Feeding Babies 2: Whose Job Is It Anyways?

Rabbanit Leah Sarna | Drisha Institute for Jewish Education | 6 Kislev 5783

1. Ketubot 59b:6-7

MISHNA: And these are tasks that a wife must perform for her husband: She grinds wheat into flour, and bakes, and washes clothes, cooks, and nurses her child, makes her husband's bed, and makes thread from wool by spinning it. If she brought him one maidservant, i.e., brought the maidservant with her into the marriage, the maidservant will perform some of these tasks. Consequently, the wife does not need to grind, and does not need to bake, and does not need to wash clothes. If she brought him two maidservants, she does not need to cook and does not need to nurse her child if she does not want to, but instead may give the child to a wet nurse. If she brought him three maidservants, she does not need to make his bed and does not need to make thread from wool. If she brought him four maidservants, she may **sit in a chair** [*katedra*] like a queen and not do anything, as her maidservants do all of her work for her. **Rabbi** Eliezer says: Even if she brought him a hundred maidservants, he can compel her to make thread from wool, since idleness leads to licentiousness. Consequently, it is better for a woman to be doing some kind of work. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: Even one who vows that his wife is prohibited from doing any work must divorce her and give her the payment for her marriage contract, since idleness leads to idiocy.

כתובות נייט ב:וי-זי

מַתְנִי׳ וְאֵלּוּ מְלָּאכוֹת שֶׁהָאִשָּׁה עוֹשָׁה לְבַעְלָה: טוֹחֶנֶת, וְאוֹפָה, וּמְכַבֶּסֶת, מְבַשֶּׁלֶת, לְּבַעְלָה: טוֹחֶנֶת, וְאוֹפָה, וּמְכַבֶּסֶת, מְבַשֶּׁלֶת, בַּצֶּמֶר. הָכְנִיסָה לוֹ שִׁפְחָה אַחַת — לֹא טוֹחֶנֶת וְלֹא אוֹפָה וְלֹא מְכַבֶּסֶת. שְׁתִּים — אֵין מַצַּעַת לוֹ הַמְּשָׁה, וְאֵין עוֹשָׁה בַּצֶּמֶר. אַרְבַּע — יוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּקֹתֶדְרָא. רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמֵר: אֲפִילוּ הִכְנִיסָה לוֹ מֵאָה שְׁפָחוֹת — פּוֹפָה לַעֲשׂוֹת בַּצֶמֶר, שֶׁהַבַּטְלָה מְבִיאָה לִידֵי הַמַּדִּיר אֶת אִשְׁתוֹ מִלְעֲשׁוֹת מְלָאכָה — יוֹצִיא וְיִתֵּן כְּתוּבָּה, שֶׁהַבַּטָלָה מְבִיאָה לִידִי יוֹצִיא וְיִתֵּן כְּתוּבָּה, שֶׁהַבַּטָלָה מְבִיאָה לִידִי שִׁיצְמוּם.

2. Ketubot 59b:10-12

§ The mishna mentions among a wife's obligations that she nurses her child. The Gemara suggests: Let us say that the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Beit Shammai, as it is taught in a baraita: If a woman took a vow not to nurse her child, Beit Shammai say: Since she vowed, she must remove her nipple from his mouth and not nurse him. Beit Hillel say: Her husband can compel her, and she must nurse the child even against her will. However, if she was divorced and therefore had no further obligations to her husband, he cannot compel her.

כתובות נ"ט ב:רי-ר"ב

וּמְנִיקָה אֶת בָּנָה. לֵימָא מַתְנִיתִין דְּלָא כְּבֵית שַׁמַּאי. דְתַּנְיָא: נַדְרָה שֶׁלֹא לְהָנִיק אֶת בְּנָה, בֵּית שַׁמַּאי אוֹמְרִים: שׁוֹמֶטֶת דַּד מִפִּיו. בֵּית הַלֵּל אוֹמְרִים: כּוֹפָה וּמְנִיקָתוֹ. נִתְגָּרְשָׁה — אֵינוֹ כּוֹפָה. וְאָם הָיָה מַכִּירָה — נוֹתֵן לְה שְׂבָרָה וְכוֹפָה, וּמְנִיקָתוֹ מִפְנֵי הַסַּכָּנָה.... Nevertheless, **if** the baby **recognized her**, then even after the divorce, her husband may **pay her a salary** as a wet nurse **and compel her to nurse due to** the **danger** that the child will starve if he refuses to nurse from another woman. This *baraita* indicates that according to Beit Shammai a woman has no obligation to nurse her child. If she had a prior obligation to her husband to nurse the child, the vow would not take effect.

...And furthermore, it is taught in a *baraita* that Beit Shammai explicitly say with regard to all women, not specifically in the context of vows: She does not need to nurse if she does not want to. Rather, it is clear that the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Beit Shammai.

ְעוֹד: תַּנְיָא, בֵּית שַׁמַּאי אוֹמְרִים: אֵינָה מְנִיקָה! אֶלָא מְחַוַּוּרְתָּא מַתְנִיתִין דְּלָא כְּבֵית שַׁמַּאי.

רש"י -ועוד תניא - גבי כל הנשים ואפילו בלא נדר: אינה מניקה - אם אינה רוצה:

3. Ketubot 59b:13-60a:3

The Gemara above quotes a baraita where it is taught that if the baby recognized her, her husband can compel her to continue nursing even after she is divorced, but he must pay her for nursing. The Gemara asks: **How old** does the child have to be so that one can assume that he already recognizes his mother? Rava said that Rav Yirmeya bar Abba said that Rav said: Three months, and Shmuel said: Thirty days, and Rabbi Yitzḥak said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: Fifty days. Rav Shimi bar Abaye said: The halakha is in accordance with what Rabbi Yitzhak said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan. The Gemara asks: Granted, Rav and Rabbi **Yoḥanan** are in dispute with regard to the difference between fifty days and three months, as it is possible that **each** baby varies according to its intelligence, as one baby is sufficiently developed at fifty days, while another knows his mother at only three months. However, according to Shmuel, can you find a case like this, a one-month-old baby who recognizes his mother? The Gemara relates: When Rami bar Yehezkel came from Eretz Yisrael, he said: Do not listen to, i.e., do not accept, those principles that my brother Yehuda said in the name of Shmuel, as Shmuel did not establish a particular time with regard to this matter. Rather, this is what Shmuel said: Whenever he recognizes her, i.e., there is no fixed age at which this occurs. One must check each baby to see whether he recognizes his mother.

The Gemara relates: A certain divorcée came before Shmuel, as she did not wish to nurse her son. He said to Rav Dimi bar

כתובות נ"ט ב:ר"ג-ס' א:ג'

אָם הָיָה מַפִּירָה. עַד כַּמָּה? אָמֵר רָבָא אָמֵר רַב יִרְמְיָה כַּר אַבָּא אָמַר רַב: שָׁלשָׁה חֲדָשִׁים, וּשְׁמוּאֵל אָמֵר: שְׁלשִׁים יוֹם. וְרַבִּי יִצְחָק אָמֵר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם. אָמֵר רַב שִׁימִי בַּר אַבָּיֵי: הַלָּכָה כְּרַבִּי יִצְחָק שֶׁאָמֵר מִשׁוּם רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן.

בִּשְׁלָמֶא רַב וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנֶן — כָּל חַד וְחַד כִּי חוּרְפֵּיה. אֶלָּא לִשְׁמוּאֵל, כִּי הַאִּי גַּוונָא מִי מַשְׁכַּחַתְּ לַהֹּ? כִּי אֲתָא רָמֵי בַּר יָחָזְקֵאל, אָמַר: לָא תְּצִיתִינְהוּ לְהָנֵי כְּלָלֵי דְּכָיֵיל יְהוּדָה אֲחִי מִשְׁמֵיה דְּשְׁמוּאֵל. הָכִי אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: כָּל זְמַן שָׁמַכִּירָה.

ָהָהִיא דַּאֲתַאי לְקַמֵּיה דִּשְׁמוּאֵל. אֲמַר לֵיה לְרַב דִּימִי בַּר יוֹסֵף: זִיל בִּדְקַה. אֲזַל Yosef: Go and check her, i.e., verify whether the child recognizes his mother. He went, placed her in a row of women, and took her son in his arms and passed him near them to see how the child would react. When the child reached her, he looked at her face with joy, and she averted her eyes from him, as she did not want to look at him. He said to her: Lift up your eyes, get up and take your son, as it is obvious that he knows you. The Gemara asks: If this is so, then how does a blind baby know and recognize his mother? Rav Ashi said: Through smell and through the taste of her milk.

אוֹתְבַהּ בְּדָרֵי דָנְשֵׁי, וְשַׁקְלֵיהּ לִבְרַהּ וְקָמְהַדַּר לֵיהּ עֲלַיִיהוּ. כִּי מְטָא לְגַבַּהּ, הָּוָת קָא מְסוֵי לְאַפַּהּ כְּבַשְׁתִּנְהִי לְעֵינַהּ מִינֵּיהּ. אֲמַר לַהּ: נְטֹף עֵינִיךּ, קוּם דְּרֵי בְּרִיךְ. סוֹמֵא מְנָא יָדַע? אָמַר רַב אָשֵׁי: בְּרִיקָא וּרְטַעְמָא.

4. I Samuel 1:20-28

Hannah conceived, and at the turn of the year bore a son. She named him Samuel, meaning, "I asked the LORD for him." And when the man Elkanah and all his household were going up to offer to the LORD the annual sacrifice and his votive sacrifice, Hannah did not go up. She said to her husband, "When the child is weaned, I will bring him. For when he has appeared before the LORD, he must remain there for good." Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do as you think best. Stay home until you have weaned him. May the LORD fulfill His word."-h So the woman stayed home and nursed her son until she weaned him. When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, one *ephah* of flour, and a jar of wine. And though the boy was still very young,-b she brought him to the House of the LORD at Shiloh. After slaughtering the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. She said, "Please, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you and prayed to the LORD. It was this boy I prayed for; and the LORD has granted me what I asked of Him. I, in turn, hereby lend him to the LORD. For as long as he lives he is lent to the LORD." And they bowed low there before the LORD.

שמואל א אי:כי-כייח

וַיָהִי לְתָקֻפְּוֹת הַיָּמִים וַתַּהַר תַנַּה וַהַּלֶד בֵּן וַהִּקָרָא אֶת־שָׁמוֹ שָׁמוּאֵל כִּי מֵיהָוָה שָׁאָלְתִּיו: וַיַּעַל הָאִישׁ אֶלְקַנַה וְכָל־בֵּיתֵוֹ לִזְבָּחַ לַיהַנָה אֶת־זֶבַח הַנָּמִים וְאֶת־נִדְרָוֹ: וְחַנַּה לְאׁ עַלֻתָה ַבּי־אָמָרָה לְאִישָּׁה עַד יִגָּמֵל הַנַּעַר וַהַבָּאֹתִיו וְנָרָאָהֹ אֶת־פָּנֵי יִהֹנָה וַיִּשַׁב שָׁם עַד־עוֹלָם: וַיְּאמֶר לָהּ אֶלְקַנָּה אִישָּׁה עֲשָׂי הַסְּוֹב בָּעֵינַיִּךְ שָׁבִי עַד־גַּמָלֶךְ אֹתוֹ אַךְ יַקִם יְהַוָּה אָת־דָּבָרֶוֹ וַתַּשֶׁב הָאִשָּׁה וַתִּינֶק אֶת־בָּנָה עַד־גָּמָלָה אֹתְוֹ: וַתַּעַלֵּהוּ עַמַּה כַּאֲשֶׁר גָמַלַתוּ בָּפַרִים שָׁלשָׁה וָאֵיפָּה אַחָת קַּמַח וְנָבֶל יַּיִן וַתִּבָאָהוּ בִית־יִהֹוָה שָׁלְוֹ וְהַנַּעַר נָעַר: וַיִּשְׁחַטְוּ אָת־הַפָּר וַיָּבָאוּ אֶת־הַנַּעַר אֶל־עֵלָי: וַתֹּאמֶר ֹבֵּי אֲדֹנִי חָי נַפִּשָׁךָּ אֲדֹגֵי אֲנִי הָאִשַּׁה הַנָּצָבֶת עִמְּכָה בַּוֶּה לְהִתְפַּלֵל אֶל־יִהָוָה: אֶל־הַגַּעַר הַזֶּה הִתְפַּלֻלְתִּי וַיָּהֵן יִהַּנָה לִי אֶת־שָׁאֲלַתִּי אֲשָׁר שַׁאַלְתִּי מֵעִמְוֹ: וְגַם אָנֹכִי הִשְׁאִלְתִּהוּ לֵיהֹנֶה כָּל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר הָנָה הִוּא שַׁאָוּל לַיהָֹוֶה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ שָׁם לַיהָוָה: {۵}

5. Radak on I Samuel 1:22:1

Until the boy will be weaned: Until the end of his nursing, and that is the twenty-four months that an infant nurses. And even though they were obligated to bring him [to Shiloh] on

רד"ק על שמואל א אי:כ״ב:אי

עד יגמל. עד תשלם יניקתו והוא עשרים וארבע חדש שהתינוק יונק ואעפ"י שהיו חייבין להביאו משום account of, "every male shall appear" (Exodus 23:17) - our Rabbis, may their memory be blessed, said it was because she saw that he was pampered and weak, so she was concerned lest he fall sick because of the travel.

יראה כל זכורך אמרו רבותינו ז"ל כי ראתה חנה בנער שהיה מעונג וחלוש וחששה שמא יחלה מפני הדרך:

6. Ketubot 60a:4

§ Apropos the period of time during which a child nurses, the Gemara continues to debate different aspects of this matter. The Sages taught in a baraita: A child may continue to nurse until the age of twenty-four months, and from this point forward, if he continues to nurse, he is like one who nurses from a non-kosher animal, as a woman's milk is forbidden to anyone other than a small child; this is the statement of Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Yehoshua says: A child may continue to nurse even for four or five years, and this is permitted. However, if he ceased, i.e., was weaned, after twenty-four months and then resumed nursing, he is like one who nurses from a non-kosher animal.

כתובות ס' א:ד'

תָּנוּ רַבָּנַן: יוֹנֵק תִּינוֹק וְהוֹלֵךְ עַד עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה חֹדֶשׁ, מִכָּאוּ וְאֵילֶךְ — כִּיוֹנֵק שֶׁקֶץ, דְּבְרֵי רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר. רַבִּי יְהוֹשֵׁעַ אוֹמֵר: אֲפִילוּ אַרְבַּע וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים. פֵּירַשׁ לְאַחַר עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה חֹדֶשׁ וְחָזֵר — כְּיוֹנֵק שֶׁקֶץ. אָמַר מָר: מִכָּאוּ וְאֵילֶךְ כִּיוֹנֵק שֶׁקֶץ.

7. Ketubot 60a:12-13

The Gemara continues discussing the aforementioned baraita, which states: If the child ceased nursing after twenty-four months and then resumed, he is like one who nurses from a non-kosher animal. The Gemara asks: How long must he cease nursing to be considered weaned? Rav Yehuda bar Ḥaviva said that Shmuel said: Three days. There are those who say that this was not an amoraic statement, but rather a baraita that is taught by Rav Yehuda bar Ḥaviva before Shmuel: Weaning takes effect after three days.

כתובות סי א:רייב-רייג

פֵּירַשׁ לְאַחַר עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבֶּעָה חֹדֶשׁ וְחָזַר — כְּיוֹנֵק שֶׁקֶץ. וְכַמָּה? אָמַר רַב יָהוּדָה בַּר חַבִיבָּא אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים. אִיכָּא דְּאָמְרִי, תָּנֵי רַב יְהוּדָה בַּר חַבִיבָא קַמֵּיה דִּשְׁמוּאֵל: שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים

8. Ketubot 60a:13-60b:5

The Gemara discusses other halakhot relating to nursing. The Sages taught: A nursing woman whose husband died within twenty-four months of her child's birth may not be betrothed and may not get married until twenty-four months from the day the child was born. The reason for this decree is to protect the child. If she remarries she may become pregnant and may not be able to continue nursing, but her second husband will not be obligated to support the child who is not his son. This is the statement of Rabbi Meir. And Rabbi Yehuda permits getting married after eighteen

כתובות סי א:רייג-סי ב:הי

תָּנוּ רַבְּנַן: מֵינֶקֶת שֶׁמֵּת בַּעְלָה בְּתוֹךְ עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה חֹדֶשׁ — הָרֵי זוֹ לֹא תִּתְּאָרֵס וְלֹא תִּינָשֵׁא עַד עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה חֹדֶשׁ, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר. וְרַבִּי יְהוּדָה מַתִּיר בִּשְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׁר חֹדֶשׁ. אָמַר רַבִּי נָתָן בַּר יוֹסֵף: הֵן הֵן דְּבָרֵי בֵּית שַׁמֵּאי, הֵן הֵן דְּבְרֵי בֵּית הִלֵּל. שֶׁבֵּית שַׁמֵּאי אוֹמְרִים: עֲשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה חֹדֶשׁ, וּבֵית הָלֵּל אוֹמְרִים: שְׁמוֹנָה עֲשֶׂר חֹדֶשׁ, אָמַר רַבַּן שְׁמְעוֹן בֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: אַנִי

months. Rabbi Natan bar Yosef said: These words are the same as the statement of Beit Shammai, and those words are the same as the statement of Beit Hillel, i.e., this is an ancient dispute, as Beit Shammai say: Twenty-four months, and Beit Hillel say: Eighteen months. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: I will decide. According to the one who says twenty-four months, she may marry after twenty-one months, since even if she gets pregnant, for the first three months of pregnancy she can still continue to nurse. According to the one who says eighteen months, she may marry after fifteen months, since the milk becomes spoiled due to pregnancy only after three months. Ulla said: The *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda. And Mar Ukva said: Rabbi Ḥanina allowed me to marry a nursing woman after fifteen months.

אַכְרִיעַ. לְדִבְרֵי הָאוֹמֵר עֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה חֹדֶשׁ — מוּתֶּרֶת לִינְּשֵׂא בְּעֶשְׂרִים וְאָחָד חֹדֶשׁ. לְדִבְרֵי הָאוֹמֵר בִּשְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׁר חֹדֶשׁ — מוּתֶּרֶת לְהִנְּשֵׂא בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ, לְפִי שָׁאֵין הָחָלָב נְעְכָּר אֶלָּא לְאַחַר שְׁלֹשָׁה חָדָשִׁים. אָמַר עוּלָא: הָלֶכָה כְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה. וְאָמַר מָר עוּקְבָא: לִי הִתִּיר רַבִּי חְנִינָא לָשֵׂאת לְאַחַר חַמִּשָּׁה עַשַׂר חֹדֵשׁ.

9. Mishneh Torah, Marriage 21:5-6

There are other tasks that a woman performs for her husband when they are poor; they are: to bake bread in an oven - Ezra ordained that a woman get up early and bake bread so that there will be bread available to give the poor.

She should cook food, wash clothes, **nurse her child**, place straw before her husband's beast - but not before his cattle - and grind [flour].

What does grinding [flour] involve? [Not that the woman actually operates the mill herself,] but that she stays at the mill, sifts the flour and prods the animal [who turns the mill], so that [the operation of] the mill will not be hampered. If it is the [local] custom, for women to grind [flour] using a hand mill, [a woman] should grind [flour in this manner]. When does the above apply? With regard to a poor [couple]. If, however, a woman brings a maid to [the household] or property with which a maid could be purchased, or if the man possesses a maid or funds with which a maid could be purchased, the wife is not required to grind [flour], to bake, to do laundry or to place straw before her husband's beast. If the wife brings two maids to [the household] or property with which two maids could be purchased, or if the man possesses two maids or is [wealthy] enough to purchase two maids, the wife is not required to cook or to nurse her child. Instead, she gives him to a maid to nurse.

משנה תורה, הלכות אישות כ״א:ה׳-ו׳

ָיֵשׁ מְלָאכוֹת אֲחֶרוֹת שֶׁהָאִשָּׁה עוֹשָׂה לְבַעְלַה בִּזְמַן שֶׁהֶן עֲנִיִּים וְאֵלוּ הֶן. אוֹפָה הַפַּת בַּתַּנוּר, וְעֶזְרֵא תִּקֵן שֶׁתִּהָיֶה אִשָּׁה מַשָׁכֶּמֶת וָאוֹפָה כְּדֵי שֶׁתִּהְיֵה הַפַּת מְצוּיָה ַלַעֲנָיַים. וּמִבַשֶּׁלֶת אֵת הַתַּבִשִּׁילִין. וּמְכַבֶּסֶת אֶת הַבְּגָדִים. וּ**מֵינִיקָה אֶת בְּנָה.** וְנוֹתֶנֶת מָבֶן לְפְנֵי בְּהָמְתּוֹ אֲבַל לֹא לְפְנֵי בָּקַרוֹ. וּמְטַחֶנֶת. כֵּיצַד מְטַחֶנֶת. יוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּרַחַיִם וּמִשַׁמֶּרֶת הַקֶּמַח וְאֵינָה טוֹחֶנֶת. אוֹ מְחַמֶּרֶת אַחַר הַבְּהֵמָה כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יִבַּטְלוּ הָרַחַיִם. וָאָם הָיָה דַּרְכַּן לְטָחוֹן בְּרַחַיִם שֶׁל יָד טוֹחֶנֶת: בַּמֶּה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים בַּצְנִיִּים אֲבַל אָם הָכִנִיסָה לוֹ שִׁפְחָה אֲחַת אוֹ נָכָסִים שֶׁרָאוּי לָקנוֹת מֵהֶן שִׁפְּחָה אַחַת אוֹ שֶׁהָיָתָה לוֹ שִׁפְחָה אַחַת אוֹ שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ מַמוֹן בְּדֵי לִקְנוֹת מִמֶּנוּ שִׁפְחָה אַחַת אֵינָה מְטַחֶנֵת וָלֹא אוֹפָה וָלֹא מְכַבֵּסֶת וָלֹא נוֹתֶנֵת מֶבֶן לִפְנֵי בִּהֶמְתוֹ. **הִכְנִיסָה לוֹ שִׁמֵּי** שָׁפָּחוֹת אוֹ נְכָסִים הָרְאוּיִין לִקְנוֹת מֵהֶן שָׁהֵּי שָׁפָּחוֹת אוֹ שֶׁהָיוּ לוֹ שָׁהֵי שָׁפָּחוֹת אוֹ שֶׁהָיָה רָאוּי לִקְנוֹת שָׁתֵּי שְׁפָּחוֹת אֵינָה מְבַשֶּׁלֶת וְאֵינָה מֵינִיקָה אֶת בְּנָה אָלָא נוֹתֶנֶת אוֹתוֹ לַשִּׁפְּחָה לְהֵינִיק:

10. Mishneh Torah, Marriage 21:11-17

During the time a woman nurses her child, she is not compelled to perform as many tasks [as usual], and wine and foods that are beneficial to nursing are added to her support.

If, despite the fact that she was allotted the foods appropriate for her, she desires to eat more or desires to eat other foods, because of the craving in her stomach, she is entitled to eat everything she desires [provided she pays for the additional food] from her own funds. The husband cannot prevent her, saying: "Perhaps she will overeat or eat harmful foods and the child will die." [The rationale is] that the physical pain the woman feels takes priority.

When a woman bears twins, she cannot be compelled to nurse both of them. Instead, she is required to nurse one, while the husband is required to hire a nursemaid for the second child. If a woman desires to nurse another woman's child together with her own, her husband may object and restrict her to nursing only her own child.

Although a woman takes a vow not to nurse her child, she may be compelled to do so until the child - whether a boy or a girl - is 24 months old.

If a woman desires to nurse her child, but her husband objects, claiming that this will mar her beauty, she is given this prerogative, for it is painful for her to part from her child. [This law applies] even if she owns several maids.

If she is poor and would thus be obligated to nurse her child, but her husband is rich, and it is appropriate that his wife not be obligated to nurse his child - if his wife does not desire to nurse, he must hire a nursemaid or buy a maid, even if he did not possess any maidservants beforehand. [The rationale is] that the woman's social standing rises together with that of her husband and does not descend with his. If a woman claims that [her husband] is of [a social standing that] requires him to hire or purchase a maid, and he claims that he is not, the burden of proof is on the woman. [The husband] is not [required] to take an oath.

When a woman is divorced, she cannot be compelled to nurse [her child]. If she desires to nurse the child, [her ex-husband] must pay her a wage. If she does not desire [to nurse], she should give the son to his father, and he should care for him. When does the above apply? When she did not nurse the child

long enough for him to recognize her. If, however, [the child is

משנה תורה, הלכות אישות

כ"א:ר"א-ר"ז

פּוֹחַתִין לָה מִמַּצְשֵׁה יָדֶיהָ וּמוֹסִיפִין לָה פּוֹחַתִין לָה מִמַּצְשֵׁה יָדֶיהָ וּמוֹסִיפִין לָה עַל מְזוֹנוֹתָיהָ יַיִן וּדְבָרִים שָׁיָפִין לְחָלָב. פָּסְקוּ לָה מְזוֹנוֹת הָרְאוּיוֹת לָה וַהֲרֵי הִיא מִתְצַּוָּה לָצֵכל יוֹתֵר אוֹ לָצֶכל מַאֲכָלוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת מִפְּנֵי חֲלִי הַתַּאֲנָה שָׁיֵשׁ לָה בְּבִטְנָה הֲרֵי זוֹ אוֹכֶלֶת מִשֶּׁלָּה כָּל מַה שֶׁתְרְצָה וְאֵין הַבַּעַל יָכוֹל לְעַכֵּב וְלוֹמֵר שָׁאָם תֹּאכֵל יוֹתֵר מִדַּאי אוֹ מַאַכַל מַאֲכָלִים רָעִים יָמוּת הַוָּלָד מִפְּנֵי שָׁצַעַר גוּפָה קוֹדַם:

יֶלְדָה תְּאוֹמִים אֵין כּוֹפִין אוֹתָהּ לְהֵינִיק שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶלֶּא מֵינִיקָה אֶחָד וְשוֹכֵר הַבַּעַל מֵינִיקָה לַשֵּׁנִי. הֲרֵי שֶׁרָצְתָה הָאִשָּׁה לְהֵינִיק כֶּן חֲבֵרְתָהּ עִם בְּנָה הַבַּעַל מְעַכֵּב וְאֵינוֹ מַנִּיחָה אֶלֶּא לְהֵינִיק בָּנוֹ בַּלְבַד:

נָדְרָה שֶׁלֹּא לְהֵינִיק אֶת בְּנָה כּוֹפֶה אוֹתָה וּמֵינִיקָתוֹ עַד שֶׁיּהְיֶה בֶּן כ"ד חֹדֶשׁ אֶחָד הַזָּכָר וְאֶחָד הַנְּקַבָּה. הִיא אוֹמֶרֶת אֲנִי אֵינִיק אֶת בְּנִי וְהוּא אֵינוֹ רוֹצֶה שֶׁתֵּינִיק אִשְׁתוֹ כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹא תִּתְנֵוּל אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁיֵשׁ לָה כַּמָּה שְׁפָחוֹת שׁוֹמְעִין לָה שֶׁצַעַר הוּא לָה לִפְרשׁ מִבְּנָה:

הָיְתָה עֲנִיָּה שֶׁהִיא חַיֶּכֶת לְהֵינִיק אֶת בְּנָה וַהָרֵי הוּא עֲשִׁיר שֶׁרָאוּי לוֹ שֶׁלֹּא הֵינִיק אִשְׁחוֹ אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֵין לוֹ שְׁפָחוֹת אָם לֹא רֲצְתָה לְהֵינִיק שׁוֹכֵר מִינִיקָה אוֹ קוֹנֶה שִׁפְחָה מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהָאשָׁה עוֹלָה עִם בַּעְלָה וְאֵינָה יוֹרֶדֶת: הִיא אוֹמֶרת רָאוּי הוּא לִשְׂכֹר אוֹ לִקְנוֹת שִׁפְחָה וְהוּא אוֹמֵר אֵינוֹ רָאוּי. עָלֶיהָ לְשָׁבוּעַה:

הָאִשָּׁה שֶׁנְתְּגֶּרְשָׁה אֵין כּוֹפִין אוֹתָהּ לְהֵינִיק. אֶלָּא אָם רָצְתָה נוֹתֵן לָה שְׂבָרָה וּמֵינִיקָתוֹ. וְאָם לֹא רָצְתָה נוֹתֶנֶת לוֹ אֶת בְּנוֹ וְהוּא מְטַפֵּל בּוֹ. בַּמֶּה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים שֶׁלֹא הֵינִיקָה אוֹתוֹ עַד שְׁהָכִירָה. אֲבָל אָם הִכִּירָה וַאֲפִלוּ הוּא שֶׁהִכִּירָה. אֲבָל אָם הִכִּירָה וַאֲפִלוּ הוּא able] to recognize his mother, even if [the child] is blind, he should not be separated from his mother because of the [possible] danger [the separation will cause] the child. Instead, the woman is compelled to nurse the child for a wage until he reaches the age of 24 months. [A husband] is not [obligated to] support his divorcee, even when she is nursing his child. In addition to the wage she receives [as a nursemaid], he must, however, provide her with those things that the child needs for clothing, food, drink, salves and the like. A woman who is pregnant is not entitled to any [payment] at all [from her ex-husband].

[The following rules apply after the 24] months have been completed, and the child has been weaned. If the divorcee desires that her son remain in her custody, he is not separated from her until he completes his sixth year [of life]. Instead, his father is compelled to provide him with his sustenance while he lives with his mother.

After the child completes his sixth year, the father has the right to say: "If [my son] is in my custody, I will support him. If, however, he continues to live with his mother, I will not give him anything."

A mother, by contrast, is given custody of her daughter forever, even after [she passes] the age of six.

סוּמָא אֵין מַפָּרִישִׁין אוֹתוֹ מֵאָמוֹ מִפְּנֵי סַכָּנַת הַוָּלָד. אֶלָּא כּוֹפִין אוֹתָהּ וּמֵינִיקָה אוֹתוֹ בְּשָׂכָר עַד כ"ד חֹדֶשׁ: הַגְּרוּשָׁה אֵין לָה מְזוֹנוֹת אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהִיא מֵינִיקָה אֶת בִּנָה אֲבָל נוֹתֵן לָה יוֹתֵר עַל שְׂכָרָה דְּבָרִים שֶׁהַקָּטָן צָרִיךְ לְהֶן מִכְּסוּת וּמַאֲכָל וּמַשְׁקֶה וְסִיכָה וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּזֶה. אֲבָל הַמְצַבֶּרֶת אֵין לָהּ כְּלוּם. שָׁלְמוּ חָדָשָׁיו וּגְמָלַתּוּ אָם רָצְתָה ַהַמְגֹרֶשֶׁת שֵׁיָהָיָה בְּנָה אֶצְלָה אֵין ַמַפְרִישִׁין אוֹתוֹ מִמֶּנָּה עַד שֶׁיִּהְיֶה בֶּן שַׁשׁ שָׁנִים גְּמוּרוֹת. אֶלָא כּוֹפִין אֶת אָבִיו וְנוֹתֵן לוֹ מְזוֹנוֹת וְהוּא אֵצֶל אִמּוֹ. וְאַחַר שֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים יֵשׁ לָאָב לוֹמַר אִם הוא אֶצְלִי אֶתֵן לוֹ מְזוֹנוֹת וְאָם הוּא אַצֶל אָמּוֹ לֹא אֶתֵּן לוֹ מְזוֹנוֹת. וְהַבַּת אָצֶל אָמָה לְעוֹלָם וַאֲפִלּוּ לְאַחַר שֵׁשׁ: