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**SYNOPSIS OF SUBJECTS**

OF

**TRACT ABUDA ZARA (IDOLATRY).**

**CHAPTER. I.**

MISHNA I. Three days before the festival of the heathen, it is forbidden to have any business with them. In the future the Lord will take the Holy Scroll in hand, saying, "He who was occupied with it shall appear and receive his reward." The kingdom of Rome will then enter first, etc. After Rome has departed, Persia enters, etc. We have constructed many bridges, conquered many great cities, we were engaged in many wars, all for the sake of Israel to enable them to study the law, etc. "Have we then accepted the Torah, and not fulfilled its commandments?" A Gentile who is occupied with the study of the law is likened to a High-priest, etc. "Lord of the Universe, has then Israel, who has accepted the Torah, observed it?" "Men of ye nations may come and testify that Israel has observed the Torah. Nimrod may testify, etc. There are twelve hours in a day, three hours of which the Lord is occupied with the Torah, etc. There is no smiling by the Lord, since the temple was destroyed. But in the fourth three hours He teaches, etc. There is no Gehenna in the future. But the Lord will take out the sun from its sheath, etc. If not for the fear for government the stronger would swallow the weaker, etc. Concerning the explanation of (Amos, iii. 2) said R. Abuhuh, I will do it in the form of a parable. There was once a creditor of two persons, one a friend and the other an enemy of his. It is advisable for one not to pray singly the additional benediction in the first three hours at the first day of new year. When one performs a meritorious act in this world it precedes him in the world to come. "Three days," etc. Is such a long time needed? is this forbidden because a Jew must not interfere with the idols, or because "Thou shalt not put a stone for the blind"? The prohibition to do business with them refers only to a thing which can be kept in good order until the festival day. It is advisable for one to always arrange the praises of the [Omnipotent](#) first, and thereafter to recite the daily eighteen benedictions. The following are the festivals of the heathens: Kalends, Saturnalia, Kratsin, etc. Adam the first, on the first day of his creation, when he saw the sun set, cried: "Woe is to me, the world is to be returned to chaos, etc." Thirty-two battles the Romans fought with the Greeks, etc. Twenty-six years the Romans kept their

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promise to Israel, and thereafter they failed. The twenty-six years are not counted. The world will continue for six thousand years, the first two thousand of which were a chaos (Tahu), etc. It happened with Antoninus (the Caesar of Rome), who said to Rabbi, etc. (See the whole legend, pp. [16-18](#)). Unklus b. Klenimus embraced Judaism, and the Caesar sent militia to take him, etc. (See the legend, pp. [18-19](#)). There was still another festival in Rome which occurs once in seventy years, on which they would make a well man ride on a lame man, etc. [1-21](#)

MISHNA IV. In a city where the idol is placed, interfering is forbidden inside, but not outside. If, during an idol festival in the city, some stores were there decorated, one must not buy, etc. The following are forbidden to be sold to the heathens; Fir-cones, etc. We have a tradition that the tract Aboda Zara of Abraham the patriarch contained four hundred chapters, etc. Where it is customary to sell small cattle to heathens it is lawful to do so, etc. One must not sell to them bears, lions, and all such things, by which the people can be injured, etc. I walked in the upper market of Ciporas, and I met one of the minim, named Jacob, of the village of Sachania. So taught Josa B. Southyra, etc. (See foot-note, [p. 27](#).) The legend of Eliazer ben Durdaya (28). The leech hath two daughters (crying), "Give, give," *i.e.* minunism--and the government, which are never satisfied, etc. Raba sold an ass to an Israelite who was suspected of selling it to a heathen, etc. He who occupies himself with the Torah, but does not observe bestowing of favors, is similar to him who denies God. The Legend of Eliezer b. Sarta and Chanina b. Tradion when captured by government, [p. 29](#), 30. How Chanina was burned together with the holy scrolls, and what became of his wife and daughter, [p. 31](#), 32. The redeeming of latter by R. Mair (Baal Hanes), [p. 33](#). Happy is he who conquers his evil spirit, as a heroic man, etc. It is advisable to divide one's years into three parts, one-third for the study of Scripture, the second Mishna, and the third Talmud, etc. R. Aqiba when he saw the wife of Tornus Rupers, he laughed and wept, etc. Houses must not be rented to the heathens in Palestine, etc. One must not rent his bath-house to a heathen, but how is it to a Samaritan? etc. [21-40](#)

## CHAPTER II.

MISHNA I. Cattle must not be placed in the inns of the heathens. (See foot-note, [p. 41](#).) "And the cows went straight forward," etc. What does this expression mean? It reads (Jos. x. 13): "And the sun stood still, written in the book of Yasher." What is the book of Yasher? One must not stay alone even with two women. If an Israelite while on the road, happened to be accompanied by a heathen, etc, One must not confine a heathen because she brought up a person to idolatry, etc. A city in which there is no Jewish physician, but a Samaritan and a heathen, the heathen shall circumcise and not the Samaritan. One may employ their (the heathens') services for curing his personal property, etc. Ben Dama was bitten by a snake, Jacob come to heal him with the name of Jesus, but R. Ismael did not allow. With R. Johanan it is different, as he himself was an established physician. Medicines and other remedies for different sickness by different men and women, on pp. [50-53](#). The following things of the

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heathens are prohibited, and the prohibition extends even to the deriving of any benefit therefrom--viz: wine, vinegar, etc. No benefit is to be derived from the dead. Samuel and Ablat, the latter who was a heathen, were sitting together, and cooked wine was brought for them, etc. To fermenting wine no uncovering applies. One, must not pour water which has been uncovered, in the public streets, and also not water cattle with it. The sages forbid date-beer of the heathens, as a safeguard against inter-marriage. The sick heathens who become swollen, and whom uncovered water does not harm, surely ate reptiles, so that their bodies contain poison which prevent the harming effects of the snake-poison. A heathen pilgrim is prohibited only when on his way to the idol, etc. Enamelled vessels, no matter what color, are permissible. Fish oil made by a heathen specialist is permissible. Why did the sages forbid the cheese of Anugiki? Sweet are to me the words of thy friends (the sages who are explaining the law), more than the essence

of the Torah. Compress your lips, one upon the other, and hasten not to propound question, [41-65](#)

MISHNA V. The following are prohibited, but not from deriving benefit from them: Milk, etc. What is the reason for the prohibition of milk? etc. Concerning oil, Daniel has decreed the prohibition according to Rabh, etc. To everything which is not served on the table of noblemen to relish the bread, the prohibition of "cooked by a heathen" does not apply. All that may be eaten in a raw state, may also be eaten when cooked by a heathen. The sea-donkey is allowed, but not the sea-ox; and you remember this by the following mark: the unclean (on earth?) is clean, while the clean is unclean. We are to trust the wife of a scholar as we have trusted her husband. Meat, wine, blue wool that are to be forwarded through a heathen, require each two seals. The following things are allowed to eat, milk milked by a heathen in the presence of an Israelite, honey and honey-cake, etc. Fish entrails as well as fish-rye you may buy only of a specialist, etc. If the vender says, I have pickled the fish and know them to be clean, he is trusted. Praised be the Omnipotent, who puts this world in the hands of guardians! [65-81](#)

### CHAPTER III.

MISHNA I. TO VI. All images are prohibited, for they are worshipped at least once a year. The staff in the hand of the idol. The bird in its hand of the idol. Finally, the sphere is to indicate that it sacrifices itself for the whole globe. If one finds fragments of images, he is allowed to use them, etc. It is taught that a heathen can profane the idol of his fellow heathen as well as his own, while an Israelite cannot profane the idol of a heathen. If one finds vessels with the image of the sun, moon, etc., he must throw them into the salt lake. The human image and that of a nurse are, however, prohibited only when having respectively a measure in the hand and a son in the arms whom she is nursing. One may grind the images and scatter them to the wind, or sink them into the sea, etc. Peroklas, the son of a philosopher, asked once R. Gamaliel at Ako, who was then bathing in the bath of the goddess Aphrodite, etc. R. Gamaliel gave Peroklas an evasive answer; but I (Hama) say it was not evasive, etc., etc,

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The mountains and hills worshipped by heathens are allowed to use, but not the things, brought upon them, etc. Wherever you find a high mountain, an elevated hill, a leafy tree, there is surely an idol there. A town or place bearing the name of an idol should be renamed. If stones absolved fortuitously from a mountain rock, that was worshipped, is their use allowed or not? [82-96](#)

MISHNA VII. TO XV. If a house situated, close by a worship-house of an idol crumbles down, its owner is prohibited from rebuilding it, etc. There are three kinds of houses. There are three kinds of stones. There are three kinds of groves, etc. What is a grove? A tree with an idol under it. R. Simion said: "Any tree that is worshipped. It is not allowed to sit down in the shade of such a tree." Under such a tree is allowed to sow herbs in the winter, but not in summer, etc. To derive any benefit of wood obtained from an idol-grove is prohibited. How is the idol worship of a tree profaned, etc.? [96-103](#)

### CHAPTER IV.

MISHNA I. TO VI. Three stones near one another and beside the Merkules are prohibited. The son of the saints treads on them, should we abstain [therefrom](#)? Who was this son, etc.? One is not liable for slaughtering a blemished animal to an idol, etc. Money, garments, utensils found on the head of an idol are allowed, etc. The use of a garden or bathing place belonging to an idol is allowed when it is gratis, etc. It is common sense that that idol of an Israelite should be forbidden from the very beginning, etc. Whether or no food offered to an idol, if profaned, loses thereby its defilement? There was a pantry in the temple, where the Macabees heaped up the stones of the altar defiled by the Greeks. A heathen can profane his idol as well as that of his neighbor, etc. How is an idol to be profaned? If an Israelite erects a brick to worship it, but does not worship, and a heathen comes, and worships it, it is prohibited, etc. An idol [abandoned](#) by its worshippers in time of peace is allowed. My respect for Rabh and Samuel is so great that I should readily fill my eyes with the ashes of their corpses; none the less, etc. An animal resting in the proximity of an idol becomes unallowable, etc. The animal obtained by the idol-worshippers in exchange for an idol is forbidden [103-119](#)

MISHNA VII. TO IX. If God is displeased with idol-worship, why does he not destroy the idols, etc.? If the heathens worshipped but things not needful to the world, He would surely annihilate them; but they worship the sun, moon, stars and the planets. How is it that so many cripples are cured by the idols in their temples? If one comes to defile himself, the door is opened to him, while when one comes to cleanse himself, he is supported. It is forbidden both to tread and to gather with an Israelite, who prepares the wine while he is unclean, etc. They further warned against contributing toward the conditions defiling the fruit in Palestine, etc. It once happened that an Israelite and a heathen jointly hired and worked a wine-press in the City of Nahardea, etc. A heathen once happened to enter the house of a Jewish wine-seller, etc. R. Johanan b. Arza and R. Jose b. Nehorai were once sitting together indulging a little in

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wine, when a man came in, etc. Does a heathen render the wine prohibited by pouring water into it? Whether it is allowed to hire a heathen for conveying grapes to the wine-press of an Israelite, etc.? A heathen standing near the wine reservoir renders the wine forbidden, provided he has a lien on it, etc. If an Israelite, who has cleansed the wine of a heathen, left it on the latter's premises, etc. When an Israelite buys or rents a house in the courtyard of a heathen, etc. It once happened that Israelites bought of Sarsik, the viceroy, the grapes of a vineyard, etc. [119-134](#)

## CHAPTER V.

MISHNA I. TO V. The wages of a laborer hired by a heathen to work with him, wine for libation are prohibited. How is it when the heathen hires a Jewish laborer to prepare wine in general? Whether or no the use of the money obtained by a heathen from the sale of an idol is all forbidden to an Israelite. Can a citizen- proselyte, a heathen settled down in the land of Israel, on having taking upon himself not to practice idol-worship only, etc. "Jews in prospect such pleasures in your paradise? Do you really mean," said the other, "that there are greater pleasures than this?" If offered wine he poured on grapes, etc. In the case when beer vinegar was intermixed with wine vinegar, or oaten yeast with wheat yeast, etc. The rule is: "a prohibited thing renders another one forbidden," etc. It once happened that a mouse was found in a barrel of beer, and Rabh prohibited the beer. Wine known as being watched, is allowed when transported from place to place by a heathen, etc. "When an Israelite leaves his wine in the

wagon," etc. Jewish wine was once stored up in a house where a heathen and an Israelite lived in the lower and upper floors: respectively, etc. An Israelite and a heathen were once at an inn sitting and drinking wine, etc. In the city of Sumbeditha thieves once intruded into a house, etc. When an army enters a town in time of peace etc. He who sells his wine to a heathen is allowed to use the money, etc. Rabh told the Jewish wine-dealers to have their heathen customers pay in advance, etc. Once an Israelite said to his neighbor: "When I make up my mind to sell this field, I will sell it to you." Later on he sold it to a third party, etc. An Israelite once said to his neighbor: "When I make up mind to sell this field, I will sell it to you for a hundred suz, etc. If the funnel was first used to measure through it into the heathens flask, etc. Devoted wine is prohibited, and renders unallowable even by a minimal quantity. If forbidden wine falls into a reservoir, and simultaneously a pitcher of water, etc. This is the rule: "When the two are of the same kind; a minimal quantity suffices", etc. For how long must the utensils remain glowing in fire, etc. "A knife is cleansed even by grinding it."

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