Are Pets Kosher? – Handout

# Propriety of Owning Pets

# Bavli – Bava Kamma 15b

For it was taught: R. Nathan says: From where is it derived that nobody should raise a bad dog in his house, or keep a faulty ladder in his house? The Torah teaches: “Thou bring not blood upon thine house.” (Deuteronomy 22:8)

# Bavli - Bava Kamma 80a

Just as the Sages said that one may not raise small domesticated animals, so too they said that one may not raise small undomesticated animals. R. Yishmael says: One may raise “village dogs” (kelavim cofrin), cats, monkeys, and genets, because they serve to clean the house of mice and other vermin.

# Mishneh Torah, Damages to Property 5:2,9

[2] For this reason, the sages prohibited the raising of small cattle or small wild animals in Eretz Yisrael in areas containing fields and vineyards, though they allowed this in the wooded and desert areas of Eretz Yisrael. In Syria, however, such animals may be raised anywhere.

[9] The sages also prohibited the breeding of swine in any place, or of dogs, unless they are chained. One may, however, breed dogs in a town near the border. A dog should be tied up by day and untied at night. The sages said: "Cursed be the man who breeds dogs or pigs," because the damage they do is substantial and frequent.

# Mishnah - Bava Kamma 7:7

It is forbidden to rear pigs anywhere. One should not rear a dog unless it is tied with a chain.

# Rashi on Mishnah Bava Kamma 7:7

**dog** – one that bites and/or barks and causes a woman to miscarry due to fear

# Bavli - Bava Kamma 83a

The Sages taught: A person may not raise a dog unless it is tied with a chain. But he may raise a dog in a city that is close to the border of the country, and in that case he should tie it during the day but may release it at night...

Rabbi Dostai from Biri expounded: “And when it rested, he said: Return, O Lord, to the myriads of the thousands of Israel” (Numbers 10:36). This verse serves to teach you that the Divine Presence does not rest upon the Jewish people if they number fewer than two thousand and two myriads. If they are lacking one individual from this total, and there was a pregnant woman among them, who was fit to complete the number by giving birth, and a dog barked at her and she miscarried, this owner of the dog is found to have caused the Divine Presence to depart from the Jewish people.

# Shulchan Aruch – Chosen Mishpat 409:3

It is forbidden to raise a **bad** dog unless it is tied in chains of iron. But in a city close to the country it is permitted to raise it by tying it at during the day and letting it go at night.

# Bavli - Shabbat 63a

Said R. Shimon ben Lakish "whomever raises a dangerous dog in their home prevents kindness from entering their home..."

# Pesahim 113a

And Rav said to Rav Asi: Do not live in a city where horses do not neigh and where dogs do not bark, as these animals provide security and protection.

# Bavli - Shabbat 90b

Rabbi Yehuda says: Even one who carries out a live non-kosher locust is liable for carrying out any amount, because people store locusts for a child who wants to play with it.

# Feeding Issues

# Feeding Pets Prior to Eating

# Berakhot 40a

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: One is prohibited from eating before feeding his animals, as it is stated: “And I will give grass in your fields for your animals” first and only then: “And you shall eat and be satisfied” (Deuteronomy 11:15)

# Mishneh Torah - Laws of Slaves 9:8

This was the practice of the Sages of the first generations who would give their slaves from every dish of which they themselves would partake. And they would provide food for their animals and slaves before partaking of their own meals.

# Feeding Pets Milk & Meat

# Bavli – Chullin 115b

The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: The Torah states three times: “You shall not cook a kid in its mother’s milk” (Exodus 23:19, 34:26; Deuteronomy 14:21). One verse serves to teach the prohibition against eating meat cooked in milk, and one serves to teach the prohibition against deriving benefit from it, and one serves to teach the prohibition against cooking meat in milk.

# Feeding Pets Chametz on Passover

# Mishneh Torah - Laws of Chametz and Matzah 1:2

On Passover, it is forbidden to derive any benefit from chametz, as the Torah states "Do not eat chametz" (Exodus 13:3); that is, it is not permitted [to be used to derive benefit that leads] to eating.

# Shulchan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 448:7

It is forbidden to give one's animal to a non-Jew to feed it on Passover if he knows that he will feed it barley seeds, which are hametz.

# Removal of Reproductive Organs

# Leviticus 22:24

You shall not offer to the LORD anything with its testes bruised or crushed or torn or cut. You shall have no such practices in your own land, nor shall you accept such [animals] from a foreigner for offering as food for your God, for they are mutilated, they have a defect; they shall not be accepted in your favor.

# Shulchan Aruch, Even HaEzer 5:11

It is prohibited to cause the loss of the seminal organs, whether regarding a human, domesticated animal, wild animal, bird, whether kosher or not, whether in the land of Israel or the diaspora. ..One who castrates a female, whether human or the other species is exempt (Rama: but forbidden).

**Shabbat Issues**

# Pets are Muktza

# Shulchan Aruch, Orach Hayyim 308:40

It is permitted to assist animal and fowl to walk in the yard, namely one holds its neck and side and makes it walk, if the animal requires it. This is as long as one will not lift it in such a way that its feet will be off the ground, because it is Muktze and forbidden to be carried.

**Tags worn by Pets**

# Bavli - Shabbat 54b

**And not with a strap that is between its horns**. If according to Rav, whether an ornament or whether to secure, it is prohibited. If according to Shmuel, if an ornament, it is prohibited; if to secure, it is permitted.

**Using a Leash**

# Bavli - Shabbat 54a

Shmuel said that It is only permitted provided that a handbreadth of the rope does not hang below his hand. Didn’t a Sage of the school of Shmuel teach a baraita: Provided that two handbreadths of the rope do not hang below his hand?

# Mishneh Torah, Sabbath 20:8

It is permissible to pull an animal with its bit and its bridle into the public domain—and that is when it is fit for that bridle, such as a chain for a horse, a bit for a camel and a collar for a dog. But if one takes an animal out with a bridle that does not guard it—such as if he tied a rope in the mouth of a horse—or with a bit that it does not need, since it can be guarded with less that—such as if he took a donkey out with a horse's chain or a cat with a collar—it is surely a load. For any superior or inferior guarding (as opposed to a certain animal's standard guarding) is a load.

**Guide Dogs in the Synagogue**

**Yerushalmi**

Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi states that synagogues and study halls are built to be used by Talmud scholars [to eat and drink there] ...Rabbi Imi instructed the teachers of youngsters [who were present in the synagogue during the course of the day] to permit even a marginal scholar to enter the synagogue with his donkey and his tools [or clothes]

# Bavli – Berachot 63a

Rava said: The synagogue is like one’s house. Just as one objects to a person using his house as a shortcut, but does not mind spitting and wearing shoes therein, so too in the case of a synagogue, a shortcut is prohibited while spitting and wearing shoes are permitted.

# Shulchan Aruch, Orach Hayyim 88

And in the days after menstruation [but before immersion] the custom was to permit, even in the places where they were stringent, in the High Holidays and similar occasions when many assemble to go the Synagogue, them to go to the Synagogue like all other women, for it causes them great sadness, that all are assembled and they stand outside.