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Honor of Kings

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* and *siyum* on tractate *Avodah Zarah*

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ESSENTIALLY FORBIDDEN

There is a prohibition to consume *bishulei nachrim*,¹ which is adduced² (based on scriptural support)³ from the verse,⁴ “You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink.” (“Just as water isn’t altered... by fire, so, too, food....”) *Poskim*⁵ disagree if utensils that have absorbed taste from *bishulei nachrim* also become forbidden.

Some *poskim* maintain⁶ that since the prohibition of *bishulei nachrim* is “due to intermarriage”⁷ (that is, eating such food may eventually lead to a Jew marrying a gentile woman), the prohibition was not extended to the taste that forbidden food imparts to vessels, since “in such a case, it will certainly not lead to intermarriage.”⁸ **Most** *poskim*,⁹ however, maintain that even the utensils become forbidden, “since **any** food prohibited by the Sages also encompasses what the food exudes.”¹⁰

We can posit that this is analogous to wooden planks that are four {or more} handbreadths wide. Such planks are invalid as *schach*,¹¹ even if they are “flipped on their sides”¹² (“which aren’t four handbreadths”),¹³ since “once they are designated as invalid,” they are invalid “under all circumstances.”¹⁴ The

¹ {Foods cooked by gentiles.}

² *Avodah Zarah* 37b.

³ {In the original Aramaic, “אִסְמַכְתָּא.”}

⁴ *Devarim* 2:28.

⁵ {Sing., “posek”; An expert in Jewish law who provides rulings on matters of Jewish legal interpretation and practice.}

⁶ *Rosh*, cited in *Tur*, “Yoreh Deah,” 113; *Beis Yosef*, ad loc.

⁷ *Avodah Zarah* 35b, Rashi s.v., “vehashlakos”; *Beitzah* 16a, Rashi, s.v., “ein ba’hem”; *Avodah Zarah* 37b, *Tosafos*, s.v., “vehashlakos”; *ibid.*, 38a, s.v., “ella”; *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Maachalos Asuros*,” ch. 17, par. 9; et al.

⁸ *Beis Yosef* on *Tur*, “Yoreh Deah,” 113.

⁹ *Beis Yosef*, *ibid.*; see the sources cited in *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, “*Bishulei Goyim*.”

¹⁰ *Rashba*, cited by *Beis Yosef* on *Tur*, “Yoreh Deah,” 113.

¹¹ {Plant material used for the roofing of a *sukkah*.}

¹² *Sukkah*, 14b; *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Sukkah*,” ch. 5, par. 7; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch* (and Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*), “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 629, par. 18 (in Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, par. 30).

¹³ *Mishneh Torah*, *Tur*, *Shulchan Aruch*, and Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Sukkah* 14b, Rashi, s.v., “pesulah.”

Rogatchover¹⁵ explains¹⁶ that this is true because an object that is decreed forbidden {i.e., planks} because of something else that is {intrinsically} prohibited (a ceiling) becomes “like the prohibited object itself.” (And this is true not only when the “reason for the prohibition” exists). Similarly, in our case, although the **reason** for the prohibition of *bishulei nachrim* is “due to intermarriage,”¹⁷ it now becomes “like the prohibited object itself.” Thus, such food is deemed forbidden even when the reason — potential intermarriage — **no longer exists**.

2.

THE TALMUD’S NARRATIVE ABOUT EATING FROM THE KNIFE OF A GENTILE

The source for the opinion of the majority of *poskim*, one can say, is a narrative recorded at the conclusion of tractate *Avodah Zarah* relating to the laws of *kashering* knives of gentiles {used for non-kosher food}¹⁸ in order “to allow them to be used for cold {kosher} food.” And if we accept that {in that case} the knife was prohibited because it was used by a gentile for **cooking**, we can clarify several perplexing issues about this narrative. As the *Gemara* recounts:¹⁹

Mar Yehudah and Bati bar Tuvi were sitting before King Shvor {of Persia}. An *esrog* was brought before them; {the king} cut a slice and ate it, and then he cut a slice and gave it to Bati bar Tuvi. The king then stuck the knife ten times in the ground.” (As the *Gemara* there teaches, to *kasher* a knife, it must be stuck into the ground ten times.) The king cut a slice and gave it to Mar Yehudah. Bati bar Tuvi said to him {the king}: “And is this man {referring to himself} not Jewish?” The king} replied: “I am certain of that master, but I am uncertain of this master.” (Meaning, “I know that Rav Yehudah is careful to avoid eating anything forbidden, but I am uncertain that you are as careful.” —Rashi.) Others say that the king replied: “Remember what you did last night.” (The Persian custom was to give women to their male guests, and when women were sent to them the previous night, Bati accepted the women, but Rav Yehuda did not. — Rashi.)

¹⁵ {Rabbi Yosef Rosin (1858–1936), one of the foremost Talmudic commentators of the twentieth century.}

¹⁶ *Tzafnat Paneach* on *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Chametz U'Matzah*,” ch. 6, par. 2.

¹⁷ {Rashi on *Avodah Zarah* 35b, s.v., “*vehashelakos*.”}

¹⁸ {As opposed to utensils used for kosher food that was cooked by a non-Jew.}

¹⁹ {*Avodah Zarah* 76b.}

Understood straightforwardly, the difference between the two versions of King Shvor's response is that according to the first, King Shvor said that he wasn't *certain* whether Bati was careful to avoid prohibitions ("I am uncertain of"). According to the second version, however, King Shvor knew with *certainly* that Bati was **not** careful... (as the king said, "Remember what you did last night").

On this basis, the following is unclear: If Bati had welcomed the Persian women and violated a definite prohibition, why did King Shvor, according to the first version, only say, "I am **uncertain** of this master"? We would be hard-pressed to say the two opinions dispute what actually transpired²⁰ — whether "what you did last night" actually happened.

3.

KNIFE IN THE GROUND

Tosafos says²¹ that with his acceptance of the gentile women, Bati did **not** actually sin, because he was a "partially an indentured servant, since he hadn't received his bill of release." And an indentured servant is **permitted** to cohabit with a gentile woman.

[We can say that Rashi (who doesn't clarify that Bati did not transgress a prohibition) and *Tosafos* are consistent with their established positions: Regarding the law that one who says, "I have despaired of {recovering} so-and-so, my servant²² — he {the servant} has no remedy other than through a bill {of release}" (in tractate *Gittin*),²³ Rashi remarks: "*He has no remedy* — with neither a Jewish woman **nor a maidservant**, since he is a partially released...." But *Tosafos* there²⁴ explain (differently than Rashi) that "*he has no remedy*

²⁰ See *Sdei Chemed*, "Klolim, Mem," klal 164.

²¹ *Avodah Zarah* 76b, s.v., "idkar."

²² {By using this wording, the owner is saying that he deems his servant to be ownerless (Rashi on *Gittin* 39b).}

²³ *Gittin* 39b.

²⁴ *Tosafos* on *Gittin* 40a, s.v., "oso."

refers to {marrying} a free woman; however, he may pair up with a maidservant.” The same can be said about Bati, who “hadn’t received his bill of release.” According to Rashi, he was forbidden to pair up with a maidservant,²⁵ and according to *Tosafos*, doing so was permitted (and so, too, with a gentile woman).]²⁶

The following is unclear (according to *Tosafos*): Since Bati did **not** violate any prohibition, why did King Shvor confront him by saying, “Remember what you did last night”?

*Ritva*²⁷ explains:²⁸

King Shvor was unaware of this; therefore, he suspected that just as Bati was not careful to restrain himself from relations with gentile women, he would also not be careful with {eating food processed with} gentile utensils.²⁹ This was obviously incorrect, because an indentured servant is cautioned to keep all prohibitions, and just as he is forbidden to consume pork and *neveilah*,³⁰ he is forbidden to use their {non-kosher} utensils.

However, seemingly, this answer doesn’t fully clarify matters: King Shvor was an “expert in halachah”³¹ (as is also evident from this exchange itself). Thus, it is unreasonable to say that he wasn’t aware of the law that an indentured servant may cohabit with a gentile woman. It is also difficult to say that King

²⁵ And he was similarly forbidden to pair up with a non-Jewish woman. Even though, according to Rashi’s opinion (*Kiddushin* 69a) **and others**, Jewish men are biblically forbidden from having relations with a maidservant (due to the verse “there shall be no promiscuous woman” - *Devarim* 23:18), on the other hand, engaging in licentious relations with a non-Jewish woman in private is only a rabbinic decree* (*Avodah Zarah* 36b). Nevertheless, since the prohibition with a maidservant (according to Rashi) is because “he is partially emancipated,” it can be inferred that he is also forbidden to have relations with a non-Jewish woman.

*Although some opinions hold that this too is a biblical prohibition — see *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, entry “*Boel Aramis*,” (p. 14 ff) **and the sources cited there**.

²⁶ See *Maharit on Kiddushin* 69a.

²⁷ {Rabbi Yom Tov ben Avraham Asevilli, a 13th century sage, known for his commentaries on the Talmud.}

²⁸ *Avodah Zarah*, ad loc.

²⁹ {In the original, “גִּיעוּלֵי נֹכְרִים”; lit., “exudations of non-Jews.” The word “*gi’ulei*” comes from the root “*gimel-ayin-lamed*” (געל), which means “to exude” or “to ooze.” The term “*nachrim*” (נֹכְרִים) refers to non-Jews or foreigners. So, in the context of kashrus, it is generally understood to refer to any liquid or exudation that may have been produced by non-Jews during the cooking or preparation of food.}

³⁰ {*Neveilah* refers to an animal that died by any means other than by kosher slaughter.}

³¹ Rashi and *Tosafos* on *Bava Metzia* 119a.

Shvor didn't know that Bati was still a "partially indentured servant," since Rav Yehudah had **announced** that fact publicly.³²

4.

WHAT WAS THE KING THINKING?

We must also clarify the details of the incident: Bati took {a slice of} the *esrog* from King Shvor and (as it seems from the narrative) ate it. It can be simply explained that he did so [not because he wasn't careful to avoid gentile utensils, or because he wasn't aware of the laws surrounding gentile utensils (because, from his retort, "and is this man not Jewish?," we see he *was* aware and he was offended), but] because if he would not eat something the **king** handed him, it would be deemed to be rebellious.³³ That would have created a life-threatening situation for him,³⁴ which overrides all of Torah's laws — "transgress and do not be killed."³⁵

(This obviously doesn't contradict the fact that **after** Bati saw that King Shvor had shielded Mar Yehudah from committing a sin, Bati bar Tuvi asked, "And is this man not Jewish?" Meaning, why didn't King Shvor also prevent Bati bar Tuvi from sinning?)

What remains perplexing, however, is King Shvor's perspective:

- a) Since King Shvor did not intend to bait anyone with something prohibited,³⁶ why was his **uncertainty** ("I am **uncertain**") whether Bati eschewed

³² *Kiddushin* 69a.

³³ See a **similar** answer in *Avodas Avodah* (by Rabbi Shlomo Kluger) on *Avoda Zarah*, ad loc.

³⁴ See *Chagigah* 5b; *Mishneh Torah*, "*Hilchos Melachim*," ch. 3, par. 8.

³⁵ *Sanhedrin* 74a.

³⁶ Even if we were to argue that Noahides are not prohibited from "placing a stumbling block in front of a blind person" {meaning, to cause another person to violate a prohibition}, (for the opinions regarding this, see *Sdei Chemed*, "*Klalim*," "*mareches Vav*," "*Klal*," 26, sec. 123), we see in this very incident that King Shvor **was** careful in this matter (for whatever reason). As for the fact that he sent them "two maidservants" (the wording of *Tosafos* in *Avodah Zarah*, *ibid.*, and Rashi similarly writes there, "when he sent them...") — this is not relevant to our discussion, as it was a common practice of the Persians. Thus, it was the royal attendants responsible for welcoming the king's guests who had sent the women, and not the king himself (as stated explicitly in *Tosafos*, *Nidah* 47a, s.v. "*masar*").

prohibitions enough reason for King Shvor to cause Bati to stumble for certain by giving Bati something forbidden?

b) Even according to the second version of events, that Bati *did* violate a prohibition the previous night (either in actuality — according to Rashi; or only in King Shvor’s estimation — according to *Tosafos*), this does not justify King Shvor causing Bati to transgress **again**. Bati may not have been able to withstand the great temptation³⁷ of his inclination to sin (with a gentile woman), but he could still have been careful to desist from eating forbidden foods. This point is especially compelling since the casual cohabitation, in private, with a gentile woman (not for the purpose of marriage) is a rabbinic prohibition,³⁸ while the use of gentile utensils³⁹ is **biblically** forbidden.⁴⁰

c) The quandary is even greater: Since King Shvor struck the knife into the ground **anyway** (for Mar Yehudah), he could have done so easily several moments sooner, *before* giving Bati a slice of the *esrog*. That way also King Shvor would have prevented Bati from transgressing. Why did King Shvor wait to push the knife into the ground **after** giving Bati a slice (specifically intending Bati to eat something forbidden)?

³⁷ See *Yoma* 69b; *Kiddushin* 80b ff.; *Mishneh Torah*, end of “*Hilchos Issurei Biah*.”

³⁸ *Avodah Zarah* 36b.

³⁹ {In the original, “*gi’ulei nachrim*”; lit., “purging of {vessels used for cooking by} gentiles.” In other words, use of utensils that belonged to non-Jews, when these utensils may be assumed to have absorbed prohibited substances, is biblically prohibited unless these utensils are first properly purged of these substances. See *Bamidbar* 31:21, and Rashi, ad loc.; and following fn.}

⁴⁰ See *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, vol. 8, entry “*Haggalah*,” beg., and the sources cited there.

5.

WHEN THE REASON NO LONGER EXISTS

We can posit the following solution, with the following preface. The knife was prohibited not because it was used for forbidden foods (in general), causing it to have absorbed {the flavor of forbidden foods} in the house of King Shvor.

That is because, as a **king** — and “there is nothing lacking in a king’s house”⁴¹ — it would be unheard of {for his household staff} to have used the same knife to cut fruit (an *esrog*) and hot meat dishes, etc. Undoubtedly, there were separate knives for fruit; therefore, these knives would not have absorbed any forbidden foods.

The knife would only have been prohibited a result of {being used to cut} ***bishulei nachrim***⁴² — the knife was also used for cooked (and spicy)⁴³ fruit,⁴⁴ and it absorbed {the flavor of} *bishulei nachrim*.⁴⁵

This explains the insight of the second version, according to which King Shvor said, “Remember what you did last night”:

The reason for the prohibition of foods cooked by a gentile is (as mentioned) “due to intermarriage” — “their daughters.” Since Bati was **permitted** (according to *Tosafos*) to consort with “their daughters,” there should be no prohibition for him to eat *bishulei nachrim*. (After all, the {rabbinical} prohibition to eat *bishulei nachrim* was {only enacted} as a safeguard against {the biblical prohibition of intermarrying with} “their daughters.”)

⁴¹ *Shabbos* 153a.

⁴² And we cannot say that based on this, it was permissible to eat it even without sticking the knife into the ground, as all opinions agree the utensils do not forbid what is cooked in them (when the {the quantity of the} cooked dish is greater than the {quantity of prohibited} absorbed “*bishulei nachrim*” with which the cooked dish mixes) — *Shach*, “*Yoreh Deah*,” sec. 113, sub-par. 21. For how do we know that {the quantity of} “*kiddei netilah*” (width of a finger) of the spot where the *esrog* was cut is greater than the quantity absorbed in the knife?

⁴³ {This would cause the flavor of the fruit to be absorbed by the knife.}

⁴⁴ Including fruits that are not eaten raw {and thus the prohibition applies to them}.

⁴⁵ This requires further examination as we are compelled to say that the *esrog* itself was not prohibited due to “*bishulei nachrim*” (even though it is not eaten raw) — as evidenced by Rav Yehudah eating the *esrog* — meaning that it was cooked by a Jew!

And although we've adopted the view (as mentioned in Section 1) that *bishulei nachrim* become "like the prohibited object itself," and therefore, such food {and what it exudes} remain forbidden even when the reason for prohibition no longer exists, this isn't analogous to our case.

(This is aside from the consideration that the rule, "it becomes like the prohibited object itself," applies only when referring to a *specific* object. Meaning, once a *specific* object is "designated as invalid," it remains so "under all circumstances." However, this is not true when logic dictates that the prohibition never applied **in the first place**, since by the strict letter of the law, the reason for the prohibition is not possible. As we see in our case, there are **various** scenarios in which the prohibition of {consuming} foods cooked by gentiles doesn't apply, since in those instances there never was the {concern and} decree "due to intermarriage.")⁴⁶

When a prohibition persists even when its (cause and) reason no longer exist, that only means that there is no longer a concern that {consuming} *bishulei nachrim* will lead to forbidden intermarriages, but the actual prohibition of forbidden intermarriages still exists. In contrast, concerning Bati, this wasn't the case, since for him, there **was no** prohibition of a forbidden intermarriage to begin with. So it makes no sense to say that *bishulei nachrim* was prohibited to him because this could lead possibly to "intermarriage" ("their daughters"), as this was *permissible* for Bati!

Similarly, we can also explain King Shvor's response — "Remember what you did last night" — according to Rashi, who said that Bati was **forbidden** from cohabiting with a gentile woman (although he was a "partially indentured servant"): Since the prohibition of {consuming} *bishulei nachrim* is in place only to prevent {consorting with} "their daughters," King Shvor believed that there was no reason or need to prevent Bati from violating the **safeguard** of the prohibition ("their daughters") {i.e., consuming *bishulei nachrim*}, when Bati did not observe the prohibition itself ({of being intimate with} "their daughters").

⁴⁶ See *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, "*Bishulei Goyim*" (p. 658 ff., p. 666, and the sources cited there).

6.

ANOTHER REASON

On this basis, we can explain, according to the first version of events, why King Shvor did **not** say, “Remember what you did last night”:

Aside from the above reason for the prohibition of {consuming} *bishulei nachrim* — “due to intermarriage” — there is another reason: “For the Jew not to become accustomed to be at {the gentile’s home for} meals and feasts, lest he feed him something not kosher.”⁴⁷

We can posit that the two versions of events in the Gemara are tied to these two reasons, and the Sages disagree as to which is the (primary) one {for the prohibition}: According to {the second version that begins with} “others say,” the (primary) reason is “due to intermarriage”; hence, the response {of King Shvor} was, “Remember what you did last night,” in order to address why Bati did not have to be prevented from {consuming} *bishulei nachrim*. (According to *Tosafos*, it was because he was allowed {to cohabit with} their daughters, and according to Rashi, it was because he was not mindful to avoid {cohabiting with} their daughters, regardless). According to the first version, however, the (primary) reason is: “For the Jew not to become accustomed... lest he feed him something not kosher.” **This** being the reason, the response — “what you did last night” — is irrelevant.

But this remains unclear, as mentioned, according to the first version: How is King Shvor’s claim — “I am uncertain of” — justification for causing Bati to violate something forbidden?

And the following also remains murky according to the version, “others say,” according to Rashi’s interpretation: Granted, Bati was not careful to avoid “their daughters,” and there was, therefore, no obligation to prevent his transgression of a rabbinically instituted safeguard {to preclude cohabitation with} their daughters. However, would it not have been preferable for King

⁴⁷ Rashi on *Avodah Zarah* 38a.

Shvor to stick the knife in the ground {to *kasher* it from *bishulei nachrim*} prior to slicing the *esrog* for Bati (thus automatically preventing Bati from transgressing), especially, as this would not have inconvenienced the king?

7.

THE KING'S HONOR

The explanation of the above:

There is a law⁴⁸ that a person appointed to a position of leadership in a community may not do any {menial} labor in the presence of three {or more} people. Even more so is true for a king.

[Although King Shvor was a gentile, this halachah is based on common sense, which applies also to a gentile, especially to the gentile's personal conduct. And, in general, we must also honor gentile kings.⁴⁹

We can posit that the reason for this is that honoring a king is a corollary of promoting civilized behavior. (As it is taught:⁵⁰ "Were it not for the fear of its (the government's) authority, a man would swallow his neighbor alive"). This obligation also applies to gentiles.⁵¹ Thus, Jews must honor gentiles, as well.]

Hence, due to the king's honor, King Shvor was **not allowed**⁵² to stick the knife in the ground in front of Bati and Mar Yehudah. And since by eating the *esrog* (without the knife being stuck in the ground) Bati would not violate any prohibition, he was, in fact, obligated to eat it, as otherwise his life would be endangered,⁵³ as discussed in Section 4. Therefore, King Shvor had to give him the *esrog* {slice} without first *kashering* the knife.

⁴⁸ *Kiddushin*, 70a; *Mishneh Torah*, "Hilchos Sanhedrin," ch. 25, par. 4; *Tur*, and *Shulchan Aruch*, "Choshen Mishpat," sec. 8, par. 4.

⁴⁹ See Alter Rebbe's "Seder Birchas HaNehenin," sec. 13, pars. 9-10.

⁵⁰ *Avos* 3:2.

⁵¹ See a lengthy discussion regarding this concept in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 5, p. 158.

⁵² Since a king cannot forgo his own honor (*Sotah* 41b).

⁵³ See *Tanya*, "Iggeres HaKodesh," epistle 26, "It becomes (completely) permitted."

Based on this, we can clarify King Shvor's justification why he *did* stick the knife into the ground for Mar Yehudah — "I am certain of that master": The king wasn't saying that he knew that Mar Yehudah would not eat something forbidden, whereas the king was unsure about Bati. Rather, "I am certain" that Mar Yehudah would, **under no circumstances**, eat the *esrog* (despite being allowed to, according to halachah), even if it meant imperiling his life.

Especially, if this {Mar Yehudah} is referring to Rav Yehuda about whom the Gemara⁵⁴ says was of "the previous generation," who would "sacrifice their lives to sanctify Hashem's name" (even when **not** obligated).⁵⁵

Consequently, King Shvor was **duty-bound** to stick the knife in the ground for Mar Yehudah.⁵⁶

Conversely, regarding Bati, about whom King Shvor had said, "I am uncertain," King Shvor was unsure (not if Bati was generally careful to avoid prohibitions, but only) if Bati would sacrifice his life to avoid transgressing. So, as king, he was **not allowed** to forgo his own honor and to perform the chore of sticking the knife into the ground for Bati.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *Berachos* 20a; the Gemara, while recording the incident of King Shvor, calls him "Mar Yehudah," but Rashi (quoted by *Tosafos*) on *Avodah Zarah* 76b, calls him "Rav Yehudah".

⁵⁵ *Eitz Yosef* on *Ein Yaakov*, *Berachos* 20a.

⁵⁶ And it wasn't considered beneath the king's dignity, since the king *kashered* the knife to prevent Mar Yehudah from violating a **prohibition**. This justification is similar to what is mentioned in *Sotah* 41b, that a king may forgo his honor for the sake of a mitzvah (see *Tosafos* there).

⁵⁷ This also explains why King Shvor didn't first serve Mar Yehudah with the *esrog* — seemingly, he should have first honored Mar Yehudah (and he would have not have enabled also Bati from transgressing; and this way, sticking the knife into the ground for would **not** have been for Bati's sake and wouldn't be contravening the king's dignity) — because the king wanted people to **learn a rule** from his conduct: for Bati's sake, the king was **prohibited** to forgo his honor .

8.

JEWISH PRIDE

This incident also teaches us a lesson in serving Hashem:

We are told about two people sitting before King Shvor, who had to pay homage to the king. One of them feared the gentile king, and therefore, he ate a fruit that King Shvor cut with a non-kosher knife, relying on a dispensation that his life was in mortal danger, etc. As a result, the king showed this fellow no respect at all.

The other person, whom King Shvor was “certain of” — certain that he would not violate any prohibition, even one that dishonored the king, to the point of self-sacrifice — specifically, this Jew did not lose the good graces of the king. Moreover, King Shvor overlooked his own honor and inconvenienced himself to serve Mar Yehudah.

Seemingly, the king could have easily summoned a servant to stick the knife into the ground. Alternatively, the king could have even told Mar Yehudah to *kasher* the knife.

But when a gentile sees before him a G-d-fearing Jew who is careful not to sin, to the point of self-sacrifice, the gentile then considers it an **honor** for him (and even an honor for a king)⁵⁸ to be of service to the Jew. And not simply to serve the Jew, but to defer to him and help personally with all the mitzvah’s embellishments.⁵⁹ (For, as mentioned, according to the letter of law, Mar Yehudah would have been permitted to eat a slice from the *esrog* without the knife first being *kashered*.)

By emulating this conscientious conduct, we bring about the “conclusion” of “*avodah zarah*.”⁶⁰ We nullify any vestige of idolatry in the world, leading to a time when “Hashem will have sovereignty”⁶¹ throughout the world, “and Hashem shall become King over all the earth,”⁶² literally, at any moment.

— Based on a talk delivered on Yud-Tes Kislev 5731 (1970)

⁵⁸ As the verse states, “Kings will raise you” (*Yeshaya* 49:23; see *Zevachim* 19a, where it quotes this verse regarding Izgadar, King of Persia).

⁵⁹ {In the original Hebrew, “*hiddurim*,” pl.}

⁶⁰ {A play on the words “*siyum*, conclusion, of (tractate) *Avodah Zarah*,” of idolatry.}

⁶¹ *Ovadiiah* 1:21.

⁶² *Zechariah* 14:9.