

Shadows, Shedim & Us

Rabbi Steven L Denker

Deuteronomy 32:17

They sacrificed to **demons**,
no-gods, Gods they had
never known, New ones,
who came but lately, Who
stirred not your fathers'
fears.

יִזְבְּחוּ לַשֵּׂדִים לֹא אֱלֹהִים
לֹא יִדְעוּם חֲדָשִׁים מִקֶּרֶב בָּאוּ
לֹא שְׁעָרוּם אֲבֹתֵיכֶם :

Psalms 106

They worshiped their idols,
which became a snare for
them. (37) Their own sons
and daughters they sacrificed
to **demons**. (38) They shed
innocent blood, the blood of
their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the
idols of Canaan; so the land
was polluted with bloodguilt.

וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ אֶת־עֲצָבֵיהֶם וַיִּהְיוּ לָהֶם
לְמוֹקֵשׁ : (לוז) וַיִּזְבְּחוּ אֶת־בְּנֵיהֶם
וְאֶת־בָּנוֹתֵיהֶם לְשֵׁדִים : (לח)
וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ דָם נָקִי דַם־בְּנֵיהֶם
וּבְנוֹתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר זָבְחוּ לְעֲצָבֵי
כְּנָעַן וַתִּחַנַּף הָאָרֶץ בַּדָּמִים :

Exodus 12:23

For when the LORD goes through to smite the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, and the LORD will pass over the door and not let the **Destroyer** enter and smite your home.

וְעָבַר יְהוָה לְנִגְףֹךָ אֶת־מִצְרַיִם
וְרָאָה אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־הַמַּשְׁקֹוף וְעַל
שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזֹת וּפָסַח יְהוָה
עַל־הַפֶּתַח וְלֹא יִתֵּן הַמַּשְׁחִית
לָבֹא אֶל־בְּתִיכֶם לְנִגְףֹךָ :

Jonah 4:6

The LORD God provided a ricinus plant, which grew up over Jonah, to provide **shade** for his head and save him from discomfort. Jonah was very happy about the plant.

וַיִּמֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים קִיקְיֹון וַיַּעַל
אֶמְעַל לְיוֹנָה לְהַיֹּת צֵל עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ
לְהַצִּיל לוֹ מִרְעָתוֹ וַיִּשְׂמַח יוֹנָה
עַל־הַקִּיקְיֹון שְׂמֵחָה גְדוֹלָה :

Meilah 17b (1)

The demon ben Temalyon went before them and ascended into the emperor's daughter and possessed her. When Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai arrived there, the emperor's palace, he said: Ben Temalyon, emerge! Ben Temalyon, emerge! And once Rabbi Shimon called to him, ben Temalyon emerged and left the emperor's daughter, and she was cured..

קדים הוא על בברתיה דקיסר
כי מטא התם אמר בן תמליון
צא בן תמליון צא וכיון דקרו
ליה נפק אזל

Meilah 17b (2)

When the emperor saw that Rabbi Shimon had cured his daughter, he said to them: Ask from me any reward that you want to ask. And he took them up to his treasury to take whatever they wanted. They found that letter there that contained the decrees against the Jewish people, and they took it and tore it up, and thereby nullified the decrees.

אמר להון שאילו כל מה דאית
לכון למישאל ועיילינהו לגנזיה
לשקול כל דבעו אשכחו ההוא
איגרא שקלוה וקרעוה

Pesachim 111a (1)

The Gemara elaborates: With regard to one who relieves himself between a palm tree and a wall, we said that he places himself in danger only when there are not four cubits of space between the two objects. However, if there are four cubits, we have no problem with it. The demons have enough room to pass, and he will not obstruct them.

הנפנה בין דקל לכותל לא
אמרן אלא דלית ליה ארבע
אמות אבל אית ליה ארבע
אמות לית לן הרבים

Pesachim 111b (2)

And furthermore, even when there are not four cubits, we said there is a problem only when the demons have no other route besides that one. However, if they have another route, we have no problem with it. And with regard to one who passes between two palm trees, we said that he is in danger only if a public domain does not cross between them.

בה וכי לית ליה ארבע אמות
לא אמרן אלא דליכא דירכא
אחרינא אבל איכא דירכא
אחרינא לית לן בה והעובר בין
שני דקלים לא אמרן אלא דלא
פסקינהו רשות

Pesachim 111b (3)

However if a public domain crosses between them, we have no problem with it, as demons are not permitted to cause harm in a public place.

אבל פסקינהו רשות הרבים
לית לן בה

Hullin 107b

Abaye said: The reason for the washing **there** is not on account of the food specifically. Rather, it is **due to** an evil spirit named **Shivta**, who contaminates hands that have not been washed in the morning. As long as one washes his hands in the morning, perhaps he need not wash them again to feed another.

אמר אביי התם משום שיבתא

Leviticus 6:6

A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar, not to go out.

אֵשׁ תִּמְיֵד תִּנְקֹד עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא
תִכָּבֵה׃