

is also considered; and even a vessel like a chest, if it be ten handbreadths high, and in breadth four by four. A hollow vessel, or a tower, is also considered as a private jurisdiction.

The term *public jurisdiction* includes roads and streets, if their breadth be sixteen ells by sixteen, and they be open from gate to gate, and six hundred thousand persons pass thereon. And every thing in a public jurisdiction, which is not three handbreadths high, is reckoned as the ground, and is public jurisdiction: even thorns and filth upon which the public does not tread.

But if it be from three to nine handbreadths high, but not nine entirely, and its breadth be four by four, it is called a *Karmelith*.

“If it be less, it is called a *free place*.” (Orach Chaim, 344.)

Now it may well be doubted, concerning many Jews in this city, whether they are acquainted with even this portion of the Sabbath laws, but it is quite certain that they are ignorant of the innumerable modes of possible transgression which arise from these distinctions; for the oral law then goes on to define what is lawful concerning each. In a public jurisdiction he may move any thing four ells.

כל אדם יש לו ר' אמות ב"ה שיכול למשל בהם :

“Every man has got four ells within which he may move things.” Or, as Rambam expresses it—

רשות היחיד ומקום פסור מותר למשל בכלן
אסור היה אך כל אחת משחיתן כמה מלין מסולסל
בכלה : אבל רשות הרבים הטרמית אין מסולסל
בהן אלא בארבע אמות :

“In a private jurisdiction, and in a free place it is lawful to move things the whole length of the place, even though the length of each should be many miles. But in a public jurisdiction or a Karmelith things may not be moved more than four ells.” (Hilchoth Shabbath, c. xxiv. 11.) Now, it may well be asked, upon what passage of the law of Moses these distinctions are grounded, and what there is in a public jurisdiction which converts an act lawful in a private jurisdiction, into a sin to be expiated only by stoning the offender? For instance, in a private jurisdiction a man may carry certain matters for miles without violating the Sabbath commands, but if he venture out into a public jurisdiction with a pocket-handkerchief, or a snuff-box, or a half-crown in his pocket, and carry it only five ells, he is guilty of death; and if the Talmudists held the reins of power, would be led out as soon as the Sabbath was over, and stoned. Reason revolts against such doctrine, the act is the very same in both cases, and is therefore in both cases a sin, or in both cases lawful. Humanity shudders at the thought of stoning a man for carrying a pocket-handkerchief, and the Bible teaches us that a religion, teaching such inexorable and

wanton cruelty, cannot be from God. It is true that at present the power of Christianity protects Israelites from such harsh treatment; but wherever the Talmud has any degree of influence, Israel groans under its bondage. Many a time have we seen Jews with their pocket-handkerchief tied round their knee like a garter, for this is lawful, though to carry it in his pocket would be a grave and capital offence. And we once knew an Israelite who was taking a walk on the Sabbath-day, and being addressed by a Gentile beggar, put his hand into his pocket and gave the poor man a small coin. He was observed by some Talmudists, who immediately attacked him for his profanation of the Sabbath. Afraid of losing his character, and being at that time more anxious for the praise of man than that which cometh of God, he defended himself by saying, that he had unintentionally taken out the money in his pocket, but had remembered it when addressed by the beggar, and therefore took the opportunity of getting rid of that which it was not lawful to carry. The Talmudists were satisfied, and their wrath changed into profound admiration for his piety. These cases exemplify the practical working of the Rabbinic system. It burdens the consciences of the sincere, and makes the unscrupulous hypocrites. It may be replied that such things could not happen in England, and that here the Jews are too enlightened to observe such distinctions. But every one who makes this reply condemns modern Judaism as a religion unfit for the observation of the enlightened, and if he be a conscientious man, should protest against doctrines which he believes to be false, and laws which he abhors as cruel. These Sabbatic laws are a part, an essential part, of modern Judaism. There is not any part of the oral law upon which Talmudists lay more stress. The man, therefore, who does not observe them has changed his religion. He has got a new faith, as really, as if he had been baptised and professed Christianity. Every Israelite who carries a pocket-handkerchief in his pocket through the streets of London on the Sabbath-day, has apostatized from that Jewish religion, which has been professed for near two thousand years, and practically declares that the religion of the synagogue is false. How then can he, without hypocrisy, profess to believe in the religion of the Jews? or how can he, as an honest man, uphold a system which he regards as false, and which would have him executed as a criminal if it had the power? If such persons, who live in the habitual transgression of all the Sabbatic laws, have any regard for truth and for divine revelation, they should openly declare their sentiments, announce to the world that they have forsaken the religion of their fathers, and assert that

religion which they regard as true. The blindest and most bigoted Talmudist is a far more respectable man, and more acceptable in the sight of God, than he who pretends to profess a religion in which he does not believe, and whose precepts he regards as fanatical and superstitious.

But to return. From the above laws it appears that it is a sin to carry any thing in a public jurisdiction a distance of more than four ells. But suppose, then, that there was something which the Talmudists might find it convenient or desirable to move to a greater distance, is there no provision to effect its conveyance? Yes. These scrupulous persons, who would stone a man to death for carrying any thing five ells, have an expedient for conveying it a hundred miles if necessary. לשיכן מותר לאדם לעקור ההצמץ מרשות הרבים ולהניח להברו שאצלו בחוץ ד' אמותיו והברו להברו שאצלו אפילו ק' מילין אף על פי שההצמץ הולך כמה מילין ב"ה שכל אחד לא ישלשנו אלא בחוץ ד' אמותיו:

"Therefore it is lawful for a man to move a matter from the public jurisdiction, and to give it to his neighbour, who is within a distance of four ells; and his neighbour to his neighbour again, and so on, even for a hundred miles. For although the thing itself go many miles, each person has only moved it his four ells." (Orach Chaim, 348.) We have often heard of the wonderful effects of division of labour, but never knew before that it could convert a capital offence into an innocent employment. Surely it is not necessary to prove that if it be unlawful for one person to do a particular act, it is equally unlawful for a hundred persons to combine for its performance. This law really has more the appearance of a caricature devised by some enemy of the oral law, than the grave decision of religious men in a matter of life and death. But if we examine a little further, we shall find that it is unlawful to move this same thing, whatever it be, from one jurisdiction to another, though that other be close at hand. כשם שאסור לשלשל בכל הכרמלית כן אסור להוציא ממנה לרשות היחיד או לרשות הרבים או להניח לטרמלית מרשות היחיד או מרשות הרבים. אם הוציא או הכניס פסור:

"As it is unlawful to move any thing in the place called Karmelith, so it is unlawful to carry any thing out of it into a public or private jurisdiction, or, vice versa, to introduce any thing from either of these into the Karmelith. But if any one does either he is not guilty," that is, he is only to get a flogging, but not to be stoned. An unlearned man who had already seen something conveyed by the above expedient might easily be led to commit an offence of this kind. His untutored mind might not perceive why the one should be sinful, if the other was lawful, but such an

assertion of common sense would draw down certain chastisement. At all events, he might be tempted to put his head from one jurisdiction into another, especially if he was standing in the street, and was offered a drink by a friend in a house, he might put his head into the window and take what was offered, but would soon find, to his cost, that he had broken one of the Sabbatic laws.

לא יטמא אדם ב"ה ויציא ראשו ל"ה וישתה אם או יטמא אלא אם כן יכניס ראשו ורובו למקום שהיה שוחה רכין שהוא צריך לאלו המים אנו דושטין שמה יבואם אלו אבל מותר לעמוד ב"ה או ב"ה ולשתות בכרמלית:

"A man may not stand in a private jurisdiction, and put forth his hand into a public jurisdiction, and then drink, or vice versa. But if he does so, let him introduce his head and most of his body into the place in which he drinks, for as he wants the water, we fear lest he should take it to himself (into the place where he is standing). But it is lawful to stand in a private or public jurisdiction and drink in that which is called Karmelith." (Orach Chaim, 349.) It is evident that no unlearned man can stand a fair chance with laws like these. He could not hope even to escape corporal punishment. But if the accurate observance of such laws was the condition of salvation, he would have reason to despair. The most honest desire to yield obedience and the utmost exertion of his understanding will not help him, nor compensate for his ignorance. If for instance he should conclude, because it is unlawful for himself to have his head in one jurisdiction and his body in another whilst he is drinking, that it would be equally unlawful for cattle in the same predicament to get food, he would be mistaken. ברמה שדיתה רובה בחוץ והאשה בפנים אוכסין אוחז:

"A beast that has got most of its body outside, and its head inside, may be fed." And if he should take this as the general rule of his conduct, he would be mistaken again, for long-necked animals form an exception.

ובגמל עד שיחא ראשו ורובו בפנים הואיל וצוארו ארוך:

"But in the case of the camel, he must have his head and most of his body inside, because his neck is long." (Hilchoth Shabbath, c. xxv. l.) And so with endless cases which arise from this one distinction of places into four classes. Judaism is in all its parts a religion for the studious, and for them only. For an unlearned man to keep the Sabbath, as the oral law requires, is absolutely impossible. And after all, what good does it bestow upon those who spend their life in the study? Does it improve the heart, or open more abundant views of the Divine mercy, or fill the soul with love to man? That it

sharpens the wit and subtlety, we do not doubt, but that is but small profit to man in general. The criminal law of any country will do the same, and in truth the oral law is very little more than the Rabbinical criminal code. Its great subject is guilty and not guilty. And even in this it does not address itself to the conscience, and lead a man to consider the workings of the heart and the wanderings of the thought, and show him sin at its fountain-head. It is a mere dry detail of external observances, as may be seen from the numerous specimens adduced in these papers, and as might be shown more fully by translating the whole. If real devout feeling and improvement of the heart in the fear of God and the love of man be true religion, we might expect it, if any where, in the Sabbath laws. The Sabbath is that holy day which God has set apart to raise men's thoughts from earth to heaven. It is that period of sacred relaxation on which even the poor and the unlearned may lay aside their worldly cares and occupations, and meditate upon the love and will of God, and that eternity to which he is hastening. In the laws, then, respecting the observance of this day, we might naturally expect the spirit of devotion to be manifested, but in the oral law we look in vain for any thing of the kind. Its directions about the Sabbath are one continued dry detail of external observances, which to a conscientious man acquainted with them must constitute a load upon his conscience, sufficient to make the Sabbath the most unhappy day of all the seven. But as to the poor and labouring classes, who have no time for study, it is impossible that they should know, and much more that they should keep, all that is necessary for the right observation of the Rabbinical Sabbath. If therefore the oral law were true, the poor must lose a large portion of the blessings, and even be in danger of perdition. Nay, if it be true, then we must believe that God has given a religion impossible to be observed by the poor, and offering great advantages to the rich and learned, that is, that He is a respecter of persons, though Moses and the prophets teach the contrary. But we would ask our readers, what use is it to them to profess a religion of which they can never attain a competent knowledge? We venture to affirm that the majority of Israelites do not know enough of the oral law to help them to

keep the Sabbath, much less to observe the six hundred and thirteen commandments; can it be said then that they possess a religion with which they are not acquainted? If the knowledge and practice of the oral law be necessary to constitute a true Jew, ninety-nine out of every hundred must give up their claims to the Jewish name. But then what is to become of the Jewesses, who are not even obligated to learn? Every rabbi will be willing to confess that the women at least are ignorant of the oral law. Can they then have a portion in the world to come? If the knowledge and practice of the oral law be necessary to salvation, they cannot. But if they can be saved without it, then it follows that God has given a law, the knowledge of which is not necessary to salvation. Let every Jew ask himself this question, Am I acquainted with all the precepts of the oral law? If not, can I be saved without this knowledge? If I cannot, then the Jewish religion is one which makes it impossible for the poor to be saved. If I can, then the Jewish religion is of no real use, for I can be saved even without knowing it. Such a religion cannot be from God. His religion is necessary to be known by every man, woman, and child in the world, and the knowledge of it is just as easy to be acquired by the poor and unlearned as by the rich and studious. Let then the poor and the unlearned consider the folly of professing a religion, with which they can never hope to become acquainted, and let them return to the religion of Moses and the prophets, which, by the help of the God of Israel, every one can understand, at least so far as is necessary to salvation. The Bible, like every thing that has God for its author, has beauties discoverable by the eye of the poor, at the same time that it has perfections to exercise the observation and skill of the most learned. And this holy book is the heritage of Israel, which the oral law can never be. The oral law may be the heritage and religion of the rabbies who know it, but it has no more to do with the religion of those who know it not, than the laws of the Chinese. The great majority of the Jewish people might just as well call themselves followers of Confucius. No man can be said to believe in doctrines which he does not know, and can never hope to know: and this is the case with nine-tenths of the oral law.

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