow, where the **menakkerim** appointed there are erudite rabbis, well-versed in Torah, who are able to discuss the halachos.

Yam shel Shlomo, Chullin, ch. Gid Hanasheh, ch. 19: I am the person who heard and saw, that most of our **menakkerim**, even though they are stringent to cut off even what is permissible yet many times I found that they treated chelev lightly. ⁵ Therefore, I took upon myself not

Dear reader, think a little about the testimony of the great **Maharshal**, who was the greatest of his learned generation, who testifies that most of the **menakkerim**, although they are stringent to cut off even what is permissible in order not to stumble on a prohibition (after the manner of the early chasidim, who would stay waway from ninety-nine gates of permissibility in order not to confront one gate of prohibition), were nevertheless, found many times treating chelev itself lightly. This means that the power of the evil forces is so great and formidable to cause Jews to stumble upon eating chelev, that he can even cause pious people to stumble over the most serious sin, one that is well-

to eat any meat upon which **nikkur** was performed until it is examined by another **menakker**, to ascertain whether the **nikkur** performed properly accomplished; naturally, I mean an expert **menakker**. He writes that **Maharam Mintz** did the very same thing and further he writes that once it took place that, after the **nikkur** of the **menakker**, the meat was still not fit for consumption and he told this to all the **menakkerim** that they learn a lesson not to rely on one **menakker** who performs **nikkur** on the meat, but that an expert should examine the meat after the **nikkur**.⁶ He writes that this was a great innovation introduced by **Maharam Mintz**.

The following found in *Sefer Giv'as Pinchas*: In the introduction he brings in the name of *Sefer "Beis Yitzchak"* words of admonition to rabbis, who relinquished their jurisdiction over **menakkerim** and do not supervise them, but rely on the **menakkerim** who learned **nikkur** from one another and since sometimes the teacher did not learn, so how can the pupil know? Moreover, in the inside of the animal, everybody is engaged; women, slaves, children and *shochtim* make themselves **menakkerim** and nobody supervises them. All of this is because the rabbis, themselves who give out decisions of *halachah* are unversed in these laws. Therefore, the rabbi, the judge, the one who gives out

known to all students of the Torah. The argument that there is nothing to fear from So and So is null. Is he greater than the **menakkerim** appointed by the head of the Diaspora, the great *Maharshal*? Even they stumbled upon the prohibition of *chelev*, not only once but many times.

6.

We can see and follow his example. If *Maharam Mintz* was afraid in his generation, to rely on a **menakker** without checking after him, what should insignificant *hysoops* of the wall, like we, answer?

decisions in halachah, must first learn the order of **nikkur** of the front quarters thoroughly so that nothing imperfect leaves his hand.

He writes there the order of **nikkur** that, amongst our many sins, I have seen with my own eyes that there are great pitfalls, for the matter has been completely forgotten. Concerning the navel, "Giv'as Pinchas" writes in ch. 65:9, "The butchers must be careful to watch the diaphragm, for above the diaphragm there is no **chelev**, and below the diaphragm begins the fat of the kidneys and the fat of the intestines and other types of **chelev** and from there on, **nikkur** is required, and it is counted as the hind quarters.

Beis Yitzchak writes there, "In order not to come to the prohibition of **chelev**, it is customary to cut all the flanks that have white on the outside as far as the navel and to count them as the hind quarters, and to avoid any doubts, for most butchers do two evils: they leave the meat between the twelfth and the thirteenth rib with the front quarters and also cut the flanks that lie under the navel straight. These really belong to the hind quarters, but they leave them with the front quarters and cause the public thereby to stumble on a real prohibition and no one supervises this."

Neglect of the Study of the Laws of Chelev and Nikkur

The author of "**Toras Hanikkur HaYershalmi**" asks: "Why did the great rabbis, who have thorough knowledge in all fields of Torah, completely neglect the study of these halachos, which are not "halachos for the Messiah," but very practical halachos? He replies that in other fields of Torah, one who learns the Gemara, the early and the later commentaries thoroughly, can gain knowledge in the matters he is studying. This is not so concerning these

halachos, for if one does not engage in the practice of these halachos they remain devoid of meaning, like the esoteric, hidden parts of the Torah, and the neglect in this field is overwhelming. Consequently, many stumble on the prohibition of chelev, even those who observe stringently all mitzvos, both minor and major.

How correct are the words of the geonim of the Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem in their decision on the matter of chelev! The neglect of the matter of nikkur of chelev is appalling, that any menakker teaches and instructs whomever he so desires. Within a short time, he is initiated into the profession of nikkur without any certification, when in fact the one who taught him requires certification. Thus, the pitfall of giving people chelev and blood to eat, is very great. They are punishable by Koris.

In Sefer Tzinnah leDavid by Rabbi David son of Gershon Deutsch of the community of Albershvild, with the approbation of the geonim of Germany and from the gaon of his generation, **Rabbi Jonathan Eibenschutz o.b.m.**, printed in 5510, the author writes: *In the city of Nickelsburg I met menakkerim. I queried and examined them on the details of the laws, whence I brought them to the supreme local rabbinical court, where I performed the practical halachah before this court. They saw, then, understood and realized the grave sin and pitfall that had come about through them. I saw menakkerim cutting meat from chelev and saying, "This is chelev," and about real chelev, they would say, "this is kosher." At times they opposed me with audacity declaring, "This is the way we were taught and this is our custom from long ago," and they regarded me as in error, when they said, "If you are right, why don't the great rabbis, the sages of the generation, admonish us about this?" I said of them and of their custom, "They are a*

generation of perversions, and their custom (פְּתוּרָה) is transposed to Gehinnom (גְּהִינּוֹם). They all cut twelve ribs with the front quarters, leaving meat belonging to the hind quarters. Kereisi, end of ch. 65, writes, **we should nowadays be more stringent, not to rely on the integrity of the menakker and not to rely on nikkur of anyone but a well-versed man, who has feared G-d from his youth on.**" Givas Pinchas writes: "Concerning the order of **nikkur**, I have seen with my very own eyes that there are many pitfalls because the matter has become completely forgotten."

Darchei Teshuvah, Yoreh Deah 64 (131) brings a question of a **menakker** who is not qualified. "If it was found that the **menakker** was unversed in the laws, and does not know the laws of **nikkur**, is there reason to disqualify his **nikkur** retroactively? He refers to **Responsa Shevus Yaakov vol. 2, Yoreh Deah**, end of ch. 51, who ruled stringently in that case and wrote that the case of **menakker** must be dealt with more stringently than that of a shochet, and if it was discovered that the **menakker** was unversed in **nikkur**, everything must surely be prohibited retroactively according to all authorities." **Beis Lechem Yehudah**, above 1:9, criticized him for that ruling, since no one practices **nikkur** unless he first received certification for **nikkur**. See above 65:75, about the utensils in which the meat purchased from this butcher was cooked. The ruling is obvious that if the **menakker** does not know and is unversed in the laws of **nikkur** of real **chelev**, then all utensils in which the meat bought from that butcher was cooked are non-kosher retroactively, since the **menakker** did not receive certification for **nikkur**. If it was discovered, however, that the **menakker** was well-versed in the laws of **nikkur** of real **chelev**, but he left over **chelev** on the meat, we cannot prohibit the use of

the utensils retroactively. All this is in Darchei Moshe.

It is, however, surprising and appalling that we could reach such a degree of neglect in Europe and especially in the United States. I was alarmed, and could not believe my eyes to see such confusion in the field of nikkur of chelev. They do not perform nikkur at all on Biblically prohibited chelev and chelev the eating of which is punishable by Koris. This is unbelievable. This pitfall to feed religious Jews chelev, prohibited by the Torah and punishable by Koris, G-d forbid, because the menakkerim are not well-versed in the laws and craft of nikkur of chelev. Moreover, they have no certification from an expert menakker nor from a qualified rabbinical court. For this purpose, we have founded a seminary that will be a center for the study of shechitah, nikkur and questions of prohibition and permissibility, titled "Halachah Lemaaseh." The Rabbinical Court of all Ashkenazic congregations in the Holy City of Jerusalem, (the greatest rabbinical court in the world qualified for all of them,) shall test the young men of our seminary and ordain them to serve in the holy professions of nikkur, shechitah, and rendering decisions on questions of prohibition and permissibility.

May the L-rd pour down upon us a spirit of purity from above, and may we be worthy of a truly pure table, and in the merit of this, we will be worthy of the coming of the Redeemer to Zion speedily and in our times. Amen.

Rabbi Mordechai Malachi



CHAPTER 6

The Case of Nikkur of the Liver

On the eighth day of Sivan of the year, 5742, a large meeting took place in the office of the Central Rabbinical Congress of the United States. It was attended by tens of rabbis, **menakkerim** and others, where the extent of neglect in the field of **nikkur** became partially exposed (the agenda of the meeting will be publicized in detail elsewhere). Among other things they brought a liver upon which a number of **menakkerim** performed **nikkur**. When they released it from their hands as kosher, a storm broke out by other **menakkerim** who shouted at them, "You've left over some **chelev!!!**" One great rabbi (not versed in **nikkur**) wished to vindicate himself declared, "Well, this **chelev** is only Rabbinically prohibited." (I.e. it is not so stringent). We, therefore see fit to publicize here a notice for everyone to read and ponder upon. (The very argument that it is permissible to treat Rabbinical prohibitions lightly requires castigation and reproof, but here is not the time nor place for reproach).

To Save from prohibition

This is to notify those appointed to supervise matters of **nikkur**, that the fat on the liver is prohibited as real **chelev**, for, in addition to what is delineated in books concerning **nikkur**, that on the side where the gall bladder hangs, there is the "**chelev** covering the straight side" of the stomach, which is prohibited, there is also the root of the **chelev** of the second stomach, which is the "dress" known as "Perusah," punishable by Koris, G-d forbid. Since the writer spoke to some **mashgichim**, who did not feel that there was any prohibited **chelev** in the fat on the liver, even because

of the first reason and it is common that women buy the lung and liver of small animals, attached as it was and not everyone learns the laws *to remove the fat*. It is, therefore, necessary to admonish the public concerning this matter, to remove the pitfall from among our people. Moreover, it is necessary to warn the people about a common cause for alarm. When they take the lung of small animals there is usually left a part of the diaphragm, which is called "**flecken**." There are two membranes. The one toward the liver is prohibited because of **chelev** of the insides, that lies on it, making very easy to stumble upon because it is very common and not everyone knows the halachos. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the mashgichim to fulfill the Rabbinic maxim that a scholar does not let anything out of his hand unless it is completely prepared for eating. Also, concerning the white liver, called **Weisse leber**," that is explained in the books on **nikkur** that it must not be cooked because of the many veins in it, but first to perform **nikkur** and then to roast it, for if some veins remain, the fire draws out the blood and then, whoever wishes to cook it may do so. Many butchers sell this with the name "**grashitzel**" or "**prezil**" without any **nikkur** and without notification.



The Status of Nikkur

Approbations by the Sainted Grand Rabbi
of Satmar O.B.M.

For the publication of the monthly, "Leket
Shoshannah*")

DIVREI YOEL

LETTER #195

Since my illustrious friend, who is a writer, scholar and a scion of a prominent family of kohanim and great rabbis, **Rabbi Samuel Hakohen Schwartz** ¹ of our city, who is now **maggid** of **Cong. Zichron Yehudah**, from which he barely ekes out a livelihood, decided to print a periodical containing original Torah ideas. To disseminate the teachings of Torah, perhaps by which he will be able to earn a livelihood. I, therefore, appeal to my brethren to be faithful friends in purchasing this periodical and to assist and support him properly, to fulfill the mitzvah, וְהִחֲזַקְתָּ בוֹ, **And you shall assist him.** The mitzvah to assist a scholar, a son of saints and great rabbis like he, is very great and sorely beckoning.

The merit of his holy forefathers ² will protect all those who assist him. The L-rd will widen the boundary of Israel with all haste. The power of the Torah and its scholars will be raised. We will merit the ingathering of the exiles and the redemption speedily in our days. Amen.

B.H. Wed. night Vayakhel, 5694, Satmar.

(signed) **Joel Teitelbaum**

(*Was published monthly in Satmar. From time to time, many of the Rabbi's novelae appeared in it.)

1. (See vol. 1, letter 127, second footnote.)

2. The son of **Rabbi Naftali Schwartz of Nod**, served about two years as one of the Rabbi's servants.

Published in Satmar the periodical, "Leket Shoshannah" in which he publicized many of the Rabbi's novelae.

This Torah monthly appeared in the city of Satmar in the year 5696, when the sainted Grand Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum o.b.m. served as rabbi of Satmar. It was published by Rabbi Samuel Schwartz o.b.m., grandson of the author of "Kol Aryeh," o.b.m., who was very close to the Rabbi o.b.m., never doing any major or minor thing without his consent.

★ ★ ★

Important Notice!

We wish to notify the Orthodox public everywhere that the Rabbinical Court of the Orthodox Jewish Community has decided that all young men or rabbis and mashgichim who wish verification of their knowledge of **nikkur** and wish to receive certification from the Rabbinical Court for it, must be examined by Rabbi Mordechai Malachi and Rabbi Baruch Meislsh and upon receiving verification and ordination and their signatures, the Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem the Holy City.

Those interested should apply to the administration of the seminary "Halachah Lemaaseh," 2 Elisha Street, Bene Beraq, or to our office on 7 Histadruth Street, Tel Aviv, Tel. 294748, P.O.B. 4618.

The Administration

CHAPTER 7

Testimonies

GO OUT AND DEMONSTRATE IN THE STREETS!!!

We present below a part of the testimonies in our possession, what expert menakkerim, famous for their skill and fear of G-d (who know the process of nikkur of the hind quarters, certified by geonim and famous menakkerim for many generation) testified about many cuts of meat that they had personally seen being sold as "glatt kosher" for the most devout, with the sanction of famous congregations and famous rabbis who grant hechsherim, and Biblically prohibited chelev was found on them and other serious doubts, as will be delineated from their writing.

Because of the pressing importance of the matter, we saw fit to publicize it without the names of the stores, the congregations and the rabbis at present, (the names of the menakkerim who testified are found in their entirety in our office, and also in the possession of many great rabbis and grand rabbis, who are well-known in the United States. They are prepared to stand and testify before any rabbinical court prepared to listen to their testimony according to the law of the Torah).

The following testimonies were written in the presence of famous great rabbis in the United States, who sent it to us to ask our opinion.

TESTIMONY #1

A

Sunday, 19 Av, Seder R'eh, 5742

In...store, under the supervision of Rabbi Lee Ave.

1) I found a portion of the "treife collar," that was without **nikkur**, (with the chelev on it). This is a part of the flesh of the hind quarters, for which reason it is called "the treifa *collar."

2) I also found on this membrane at the edge of the "rofle" above the navel, with **nikkur**.

3) The entire "rofle" from above was completely without **nikkur**, and so was the fat on it that is under the membrane completely without **nikkur**.

4) The red meat was joined completely on the ribs, without any separation.

5) All the cartilages were surrounded with chelev. They were not touched at all and too, there was absolutely no **nikkur** performed on them, (also the thirteenth cartilage itself remained there).

6) I found the membrane on the diaphragm (thin red meat) of approximately two inches in size.

7) I found portion of the navel itself as also below the navel on the "shpondra" on the cover of a silvery appearance and also real chelev.

*) In all bc concerning **nikkur** it is brought that on the "treife collar" which is on t. olda" **nikkur** does not help,, and it must be discarded as treifah. See Z ch Shmuel, Tzinna David, Aruch Hashulchan 65:48, Toras Nikku HaYerushalmi, and others.

The Status of Nikkur

8) I also found the meat between the twelfth and thirteenth rib **without any nikkur** at all.

9) The cartilage at the top of the breast remained in the width of a finger.

10) All that the **Menakkerim** of Jerusalem of the Orthodox Jewish Community here in Jerusalem the Holy City prescribed in letter #2, they did not do at all.

There were other details but it being too tedious for the reader we wrote only major wrongdoings.

(signed)...son of...

Shochet and inspector and expert mohel.

Here in the Holy City of Jerusalem.

I have certification from the Jerusalem **menakkerim**.

Rabbi Samuel Huminer

Rabbi Baruch Friedman

Rabbi Jacob Moses Weissfish

B

I hereby verify all the aforementioned. I am very upset that Torah prohibited **chelev** is being fed to the Jewish people, and that many G-d-fearing, religious people are being given **chelev, punishable by Koris, G-d forbid, and to my sorrow, everything is true,** as the **menakker**, Rabbi...son of Rabbi...of Jerusalem the Holy City, writes, and G-d forbid that one should eat such meat.

From me, **menakker**...

From Jerusalem the Holy City (living now in Brooklyn)

I am the disciple of our rabbis, the greatest authorities of Torah, the renowned **Rabbi Pinchas**

in the United States

77

Epstein o.b.m. (head of Rabbinical Court), and the renowned Rabbi Israel Isaac Reisman o.b.m. in Yeshivas Toras Chaim in the Old City of Jerusalem in the years 5687-5693.

I have certification from the Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem the Holy City, in the year 5699.

Rabbi Zvi Pesach Frank

Rabbi Hoseph Gershon Horowitz

Rabbi Elijah Romm

C

I, too, verify all the aforementioned.

Testimony of (living here in Brooklyn).

I have certification from the Rabbinical Court Kedasia in London.

Rabbi Henoah Padua.

Rabbi Elchanan Halperin

TESTIMOY #2 Sunday, 19 Av, Seder R'eh, 5742

This was his statement orally: Meat from the hashgachah of Rabbi...was brought before me, I was astounded to see that no nikkur at all, had been performed on it and that a large layer of Torah-prohibited chelev covered the surface of the meat on the sides and also a large membrane on the diaphragm; similarly the cartilage of the thirteenth rib was left there completely, and more, and he did not come to list the details. Therefore, I listed it in general, as below:

The Status of Nikkur

This is their written statement: I found all the plate until the theirteen rib (טבעען) **completely without nikkur.**

Testimony of the young menakker...son of Rabbi...

Shochet, inspector, **menakker**, and expert mohel, here in the Holy City of Jerusalem.

Testimony of...

Testimony of...

★ ★ ★

TESTIMONY #3

Meat under the hashgachah of rabbi.....and meat under the hashgachah of Rabbi.....(two famous butcher stores in Williamsburg) — I found the “shrint” of the diaphragm completely without **nikkur**, and so the end of the point that touches the fat of the kidneys, and so it was not peeled properly, (part of the thin membrane remained).

Menakker... ..

The young man... .. son of Rabbi ...

Testimony of ...

★ ★ ★

TESTIMONY #4

The meat of a sheep under the hashgachah of the rabbi from...

On sinews, the bones and the meat of the “rafle” **nikkur** was not performed properly.

Menakker.. ...

The young man... .. son of Rabbi

Testimony of... ..

TESTIMONY #5

A

Tuesday, Parshas Shoftim, 5742

I, the undersigned, saw two diaphragms on the liver (tenderloin) bill No. purchased...on in...by...and there remained Torah-prohibited chelev, the fat of the kidneys, also some of the membrane of the diaphragm.

*I am very upset to see that people are being led to sin, religious people who innocently buy glatt kosher meat, kosher for the most devout, and inadvertently they stumble upon the severe **prohibition of chelev, punishable by Koris, G-d forbid, this is truly astounding!** All troubles emanate from this and I hereby confirm that one may not eat such meat, G-d forbid!*

Those who sell such meat as kosher, lead the public to sin, G-d forbid.

And on this I attest on the evening preceding Wednesday, parshas Shoftim, 5742.

Menakker...

From Jerusalem the Holy City (residing in Brooklyn)

B

I, too, confirm all the above. Testimony of...(residing in Brooklyn).

☆☆☆

TESTIMONY #6

I saw diaphragm bought in the store owned by... .. Lee Ave., bill #...where the **nikkur** was not properly performed. Some of the **chelev** of the kidneys, which is, according to all views, chelev forbidden by the Torah, and the punishment for eating it is very severe, G-d forbid. G-d forbid that anyone eat of it.

Menakker.....

Menakker.....

★ ★ ★

TESTIMONY #7

Tuesday, Parshas Shoftim, 5742

A plate of a calf bought from butcher shop... .. on Lee Ave. was brought before me. The **nikkur** had not been properly performed at all, nor was it peeled properly. Also, part of the sinew between the tenth and eleventh rib remained in tact.

The small ribs being not at all menakkered, to confirm what I saw that the calf was not menakkered according to the halachah, bill #...

Menakker.....

Menakker.....

★ ★ ★

TESTIMONY #8

Rabbi Mordechai Gabriel Malachi
Rabbi of the Chassidic Synagogue
"Yavneh"

Head of Siminary "Halachah Lemaaseh"
and chief menakker of Eretz Israel, author
of the books, "Hatorah vehachasiduth,"
"Dinei Nikkur, the Halachah and the
Practice," and others.

A GREAT AND BITTER CRY!!!

*It was always my custom not to taste any meat until I examined it myself to ascertain that absolutely no **chelev** was left on it, because it is common occurrence that even experts have found to leave over **chelev**.*

*As soon as I came to America, I visited a Chassidic butcher shop in Williamsburg, renowned for its quality of kashrus, in shechitah, bedikah, **nikkur**, salting, etc., I was astounded, petrified to see that on the piece of meat they wanted to sell me was a **large amount of real chelev**, covering the surface of the meat. After a discussion with the **menakker**, I was convinced that he was **totally ignorant** of the halachos and in the practice of **nikkur**, according to the Shulchan Aruch, the traiditon of **menakkerim** and all books regarding **nikkur**.*

I was inquisitive by this unfortunate incident to visit other butcher shops in Williamsburg, Boro Park and other places.

Alas!!! Much to my sorrow, I was convinced they were all alike in that their knowledge in the laws and practice of **nikkur** is very very weak. The main part of their work being to remove the veins of the blood and to remove the membrane of the chelev,

the chelev of the flanks and the first stomach, whatever is on the front quarters, etc., but they do not perform nikkur. The Orthodox public stumble inadvertently upon the prohibition of eating chelev, something that contaminates every Jewish soul and clogs the brain and heart, thereby causing many troubles for Israel, may the L-rd save us!

The only solution is to appoint G-d-fearing **menakkerim** and *mashgichim*, who are well-versed in all halachos in the practice and skill of **nikkur** in the traditional manner. Meanwhile whoever fears for his soul should be extremely careful not to contaminate himself with the prohibition of **chelev**, which is very severe (punishable by Koris) which results in many serious troubles both spiritually and physically, G-d forbid.

And in this merit, he will dwell securely until the just decision is promulgated that everything will be rectified, and in the merit of avoiding prohibited foods, we will soon be privileged to enjoy the feast of the Leviasan as is delineated in the Rabbinic writings.

May the Al-mighty heal our breaches and say, "Enough," to our troubles!

Writing for the rescue of the holy Torah in Israel

Mordechai Gabriel Malachi

Publicized in U.S.A. in 5739



THE WITNESSES' DEMAND

We, the above signed, turn with this with a heartfelt appeal to the Orthodox community in general, and especially to the administration of the seminary "Halachah Lemasseh," that they establish a qualified rabbinical court without interests, to whom we will be able to submit our testimony face to face, and with G-d's help we are prepared to come before the court and testify concerning all the aforementioned and the court will arrange the matter according to the true view of the Torah.

And as witnesses, the obligation rests upon us to arouse and to shout that no one eat any meat of animals until the court is arranged and the matter be completely rectified according to the law of the Torah, and you shall put a knife into your throat if you have a hearty appetite!!

See! We have warned you, and we have saved our souls!

***Testimony of...**

Testimony of...

Testimony of...

***The names in their entirety are known in the Seminary "HALACHAH LEMAASEH," and to prominent rabbis and grand rabbis in the United States.**



CHAPTER 8

A LETTER RECEIVED FROM
WILLIAMSBURG, FROM A PROMINENT
EXPERT MENAKKER TO THE SEMINARY
"HALACHAH LEMAASEH"

Tammuz 5742

Peace and blessing...

*I noticed a book from the Seminary "Halachah Lemaaseh," entitled, "The status of Nikkur in the United States," (first edition), and after perusing two or three paragraphs, my eyes lit up and I venture to say that the Holy Spirit has manifested itself in our study-hall, for from the contents of the book it appears that according to the testimony and direction of the **menakkerim** of the Orthodox Jewish Community and over them all, the outstanding one of the group, the head of the shoctim, inspectors of the lungs and the **menakkerim** (known among his acquaintances as a hidden tzaddik), Rabbi Gad Trovitz, Jews in America eat **chelev**, since they do not perform **nikkur** according to the guidelines that you write and you note that you received information that in America, large communities of religious Jews, through lack of knowledge of **nikkur**, stumble upon **chelev**, punishable by Koris.*

*Moreover, Rabbi Zalman Brizel, who wages the wars of the L-rd from his youth (known among the G-d-fearing in Jerusalem) that he could not believe his ears that they eat **chelev** in the United States until they sent*

(from your seminary) experts, G-d-fearing men, wherein it became known that it was sadly a fact.

The very last one presented the harshest testimony, the expert **menakker** (famed for his great acts to strengthen the observance of the halachah, **Rabbi Mordechai Malachi**, who personally saw in America, in Williamsburg, Boro Park and Monsey, a tremendous neglect in the field of **nikkur**, that they cut meat and say, 'it is chelev' and they leave over Torah-prohibited **chelev** and say, that 'it is kosher.'

You should know that all your words are true and just and I have come with this letter just to lend a little support to your words, that I can myself testify and thereby strengthen your testimony, to prove that all your words are true and are not at all exaggerated.

On the eighth of Sivan this year, 5742, there was an important meeting in the office of the Central Rabbinical Congress of the United States and Canada wherein people from all walks of life participated: rabbis, rabbinical judges, tens of **menakkerim**, and in order not to exaggerate, I will record in detail the terrible deterioration that manifested itself there (they placed on the table various cuts of meat upon which to perform **nikkur**).

1) From among the **menakkerim** who justified their deeds as being Hungarian custom, it became known that they have no established custom, but each one performed **nikkur** in a different manner, both in practice and in understanding what is **chelev** and what is shuman (kosher fat) and just as their faces are

different, so are their deeds different and who could be foolish enough to believe that in Hungary there were tens of different customs when the books of **nikkur** by the Hungarian **menakkerim**, "**Giv'as Pinchas**," and **others**, do not even allude to this (and surely the other main books of **nikkur**, such as **Ohel Yitzchak**, **Zevach Sh'muel**, **Tzinnah David**, and others), hence any sensible person, will laugh at such excuses.

I pondered to myself, countless times, wondering how it is possible to have a custom to be lenient in a matter not mentioned in *Ramo* and other books customary to be lenient? With such an argument the Torah will be nullified, for anyone will do what he so desires in shechitah, inspection of the lungs and in any mitzvah of the Torah, such as permitting an agunah to remarry claiming that, that was the custom in a certain country and even if the *Shulchan Aruch* says the opposite, he will maintain a custom supersedes a halachah since this is included in what the Rabbis said, that if one wants to lie, he will state that his witnesses live far away.

I must confess that amongst all those who cried, "**Hungarian custom**," not one showed a certificate from the great rabbis and not even from the **menakkerim** there (and I think that even if one would be found, he would still need testing, because in many places **nikkur** was already neglected since the rabbis knew nothing of **nikkur**, as the **Giv'as Pinchas** writes in the introduction).

2) I had definite proof that the **menakkerim** (who called themselves Hungarian **menakkerim**) do not

know anything, because anyone versed in his work and craft, knows very well that the knowledge of **nikkur** does not consist only of knowing what **chelev** is and what **shuman** is, but it is also involved with the skill removing the **chelev**, the membranes, the sinews and the fats that draw without including any of the meat, for just as one may not leave over even a minute amount of **chelev**, so may one not waste Jewish money needlessly and the impression I received was that in their desire to cleanse the pieces put before them of any appearance of white — for they did not know how to differentiate between **chelev** and **shuman** — they cut off and discarded many whole strips of meat and **shuman**, that were really not **chelev**.

They erred in two things: one, that they removed **shuman** unnecessarily (because of ignorance) thereby committing the sin of wasting Jewish money, for even a penny's worth may not be destroyed for nothing, certainly when it amounts to much more than this.

It was a wonder that after all the work that one **menakker** put in to remove every trace of white stuck to it, whether it was **chelev** or **shuman**, another **menakker** whispered into the ear of his friend standing next to him and with a smile on his lips, pointed to the first one and said, "That **menakker** is a liar; he shows himself as though he performs **nikkur** like that in the store, but he surely does not."

One accustomed to the craft of **nikkur** will realize at first sight by looking at the **menakker**, how he grasps the piece of meat and how he behaves with it, whether

he is versed in the craft of **nikkur** and its halachos or not, and if he knows how to peel or not,, and the behavior of these **menakkerim** were such as to reveal their total ignorance of the craft.

3) There was a liver, upon which they did not perform **nikkur** properly and left over remnants. The wonder was that the **menakker** who left over **chelev** on the liver was angrily complaining the whole time about the matter of the test, as though to say, "Why do you need this test? We are all versed in **nikkur**, in all its details." And he was the one who did not perform **nikkur** properly.

I'll mention another wonder, that one rabbi remarked about the liver upon which a little **chelev** remained, "What is all this tumult? That is only Rabbinical prohibited." A **menakker** retorted, "Please excuse me; fowl in milk is also only Rabbinically prohibited." And I wonder why that rabbi takes the trouble to give out decisions about the appearance of blood? Why doesn't he publicize a general permission, that it is only Rabbinically prohibited. Why does he take the lulav on Sukkos after the first day? It is only a Rabbinic enactment. Why does he pray every day? According to many authorities it is only a Rabbinic requirement, and Hallel on Rosh Chodesh in only a custom, and cholov akkum is only Rabbinically prohibited, and all blessings for food, except Grace after Meals and the blessing after fruits and grain and wine, are all Rabbinic enactments. Shall we abolish them, G-d forbid? And why do we salt meat? When it is cooked, it is cooked

blood, which is only Rabbinically prohibited, as are many mitzvos. May G-d save us from such a view!

4) Now the spleen is known to contain **chelev** that, according to all authorities, is prohibited by the Torah, and even there a great neglect was found, but I wish not to write the details of that episode. Let that suffice.

5) They placed a navel on the table. Now, this belongs to the hind quarters. Since we have no **menakkerim** in America for the hind quarters, one of them called out that "**it is not edible.**" The second replied, "**But they take it for chopped meat and salami.**" The first one retorted, "**But we don't make salami.**" Go, complain to the salami factory. The second one replied, "**But the butchers grind it for chopped meat,**" and they had no answer. Then one spoke up and answered that '**we can't be blamed.**' Only the owners of the slaughterhouses, the wholesalers, who send this cut into the stores, (this is like one who eats treifos, and when someone asked him why, he replied, "What can I do if there is a treifah butcher shop near my house and they send me meat, and the rabbis said in such a case, 'what shall the son do not to sin?")

6) They went off on another subject, to the well-known question of why the meat between the twelfth and thirteenth ribs is brought into the store and it is cut straight down, not diagonally to the navel, and this requires knowledge of **menakker** of the hind quarters, and from all books of **nikkur** as it is known and as the Chasam Sofer, too, writes that it needs **nikkur**, at

least, and it was announced unanimously that no one knew how to perform **nikkur** on it, and that, usually, they do not perform **nikkur** on it at all in the United States, but eat it with all its fat (**chelev**), and I was astounded for two reasons: one, how do **menakkerim** who do not know how to perform **nikkur** on this meat, bother with it? Secondly, in most places (almost all) in Hungary they brought to the stores only ten or eleven ribs, but no more. If so, in **Williamsburg** and **Boro Park**, the home of thousands of families of Hungarian immigrants, who permitted the butchers to feed them this meat without their knowledge? Aren't they required to follow the custom of their fathers?

See **Ohel Yitzchak** (the author of which was from Hungary — as is written in the frontispiece) in "**Akeres Habais**" ch. 3, letter zaf, where he writes: The meat between the twelfth and the thirteenth ribs belongs to the hind quarters and requires **nikkur** by an expert **menakker**. It is also brought in **Giv'as Pinchas** (a great rabbi from Hungary) and see further in **Noda Beehudah**, second edition, ch. 31, in *Responsa Beth Shlomo*, and it is quoted in your booklet in the decision by the Rabbinical Court.

Moreover, according to the aforementioned authorities, that belongs to the hind quarters and so was accepted in Hungary in most places for which reason they did not bring it into the stores. Accordingly, no one may perform **nikkur** on it

unless he has certification for nikkur of the hind quarters, for that is the ruling of all the halachic authorities, that it is prohibited to perform nikkur on the hind quarters without special certification, yet there was not one menakker out of all those present who had certification even for the front quarters, let alone the hind quarters.

Moreover, even in the places where they used it, they had to perform nikkur on it, but to take the meat between the twelfth and the thirteenth ribs without nikkur, whoever thought of such a thing? And from what I understood from the menakkerim, many of them do not perform nikkur on it at all.

I cannot contain the feelings of my heart. When I sat there at that meeting, fear and darkness fell upon me, and I started to think of the terrible confusion I was witnessing. On the one side sat the rabbis, with the aim of judging and determining who was right and who was wrong and according to what I saw, they knew absolutely nothing about nikkur. If so, how could they possibly judge matters about which they were totally unfamiliar?

It was obvious that this was one big unfortunate ioke, until even at night, when I lay upon my bed, I could not rest. Had I really witnessed that scene while I was awake? Perhaps it was only a dream. It is indeed a wonder, for I had never before seen rabbis and judges sitting down to judge a matter in which they were not knowledgeable.

Also, I perceived that the **menakkerim** recognized that the rabbis were unfamiliar with the matter of **nikkur** and used this opportunity to shout aloud, "**This was undoubtedly the custom in Hungary,**" as they wished, for the rabbis could not contradict them, and in addition to what they realize — each **menakker** in his own store — that the rabbi never remarked or even looked at the **nikkur** performed in the store (as I myself can testify, having worked in a place for many years and not even once did the rabbi who gave the hechsher enter the store to examine my **nikkur**). At the time of the meeting, all the emptiness and the errors in the knowledge of the rabbis on the subject of **nikkur** even of the front quarters, (let alone the hind quarters) became manifest for at the time of the discussions and debates between the tens of opinions what the custom of Hungary was, the rabbis sat quietly and did not know to distinguish between good and bad. They only gazed at all that was transpiring, nothing else.

It still remains in the thoughts of my heart the fear the rabbis had of their butcher-menakker, as opposed to the earlier generations when the opposite was true.

*But we are worried about the first problem, and it is obviously a grave complaint against them. Is this the way we learned from our forefathers and our rabbis from years back? If they want to examine the knowledge of the **menakkerim**, do they sit together,*

rabbis and judges and look at what is transpiring as a **monkey gazes at human beings**, without understanding what is going on before them? Even if those rabbis were experts in the field of **nikkur**, that would be no way to examine **menakkerim**, because, if the **menakker** is sly and knows his work, he can easily trick the rabbis by performing **nikkur** properly in their presence and doing as he pleases in the store. Although no pitfall resulted from this test, since it was discovered that the **menakkerim** were indeed, ignorant of the laws of **nikkur**, and even though all of them knew and realized that here they had to work with all their mental and physical strength, but what the will desires, the lack of knowledge of the craft withholds, since they do not know what to do.

But the truth of the matter is that this is not the proper way to investigate the deeds of **menakkerim**, since there was the possibility that they would know what to do, but would not do it in the store. However, I gave the rabbis the benefit of the doubt, for if they do not know anything about **nikkur**, neither do they know how to test **nikkur**.

Now that your book concerning the status of **nikkur** in the United States enlightened my eyes, it afforded me great pleasure to see that you have initiated action in so great matter upon which all Judaism depends, as is explained in *Responsa Divrei Chaim*, and I saw that "you hit the nail on the head" in your evaluation of the situation in America. Had I not seen it with my own eyes, it would have been far removed for me to believe

that nikkur hachelev is neglected even in the most Orthodox stores, such as in Williamsburg, Boro Park and the like, but now that I have seen it with my own eyes, everything is unfortunately true and now I call aloud.

“Be strong and of good courage, neither fear nor cringe, nor be alarmed, for the L-rd goes before you and it is not fitting that the truth be cowardly or shy.”

*Writing with reverence for those who uphold the faith,
(signed)..., Menakker in U.S.A.*



DECLARATION CHAPTER 9

DECLARATION!!! As regards the question many ask, that in the year 5739 a statement was publicized by numerous rabbis who attested to the fact that there is no problem with the **nikkur** and that everything is being done in traditional manner and that even the most scrupulously observant may eat their fill. If so, what is new today? In fact, the answer is alluded to in the question, for this document is predated and it has already expired after three years have passed, for then the discussion concerned only one detail and even in that alone the question was not submitted to the great rabbis as it should have been. (So we heard explicitly from rabbis who participated in the meeting), and since

then, the discussion has changed a thousandfold, since many matters not known to the rabbis then, were discovered, and possibly, the situation has changed for the worse between and now (as it appears from the above testimonies). Let us enumerate many of the new things that have been discovered now, which were not discussed then:

1) They sell also from the hind quarters of the animal.

2) The neglect of nikkur in almost all chelev in the front quarters, (in details not discussed then).

3) There is no supervision over the menakkerim (a matter not discussed at all in 5739).

4) The rabbis are not at all learned in the field of nikkur, (this became revealed only recently to us and that a few of them leafed through some books superficially for a few weeks, does not come into consideration, as it is known that in order to understand and decide in these profound matters, one must study and learn and serve at least a year or two under the tutelage of expert **menakkerim** who have certification handed down from generation to generation, also on the hind quarters. **Without this, they are regarded as pupils who do not have enough experience and who destroy the world with their erroneous decisions, as we have seen several weeks ago concerning one prominent rabbi).**

If so, whoever relies on the "expired note" of three years ago, takes upon himself the responsibility of his own consumption of chelev,

punishable by Koris as well as that of his family, on his own shoulders, because, according to the Torah, and according to common sense, that "note" has no longer any validity.

*Incidentally, It is to be noted that several months ago, the rabbis again met to discuss the matter of **chelev** and it was revealed before all those present that all the aforementioned points (1-3) are still valid (and as is related above in a letter written by one of the **menakkerim** who participated there). (And as we have heard, the great tumult that encompasses the Diaspora in these days concerning the pitfall of **chelev** being fed to myriads of thousands of Jews, men, women, and children, originates from there, spread by some of those present at that meeting (who personally revealed what transpired there).*



CHAPTER 10

THIS ALWAYS TOOK PLACE

Since many cry that it is inconceivable in a place where there is hashgachah by strictly Orthodox rabbis, that the meat should not be properly prepared and if the rabbi is trusted to decide on other matters of prohibition and permissibility, he should be believed that there is no **chelev** in the meat, we therefore find it appropriate to show the reader that two hundred years ago and more, (in the time of Marharshal, even in places where there were great rabbis, outstanding in Torah and fear of G-d, tenfold as great as the rabbis of our time), there were, nevertheless, great pitfalls, and mainly because **nikkur** is hard work, especially to be careful not to leave over a minute amount of **chelev**, and also because there is much ignorance (and it is impossible to explain it to someone unfamiliar with with) and from there everyone can judge that it can surely happen in our humble generation that is very possible that the butchers are lazy in their performance of **nikkur**, since the inhabitants of the United States are, to a large extent, immigrants from Hungary who have no knowledge of these parts at all. The following are excerpts from books on this matter:

1) We find in Tzinnah David, by Rabbi David Deutsch o.b.m. (one of the greatest books on **nikkur**, 5508): I saw menakkerim cutting meat from **chelev** and saying, "This is **chelev**," and about real **chelev** they would say, "this is kosher." Sometimes they opposed me with audacity and said, "This is

the way we were taught, and this is our custom from long ago, and they regarded me as in error, when they said, "If you are right, why don't the great rabbis, the sages of the generation, admonish us about this?" And, in my humble state, I replied, "The rabbis who promulgate halachic decisions surely do not know of this pitfall, and concerning your custom I say, "They are a perverse generation, and their custom (מנהג) is transposed to 'Gehinnom' (גהנום).

2) Yam shel Shlomo, Perek Gid Hanasheh, ch. 19: I am the person who heard and saw that most of our **menakkerim**, even though they are stringent to cut off even what is permissible, yet many time I found that they treated **chelev** lightly. Therefore, I took upon myself...

3) Maharam Mintz innovated that one should not rely on meat upon which **nikkur** has been performed until another expert **menakker** examines it, because it occurs that even after **nikkur** the meat is left not completely rectified properly (mentioned in Yam shel Shlomo ad loc.).

4) No religious person should rely on any **menakker**, unless he recognizes that he is G-d-fearing and well-versed in the work of **nikkur** (Yam shel Shlomo, Chullin 1:2).

5) Sefer Beis Yitzchak (Yoreh Deah ch. 64) Admonition to the rabbis, who relinquished their jurisdiction over the **menakkerim** and do not supervise them (i.e. they neglected to study the laws of **nikkur**

intensively as is proper) and rely on the **menakkerim** who learned **nikkur** one from the other, and sometimes the teacher did not learn, so how can the pupil know? Moreover, in the inside of the animal, everybody is engaged; women, slaves, children, and especially the *shochtim* of our time, who recently learned *shechitah* and *bedikah* and received certification from the rabbi, but did not see **nikkur** and know nothing about it, yet after being appointed as *shochet* and inspector of lungs, appoint themselves **menakkerim**, and the public relies upon them, without any supervision. All of this is due to the fact that the rabbis themselves are not well-versed in this field. Therefore, **the rabbi himself must learn well the procedure of nikkur of the front quarters** (quoted in the introduction of Giv'as Pinchas).

6) I am engaged in **nikkur** many years, and I have been in many **large and small towns, and I have seen among our many sins that there are many pitfalls, and I called it to their attention, and they all thanked me** (Giv'as Pinchas, Law of **Nikkur**).

From there we see that even in Hungary there were already serious pitfalls in many places, and if one shows a writ of certification that he received it there, it may have doubtful validity.

7) *Toras Hanikkur HaYerushalmi*: Why did the great rabbis, who have thorough knowledge in all fields of Torah, completely neglect the study of these *halachos*, which are not *halachos* for the *Messiach*, but very practical *halachos*? He replies that in other fields

of Torah, one who learns the Gemara, the early and later commentaries thoroughly, can gain knowledge in the matters he is studying. This is not so concerning these halachos, for if one does not engage in the practice of these halachos, they remain devoid of meaning, like the esoteric, hidden parts of the Torah, and **the neglect in this field is overwhelming.** Consequently, many stumble on the prohibition of chelev, even those who observe stringently all mitzvos, both minor and major.

8) In the decision of the Rabbinical Court of Jerusalem. The neglect of the matter of **nikkur** is very great, that any **menakker** teaches and instructs whomever he so pleases. Within a short time, he is initiated into the profession of **nikkur** without any certification, and in fact, the one he claims to have learned from requires certification. Thus, **the pitfall of giving people chelev and blood to eat, is very great, even though they are punishable by Koris, G-d forbid.**

9) **Pri Megadim on Orach Chaim** (Procedure of the inquirer in Orach Chaim, 2:1): And in our many sins, nowadays, they do not learn the laws of **nikkur**, and it is given over to anyone. **It is most fitting for every rabbi to learn nikkur who will then be qualified to lead his flock aright — since the responsibility always lies upon him either way.**

10) The great gaon, noted for his intensive knowledge of Torah and his fear of G-d, Rabbi Jonathan Eibenshutz o.b.m., in his work, *Kereisi*, end of ch. 65:

Nowadays, one should rule stringently **not to rely on the assumed integrity of the menakker**, since there are many stringencies and the bother is hard for him. Moreover, most of them are not learned in Torah hence we may not rely in **nikkur** on anyone except one well-versed in **nikkur** and a G-d-fearing man since his youth. He writes further.

Since the time I reached my own understanding, that I learned the laws of **nikkur** to be well-versed in them and in their names, I did not rely on a **menakker**. I ate only the meat upon which I personally performed **nikkur**. Hence, I ate from the toil of my hands.

Judge from this the gravity of the prohibition of **chelev**. Now it is obvious that the great Rabbi Eibenschutz was very strict and exacting with the **menakker** of his city, that he do everything in the best possible manner, with a thorough and strict supervision and he, nevertheless, did not rely on this for himself, knowing that, although according to the Torah, we may rely on **menakkerim**, but since he knew that even if one eats **chelev** with permission, his heart and mind become clogged, he did not wish to rely on anyone, only on what he himself performed.

We conclude from all the aforementioned.

There were always breaches in the matter of **nikkur** of **chelev**, and in every generation, Satan and his company rise up against to destroy us, yet since the time of Maharshal and even earlier. Whomever G-d inspired, merited to save himself from the snare of the trappers. Whoever reads

these books will surely think that if he had lived in those generations he would have risen up with dedication to save his soul and the soul of the members of his family, to abstain from the meat of those menakkerim who neglect their work, not performing nikkur as it should be performed. His mercy is aroused concerning the Jewish children who stumbled inadvertently, but he does not realize that he, himself, is now standing in a similar situation, a real test, and he, too, will be recorded in the memorial book after decades, that he was living at the time that the House of Israel stumbled on the sin of eating chelev, even chelev prohibited by the Torah, in a horrible manner. Now why does he have to wait to be included among the stumblers, G-d forbid, whose names will be inscribed to eternity? Now one should surely abstain from eating meat of animals, rather than eat chelev all his life, either unintentionally or close to intentionally, since he read all the above. Whoever tries to purify himself, G-d helps him.

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CHAPTER 11

GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF NIKKUR LEARNING NIKKUR FROM BOOKS

THE GREAT CALAMITY LIABLE TO RESULT
FROM SOME SCHOLARS AND RABBIS

Those who learn **nikkur** from books without practical study of the work of expert **menakkerim**, to

understand each detail, to compare what is written in the books to the reality, virtually destroys worlds, and the greater his influence on the public, the pitfall destined to result from his decisions and views and the responsibility of those who stumble on Torah-prohibited **chelev** and Rabbinically prohibited **chelev** generation after generation until the coming of the Meshiach will be discredited to him and charged to his account.

But, you should know that it is not sufficient to learn from an ordinary **menakker**, for among them, too, there is a great pitfall as is expounded upon in many books (see above ch. 10), hence the rabbis have already complained bitterly about this, for this is one of the causes of the continuation of the breach in this field for generation after generation because of the ignorant **menakker** teaches his pupil according to his own way, and the error becomes compounded and deeply rooted, for if his teacher did not learn, how can the pupil know?

The way to extricate ourselves from this pitfall is to learn exclusively from an expert **menakker** who has certification from the great rabbis and the geonim of the generation (who know not to ordain anyone who did not learn from a real expert) or certification from generation to generation, i.e. that the teacher who taught him was certified by someone who was certified by someone who was certified by a certain gaon and tzaddik, as it is today with the greatest **menakkerim** of the Holy Land, that all the procedure of their **nikkur** was established by the two saints and sages, Rabbi Joshua Leib Diskin o.b.m. and Rabbi Samuel Salant o.b.m. together with their rabbinical courts.

For emphasis, we cite what the geonim write in their books explicitly that it is impossible to learn **nikkur**

from books alone. (A continuation of this will appear further in the following chapter.)

1) **Sefer Beis Yitzchak, laws of nikkur (Akeres Habais 4.6, Amudei Zahav 9):** One must warn the populace that one who is not learned (in this field) and did not learn the procedure of **nikkur** from an expert **menakker**, even if he is an accomplished scholar, G-d forbid that he approach the profession of **nikkur** to engage in it (it is understood that the same applies to making decisions and expressing opinions, which are, on the contrary, of more gravity, because one who engages in it, at most will cause those who eat of that meat to stumble, but whoever teaches the public with an improper expression, like one who says, "Those who say, 'Hungarian **nikkur**,' are right," causes myriads of thousands of Jews to stumble for many years with many thousands of olive-sized pieces of Torah-prohibited **chelev**) for that is something that requires study and **much practice, and its practice is more important that its study.**

Although the practice and procedure of **nikkur** are explained and described well in books, there is no comparison between seeing and hearing, for one must see it with his own eyes, **something impossible to learn from books, from whence he can easily come to grave pitfalls.**

2\$ **In Sefer Moreh Lazovechim** (by the rabbi of Wurzburg, about whom the gaon, the author of **Aruch Laner** calls, "The marvelous gaon, the pillar of faith")20:5:

It is well-known to all those well-versed in halachah, that whoever wishes to engage in the profession of **nikkur**, must first study those books that deal with these halachos at length and explain their various

divisions according to law and custom (that intimates that even studying the Shulchan Aruch and its commentaries are not sufficient) and additionally, **he must learn the practice of nikkur** by seeing it done **by an expert menakker**, in order that he understand thoroughly the identification of all the sinews and the membranes that are prohibited because of **chelev** and because of blood and where they are found in the cuts and limbs of the animal in order to be able to find them readily and definitely and remove them completely and exactly, as **Ramo**, too, writes in 64:6 and 65:8. It is, therefore, obvious that with this book we do not intend to teach one the practical application of the halachah from them alone, without supplementing them with study in other books and **without a teacher who is an expert menakker**.

3) In **Sefer Hanikkur by Rasha** (acronym signifying **Rabbi Shlomo Altman**, rabbi in Warsaw 5679). *Whoever wishes to know and understand, must learn constantly from an expert menakker and stand next to him during his work. Otherwise, it is impossible to acquire the required knowledge.*

4) In **Sefer Toras Hanikkur HaYerushalmi**: In other fields of Torah, one who learns the Gemara, the early and later commentaries thoroughly, can gain knowledge in the matters he is studying. This is not so concerning these halachos, for if one does not engage in the practice of these halachos, they remain devoid of meaning, like the esoteric, hidden parts of the Torah, and the neglect in this field is overwhelming. Consequently, many stumble on the prohibition of chelev, even those who observe stringently all mitzvos, both minor and major.

There is much more in the books of nikkur, but for the sake of brevity, we have not cited anymore.

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CHAPTER 12

Responsibility of Expressing Opinions, Deciding and Granting Certification Erroneous Decision by the Rabbi

After we have already explained from authors and books that, concerning the practice of **nikkur**, the rabbis stated: Its practice is more important than its study and without practice many times under the tutelage of a really expert **menakker**, no one knows anything about **nikkur** and all his decisions are merely a pitfall for the public. Consequently, it is astounding that rabbis who never learned or practiced **nikkur** until recently in America and who looked a little in books and spoke sparingly with **menakkerim**, should express their view on **nikkur** like experts. It is really astonishing. All their knowledge is but from books, for, what the **menakkerim** teach them must first be verified and these **menakkerim** are blamed for feeding **chelev** to Jews. How painful it is that the rabbis who wish to express their view and decide whether the **menakkerim** who call themselves, "Hungarian custom," are right, or whether those who claim that those who call themselves. "Hungarian **menakkerim**" do not know their business and leave over membranes, sinews and other things in large measure. Yet, these very same rabbis, whose eyes are not yet opened in this field, when they come to decide that

they are right. Isn't this a tragic joke? Everyone who hears this will laugh at it with disgust, for the rabbi who learned from the **menakker** accused of neglecting his **nikkur**, should come and testify about his teacher (from whom he learned all his knowlege) that he is satisfactory, after the **menakker** taught him the procedure of his **nikkur** and testified concerningf his deeds that such and such was practiced in Hungary, the rabbi comes to testify that the **menakker** performs properly and that so was the custom in Hungary.

If they continue on this crooked road, after a time the situation will deteriorate more and more with the low state of the generation, and they will come yet, G-d forbid, to give certifications to **menakkerim** on this basis, and this will result in the destruction of the faith and of all Judaism, may G-d protect us from this stumbling block!

We testify concerning a great rabbi (The honor of G-d is to conceal a thing) who imagined himself well-versed in the practice of **nikkur** (after a little studying and looking through books, and a conversation with inferior **menakkerim**) we were thoroughly astounded that he knew nothing of the subject and erred in many simple things, that anyone with a little knowledge of **nikkur** would not err and according to his imagination, that he already understands well the matter of **nikkur**, he is prepared to testify on what parts **nikur** must be performed and on what parts it need not and if this matter continues in this manner, they will probably start to ordain **menakkerim** according to their views and their convenience. Every G-d-fearing Jew will quake when he hears of this danger. Our soul cries in secret for the calamity destined to result from this both spiritually and physically.

The Course of Study for a Menakker

Not only does the learning from a **menakker** who is in error perpetuate the error from the teacher to the pupil, but even if the **menakker** is really an expert, it is impossible for the pupil to be well-versed in the topic of **nikkur** to perform **nikkur** in practice unless he studies under his tutelage for at least a year. Very often does a **whole year** not suffice to be really well-versed in all the details until close to two years. Now all this applies to one who wishes to learn with the intention of practicing **nikkur** under the supervision of a chief **menakker** who overlooks his work. There is an additional condition that during that time, he tried to perform **nikkur** many times when his teacher, the **menakker** stands over him to see whether he performs his work properly.

The Course of Study for One Who Grants Certification

But one who wishes to learn to be well-versed in the practice of **nikkur** with the intention of granting certification to **menakkerim** based on his knowledge, must learn from books a very long time concerning the **nikkur** of the front quarters, and also the hind quarters, in conjunction with scrutiny of the work of expert **menakkerim** (who have certification originating from famous geonim) in the **nikkur** of the front quarters and also of the hind quarters for many years, for if he is not well-versed in the **nikkur** of the hind quarters and he grants certification for the front quarters, he will have innumerable failures of great magnitude (as is known to **menakkerim** of the hind quarters) (and as it is today — this being not the place to elaborate) and in addition to this, also practical deeds and not only to be well-versed in the practice of

nikkur, but also to know all the customs of all countries, so that if a deceiver comes to trick him by stating that such was the custom in Hungary, or the like, or if he says that in a certain place they sold meat past the twelfth rib, he can intelligently contradict him; unlike today, that the rabbi believes every **menakker** as though his words were a halachah from Moses on Sinai. Furthermore, he requires very much experience with many expert **menakkerim** (for who is a wise man? One who learns from everyone), since he wishes to take upon himself the grave responsibility of the foundation of Judaism that depends on the eating of thousands and thousands of olive-sized pieces of meat to all those dependent on his giving certification until the end of all time.

He is reprimanded

Now you will understand that when we saw with our very own eyes that a great rabbi, after scanning books for about a month and with short conversation with **menakkerim** whose qualifications are highly questionable wished to take upon himself the great responsibility to render decisions to those who inquire of the law of G-d, that the **nikkur** of those **menakkerim** (who cause the public to stumble) who argue (to justify their failure and shortcoming) that, that was the Hungarian **nikkur** and he is so stubborn that it is impossible to change his mind, even they are opposed by exceptional geonim in the field of **nikkur**, who spent countless years in its study and practice also on the hind quarters and who are known throughout the country by name and that their certification dates back generation after generation from those two tzaddikim Rabbi Joshua

Leib Diskin of Blessed memory, and Rabbi Samuel Salant o.b.m. and their rabbinical court who have already trained pupils who are extremely expert in this field. Nevertheless, he still does not hesitate to justify the lazy butchers and their argument of "Hungarian custom," and to vindicate them. He is definitely deservant of a reprimand until he is willing to rectify the matter with the proper stringency.

CHAPTER 16 AND YOU SHALL CHOOSE LIFE Request and Appeals!!!

Beloved children of Isarel, descendants of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose forebears stood at Mount Sinai:

You should know that the foundation and the permanence of the Jewish people, who believe in G-d and His Torah as it was handed over to us from generation to generation, is primarily the strict observant of the dietary laws. Without this, many Jews are led to apostasy, G-d forbid (Pri Chadash, Yoreh Deah 81) and entire countries leave the faith (Responsa Divrei Chaim, Vol. 1, Chap. 6) and it brings within its fold calamities upon the Jewish people, G-d forbid (Chofetz Chaim).

It is likewise definite that **nikkur** of **chelev** was always counted among the fields in which pitfalls were common. This is because of the ignorance of **menakkerim** and the rabbis, as well as the slothfulness in doing the work with exactitude. Now the children of Israel were tempted by paganism in every generation. It was those who passed

this test and also observed strictly the laws of prohibited food and drink, who merited leaving pure and holy generations, from whom a chain or progeny blessed by G-d has emanated from then until the present and from today until the coming of the righteous Messiach.

Now, my brethren, do no harm, when we recite all that is in our heart. The entire Jewish people hangs in the balance. Every Jewish soul bears much weight.

Everyone can choose the path in which will bring him long blessed life with all the goodness in this world in addition to the reward in store for the World to Come if he avoids a prohibition listed among the most stringent, those punishable by Koris and those that clog the heart of the souls of the great and the small separates the soul from its root, until it is entirely cut off from the World to Come (as it stated in the holy Zohar quoted by Yesode Veshoresh Ha'avodah, Gate 7). This is the prohibition of **chelev**, punishable by Koris like chometz on Pesach. Now every G-d-fearing person, who fears for his everlasting soul and for that of his children dare not feel at rest by false assurances, for perhaps they are not true, or with any other kinds of assurances, since thereby he is endangering his life and those of his children for all time. Even eating **chelev** inadvertently destroys from the soul to the flesh, surely to behave in this manner all one's life. Especially is this true, when we see trouble increasing daily, young people are being taken from the world and other troubles and sicknesses, which we hesitate to print, take their toll of men, women, and children, much more than usual. Everyone wonders and asks, "What is this that G-d has done to us?" Yet no one thinks that perhaps we have not paid enough attention to the growing reports that daily increase, that the butcher shops are full of **chelev** that is punishably by Koris! They turn their backs to these reports

as though they do not pertain to them in any way. They do not give the matter any thought at all. In the manner they ignore the reports about **chelev**, so are they ignored by G-d in their time of need and distress. This is similar to what the Rabbis stated on the verse: "And I separated you from the peoples to be Mine." If you are separated from prohibited foods, you are Mine, and if not, you belong to Nebuchadnezzar and his like.

CHAPTER 14 TO AVOID EVEN A DOUBTFUL CASE OF CHELEV

In conclusion of all the aforementioned, whose heart will not fear and whose hands will not shake when he picks up a piece of animal flesh and puts it into his mouth without a definite clarification that the **chelev** has been removed properly?

*Indeed, even if the question would be of a doubtful case of **chelev**, it would still be highly advisable and intelligent to abstain from eating such meat, for in the Torah we find the penalty of Koris for eating prohibited foods in only four cases: 1) Eating chometz on Pesach. 2) Eating on Yom Kippur. 3) Eating **chelev**, and 4) Eating blood. In the case of chometz on Pesach and eating on Yom Kippur, every simple Jew will quake in the fear of infracting these prohibitions, even if there is only a slight chance, e.g. if there is a rumor that a food contains chometz and so it is with Yom Kippur. Why should the matter of **chelev** be looked upon or felt to be of any lesser degree than the other 3 cases mentioned?*

*Moreover, even if one ate something that was possibly **chelev**, when the Temple existed, he would be required to*

bring a guilt-offering to protect him from agonies until he found out definitely what it was, as is delineated in the tractate Kerithus and in other places. Now how can we allow ourselves to eat something for which one must bring a sacrifice carrying along with other dangerous circumstances.

See Rabbenu Yonah's Commentary on the beginning of Berachos, where he writes that a **doubtful case of a sin requires more repentance than a definite commitment of a sin**, for a person regrets his sin more when he is certain that he has committed in than when he does not know definitely. Therefore, a doubtful guilt-offering was to be more expensive than a sin-offering. This is delineated in Kerisus 22, which see. *ibid.*

See also Abos d'Rabbi Nathan, ch. 30: Rabbi Meir says: Whoever commits a doubtful sin is accounted as though he has committed a definite sin: How so? If a person sins and his sin is known to him, he brings a sin-offering for a sela (a coin), whereas if it is uncertain whether he sinned, he brings a doubtful guilt-offering for two sela'im (2 coins).

It is indeed the decided halachah: Ramo, Orach Chaim 603: One needs to repent of a doubtful sin more than of a definite one. See further in books of the poskim, where it is explained that, concerning atonement and repentance, one must fear even a chance of less than half (Reponsa ; Lev Aryeh on Chullin 11, Yismach Mosheh, parshas Toledos, on the verse: "And Jacob approached," and in Responsa Avnei Zedek, Orach Chaim, 74).

See also Mesillas Yesharim, that one must avoid a doubtful sin as one does actual poison.

See also Yoreh Deah, end of ch. 116, that a devout person would not eat of an animal upon which a sage issued a decision, and it is understood that a case of doubtful **chelev** upon which sages issued a decision,

which is prohibited by the Torah because of **chelev**, even simple people should not eat.

In conclusion, let us mention further what Pri Chadash writes in *Yoreh Deah*, ch. 81, that something interdicted by the Torah, even if it can be permitted for small children, nevertheless clogs the heart and brain, as we find a similar statement in *Responsa Arugas Habosem* concerning a milk from a cow that eats chometz on Pesach and in *Ketzos Hashulchan*, laws of Shabbos, laws concerning the critically ill, in *Baddei Hashulchan* he quotes *Netziv*, that, for this reason, we slaughter for the critically ill, rather than feed him non-kosher meat that was prepared from before Shabbos, (even though a critically ill person may eat it) it nevertheless, clogs the heart and brain. These facts are really awesome.

It is apropos to mention a selection from *Yesode veshoresh Ha'avodah* (Gate 7, *Sha'ar Habechoroth*) wherein he admonishes to avoid infracting a Torah prohibition although emanating from a doubt of a doubt, according to the holy *Zohar*, which states that who-so-ever contaminates himself with prohibited food has no share in G-d of Israel, nor in the World to Come, and he is punished for generations upon generations. This is the exact language:

It is not fit for a person to fall full length on the ground and to put his mouth into dirt and for rivulets of water to stream from his eyes, neither to be silent by day, nor to rest at night if he figures that he was not careful enough during his lifetime to avoid prohibited food, the penalty for which is more severe than for all other sins. According to the holy *Zohar* mentioned above, that for all sins in the Torah, even those punishable by death, after one has suffered his punishment in

Gehinnom and with other punishments, as he was sentenced in the upper world, he has, at least, a share in the Holy One Blessed be He, and a share in the World to Come. But, one who contaminates himself with prohibited foods, has neither a share in G-d of Israel nor in the World to Come and he is punished for generations upon generations.

It does not suffice to free oneself alone with caution, but one must warn others as well.

It is stated further in the same work that according to ARI zal, one should not eat the hind quarters at all even if nikkur has been performed properly. In the United States they even sell the hind quarters without informing the public. This can rightfully be termed the height of brutality.

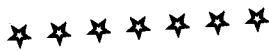
It is indeed astonishing that everyone avoids matzah if there is the least doubt that it may contain chometz, even if it is kosher according to the Shulchan Aorch, whereas chelev, which is just as severe as chometz, both of them being punishable by Koris and which pertains all year round, not only on Pesach — when he hears any kind of excuse, he is happy that he has an alibi to eat as much meat as his heart desires.

Beis Yitachak states (Akeres habais, 4:6):

No **menakker** shall let the meat out of his hand unless he examines it twice and even three times, for if a barleycorn of **chelev** is found after his **nikkur**, he is dismissed and much need be done to rectify his carelessness.

We see how very important the caution and examination after the **menakkerim** is, all of which has been completely abolished nowadays. We hope that by

reading this book, people will be inspired to beware of eating prohibited foods in general and particularly from eating **chelev** and we will merit with the help of the L-rd that His Name be sanctified through us and that the strength of Torah and the fear of G-d be renewed in all ways until we merit the coming of the Meshiach, the son of David, speedily and in our days. Amen.



CHAPTER 15

SALAMI-SAUSAGES-BOLOGNA-FRANK-FURTERS

We have learned that even those who abstain from eating animal flesh because of the great pitfalls in the United States in all details of **nikkur**, nevertheless, make a painful error and regard delicatessen (salami, sausages, bologna, frankfurters, etc.) as kosher-hence permissible. This is a very grave error; for, not only are they manufactured from animal flesh - hence the danger is no less than that of any other meat, but it is many times worse than other meat for the following reasons:

- 1) Meat that is not sold as it is but after it is ground (e.g. chopped meat, salami, and the like, are one thousand times worse than ordinary meat, because the purchaser is unaware as to its contents. Therefore, the manufacturers include in it all wastes and fall offs of the meat and fats. Where else are they going to put it?
- 2) Salami and the like contain at approximately 40% fat. they, therefore, take from the start, meat full of **chelev**. We have adequate information that they use hind quarters.

3) At the meeting of the Central Rabbinical Congress of Sivan 5742, one of the assembled noted that the part of the animal front the navel and below, which is part of the hind quarters and which contains Torah prohibited **chelev**, is used in the manufacture of salami.

4) Those familiar with the history, know very well that when these products were invented, much swindle was discovered in various countries, since it is impossible to recognize the origin of the meat and even when most people did not know to doubt the kashrus of ordinary meat, many were careful not to use these products.

5) We have various documents (from the board of health of many countries, all of whom testify unanimously that eating these products is very harmful to health and can cause cancer.

6) According to the list of the board as to what causes cancer, salami and other delicatessen have concentrated six details that cause this ailment:

a) Animal meat, b) Fat, (Chelev and shuman are one and the same as regards health), c) Smoked meat, d) Chemicals added, e) Old meat, (Salamis are made in large quantities and are allowed to stand for a long time), f) Much salt and spices.

Here you have a concentration of six definite reasons (in addition to those being discovered every day) that cause cancer, G-d forbid, and who after reading all these reasons, will still take this meat into his house. He is responsible for endangering his own life and the lives of his family, being tantamount to one who commits suicide, G-d forbid.

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