

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE FOR RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MAIMONIDES

Dror Fixler

Maimonides emphasized throughout his written works that knowledge of the natural and exact sciences is essential in order to perform the commandment of loving God. Moreover, Maimonides included the duty of teaching science as part of the commandments of studying Torah. This article explains what led Maimonides to think that learning science is part of studying Torah, and whether contemporary science – that has dramatically changed from Maimonides days – is still considered part of the commandment to study Torah. This article shows that science is actually a bridge between human reason and Divine revelation in the world, and that science is essential to prophecy, leadership, and any person of faith when trying to understand the religious world.

CIRCUMCISION DURING NEONATAL JAUNDICE

Avishai Grinzaig

The Gemara states that a “green baby” isn’t to be circumcised until “his blood drops,” since it’s considered unsafe. Nowadays, most Halachic authorities don’t circumcise a baby who has visible neonatal jaundice, since they believe that is what the Gemara means.

However, neonatal doctors believe that there is a distinction between physiological neonatal jaundice – which is not dangerous at all – and hepatitis, which is dangerous and requires postponement of the circumcision. Contemporary Halachic authorities haven’t accepted the doctors’ opinion, since they view it as contrary to the Gemara and the cautionary advice of Rabbinic sages. This article brings proof from both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, as well as verdicts from the Rishonim to show that the Gemara’s maxim about green babies doesn’t refer to physiological neonatal jaundice. Moreover, the Acharonim didn’t have a clear practice of avoiding circumcision of a jaundiced baby. This article aims to enable circumcision of a baby with physiological jaundice, after consulting with a doctor knowledgeable about neonatal jaundice.

CAN ALL ISRAEL OFFER PASCHAL SACRIFICES IN THE LIMITED
SPACE OF THE HOLY TEMPLE?

Mordechai E. Kislev

This article describes the conduct of pilgrims and priests in offering the paschal sacrifice during the Second Temple period. With simple calculations it is possible to show how the large-scale Passover and holiday offerings were made in the Temple on the fourteenth day of Nissan, and how the population of pilgrims ate them on the fifteenth. It is concluded that hundreds of people on average participated in the offering of a single sacrificial animal. With this understanding, various details of the spectacular pilgrimage culminating in Passover night become clearer.

RECONSTRUCTION AND MATHEMATICAL ANALYSIS OF SUN'S
QUOTA OF THE ANOMALY TABLE FROM RAPHAEL HA-LEVI OF
HANOVER'S BOOK – "LUHOT HA-IBBUR" PART I

Eran Raviv

Raphael Ha-Levi from Hanover (18th century) was groundbreaking in understanding Maimonides' sanctification of the new moon (*Kiddush Hachodesh*) laws, and was one of the founders of computational halachic day schedules. Ha-Levi's book, *Luhot ha-Ibbur*, is divided into two parts: the first part presents tables based on 18th-century astronomy for making astronomical calculations. The second part of the book is based on understanding the computational table's calculation method of Maimonides' laws of *Kiddush Hachodesh*.

The entire book is presented as a cookbook without explaining the assumptions underlying the tables. The author's intention was to publish a third explanatory part of *Luhot ha-Ibbur*, but this part has never been printed. In his article, Ajdler elucidates the historical and scientific background required to understand Ha-Levi's book.

One of the problems that Ajdler leaves unsolved is the sun's quota of the anomaly table = *luach menat hamaslul*. Specifically, the table that is based on modern astronomy is less accurate than Maimonides' table, which is based on Ptolemy's astronomical model.

This article presents a mathematical method to recover the Hanover coefficients by proposing a reconstructed table, and moreover, an alternative hypothesis shows Hanover to be incorrect.

DECISION WHERE NO MAJORITY EXISTS

Itay Lipschutz and Mordechai A. Schwartz

The article analyzes a Talmudic discussion dealing with a decision problem in a controversy in which no opinion has a majority, implying that the standard principle of “majority rules” is not applicable. In the Baraita’s example, three assessors issued three different appraisals for the value of a particular asset (80, 100, 120). The Baraita quotes three Tanaitic opinions regarding the court’s final decision in this case (90, 93.3, 100). The authors analyze the Tanaitic opinions according to the Talmudic discussion, the approaches of the Rishonim to this topic and particularly the various interpretations suggested for the Halachic ruling. The most challenging opinion is that of *Acherim* (93.3), as it seems counterintuitive and even R. Ashi, the editor of the Babylonian Talmud, acknowledged that “we do not understand the reasoning of *Acherim*”. The authors suggest three explanations for the approach of *Acherim* based on different mathematical models. Each issue the same result in the Baraita’s example, but different results in other cases or in generalizations of the problems to n -assessors.

“A WOMAN WHO IS NOT SUBORDINATE TO HER HUSBAND IS THE EXCEPTION” – THE INTER-MARITAL RELATIONSHIP AMONG GUR HASSIDIM

Nava Vasserman

This article discusses the inter-marital relationship in one of the major contemporary ultra-orthodox communities: the Gur Hassidic group. The Gur Hassidim reject the concept of gender equality and maintain a strict hierarchical family structure where even the Gur women see themselves as subservient to men. This is manifested in the intrinsic value attributed to female spirituality, which is considered to be of a lower potential than that of the men. From the women’s perspective, the hierarchical approach to marital relationships is not the result of

an unequal power structure, but is rather a divinely ordained order designed for the optimal functioning of the world. The secondary role of the Gur woman does not marginalize her socially, but helps to crystalize the ideal marital relationship where a woman is always subservient to her husband.

The demand for female submissiveness raises many questions, for example: how can women who have risen due to employment, education or social roles accept with docility their subservient status; how can any community preserve such practices when society at large rejects this value and promotes gender equality?

This article depicts four models describing the reactions of wives to the suppressive demands of their spouses: the appeasement model, the operational model, the manipulative model, and the equality model. While the first two models include women who sympathize with the prevailing ethos, the other two represent an idealized hierarchy which is not necessarily an actual one.

ON EQUALITY IN BURDEN: EXCLUSIONS FROM NEUTRAL
ARRANGEMENTS OF GENERAL APPLICATION ON GROUNDS OF
RELIGIOUS BELIEF, WHEN SUCH ARRANGEMENTS FURTHER NON-
COMPELLING INTERESTS

Shaul Bar Ilan

One of the main issues of the rift within Israeli society is the recruitment of Yeshiva students. This subject is part of the general question whether and to what extent we should exclude religious practice from general legislation. This article begins with an outline of the geometric location of the problem and a description of the positive law, which does not distinguish between those of different beliefs. This law is prevalent both in Israel and in the U.S. When this law finds it correct to exclude a religious belief from a certain arrangement, it grants it to all beliefs. The article describes the problems which may be caused by this approach, and offers an alternative approach, which distinguishes between different beliefs according to objective tests developed by Law and Economics methodology. In conclusion, the article attempts to prove the validity of the proposed approach by interpreting several Torah passages.

THINKING AND TALMUD: AN EXPOSITION OF THE THOUGHT
PROCESSES OF THE SAGES THROUGH THE EXAMINATION OF USING
JUSTIFICATIONS IN THE MISHNA FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A
SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Daniel Raviv

This article examines the phenomenon of the use of justifications in the Mishna, whose main purpose is the description of Jewish laws (*halachot*) without sources, as in the Midrash Halacha, and without giving reasons, as in the Talmud. This article is based on an inter-disciplinary approach which combines various fields of thought together with Jewish sources. The purpose of this article is to expose the intellectual world of the Sages as it is expressed in the Mishna, where the Rabbinic sages apply a system of justifications as a thought process. There is significant value in an inter-disciplinary approach which brings to bear an examination of the intellectual world of the Sages on the discipline of Talmud research. Such an inter-disciplinary approach provides a valuable scientific and pedagogical basis for various target groups across a range of purposes. Among the target groups one can indicate learners who are interested in improving and deepening their study of the Sages' sources by using their thinking skills; teachers who wish to improve their teaching skills by utilizing and developing their students' thinking abilities; and even Talmudic researchers who could be provided with research tools and thinking skills to analyze Talmudic texts and characterize the Sages' thought processes and their way of learning.

This article describes a variety of types of justification processes that are found in the Mishna, and they are sorted according to various criteria. The article also presents some challenging research questions regarding new approaches, both regarding Talmud study, as well as the characterization of the intellectual world of the Sages.