

- A. In the mishnah, it is explained that the sotah ritual can be pronounced in every language. However, it is said the Chalitzah (levirate marriage) can only be spoken in the Lashon Hakodesh.
- היכי דמי?
- a.
- B. It is written that the sotah ritual is performed before a priest, where holy words are written and ingested. The Chalitzah, however, is performed by elders at the town gate. Therefore the Sotah is more ritual and holy than the Chalitzah. The Chalitzah, however, is also holy, as it is said (Deut 4:25) "when you beget children and children's children". It is expected by GD that one must keep his family with children.
- a. **If the Sotah ritual is dealing with such holy things (אי הכי), then it should be recited in Hebrew!**
- C. Counterargument: So the woman understands what is happening
- i. מנל? The Rabbanan says, "We/they make her listen in all the languages she understands - about what does she drink and from what does she drink? How was she made impure and with what is she made impure?" (Sotah 32B) **Prooftext**
- b. **If the woman must understand what is happening to her in the Sotah, then all the more so the Chalitzah should be recited in all languages, so the male understands what will happen to him!**
- D. He doesn't need to understand the same way the sotah does. The man has already refused to wed his brother's wife in front of the elders, and so the wife is not directing her speech to the man, but telling GD that she is forsaken. As it is said, "All the lord has spoken we will do" (Shemot 19,8) The lord spoke and said that a man must marry his dead brother's wife (deut. 4:25). The Chalitzah ritual is not for the man, but for GD to know (from the woman) that this man has broken his order from Deuteronomy 4:25 (above), and has forsaken his family. **Gezerah Shavah**
- a. **However the Chalitzah ritual is done in front of elders of a town, a sort of court. In the Sanhedrin, it is said that when a witness did not speak Hebrew, he was still permitted in court. There, two members who spoke the witness's language, and one who understood the witness's language were elected. They would interpret and report his testimony to the Sanhedrin (Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, Aish.com). Just as other languages were used in the Sanhedrin, shouldn't another language be allowed for the Sotah ritual, which takes place in a court?**
- E. But, It is stated that blessings and curses must be spoken in Hebrew. The Chalitzah is very similar to a curse, as when the husband is spit on, he is immediately shunned and known as "the house of the loosened shoe." So, just as blessings and curses are spoken in Hebrew, so is the Chalitzah, which is like a curse. **Hekesh**
- a. **If the chalitzah, which includes a curse that is spoken, must be said in Hebrew,**
- b. **Then Sotah, which includes a curse that is ingested, as it is written the priest "writes curses on a scroll" (Numbers, 5:23) - all the more so it must be said in Hebrew. **Kal v'chomer****
- F. However, the curse is never said, but internally digested, as it is said "and you shall teach them (commandments) to your **sons**" (Devarim 5,7). Nowhere does it mention women. If women are not allowed to hear the words of the Torah, then they are not

allowed to hear a curse. Therefore, her ingesting the curse has the same weight as hearing the words in hebrew.

a. איני? דכתיב:

“ here the priest is to put the woman under this curse—“may the Lord cause you to become a curse among your people when he makes your womb miscarry and your abdomen swell. 22 May this water that brings a curse enter your body so that your abdomen swells or your womb miscarries.”

“Then the woman is to say, “Amen. So be it.”

- **Here, a Cohen is saying a giving a curse to the woman, and she is blessing it! All of this does not have to be in hebrew. If a woman cannot hear the words of torah, why is it said here not in hebrew?!**

G. The reason is is that the woman is impure. When the priest explains everything to her, he explains “How was she made impure and with what is she made impure”. This implies that the woman is impure when performing this ritual, or is assumed to be impure because the Husband suspects her of cheating. Therefore, hebrew, the Holy language, should not be spoken to or uttered by a person who may be impure! And, because the words of the torah are not being uttered in Hebrew, their holiness is diminished, and the woman is allowed to the the words “amen. So be it” but nothing else, because she is impure.

a. **Also, when the curse is written on a scroll and dipped in the water, the woman ingests it. If a woman cannot hear a curse, or the words of the torah, all the more so should she not ingest it! Why is a woman ingesting a curse written in hebrew?**

H. The woman,if she continues with the ritual to the point of drinking the water, has asserted and is asserting her innocence. At this point, she ingests holy words. If she is pure, these holy words will do nothing, because she is pure and has not offended GD. Because she does not die, her innocence is proved.

i. If she truly is impure, these holy words will act as a curse in her impure body, and “it will enter her, her abdomen will swell and her womb will miscarry, and she will become a curse” (Numbers 5:27). If her body is too impure to hold the holy words, then the words will become a curse and kill her, because she has offended GD with her putting holiness in her impure body. מנלן? It is written after GD killed both of Aaron's sons, "This is what the Lord spoke 'I will be sanctified through those near to Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" When the woman drank the bitter water knowing she was impure, it is just as Aaron's sons, who were drunk (therefore impure) and “went before the LORD” (Vayikra 10:3). Just as the fire consumed Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, so did the bitter water consume the impure woman. **Hekesh** This is why the woman may drink the bitter water, so if she is innocent she may live, and if she is impure she may die.