In three ways did Israel enter the covenant: through circumcision, ritual immersion, and ritual sacrifice.

Circumcision occurred in Egypt as it is said, “but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof” (Ex. 12:48). Moses our teacher circumcised them, because everyone in Egypt failed to fulfill this mitzvah except for the tribe of Levi. On account of this, it was written, “they have kept Thy covenant.” (Dt. 33:9).

Ritual immersion occurred in the desert before the giving of the Torah as it is said, “sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their garments” (Ex. 19:10). And sacrifice [occurred] as it is written, “And he sent the young men of the children of Israel, and they offered burnt-offerings...” (Ex. 24:5). On behalf of all Israel they sacrificed them.

And likewise for the [future] generations when an idolater will want to enter into the covenant and to take shelter under the wings of the Shechinah, and he will accept upon himself the yoke of Torah, he needs circumcision and immersion and the offering of a sacrifice. And if [the convert] is a woman [she needs], immersion and sacrifice as it is said, “[there shall be one statute] both for you, and for the stranger.” (Num. 15:15). Just as you [entered the covenant] through circumcision, immersion and the offering of a sacrifice, so too does a convert in future generations enter through circumcision, immersion and the offering of a sacrifice.

And what is the sacrifice of the convert?. A burnt offering of a beast or two turtledoves or two young doves, both of which will be burnt. But in this time, when there is not there [i.e., at the Temple] sacrifice, [a convert] requires circumcision and immersion, and when the Temple will be rebuilt he will bring a sacrifice.

A convert who was circumcised but was not immersed or who was immersed but was not circumcised is not [considered] a convert until he is both circumcised and immersed, and he is required to immerse in the presence of three. And since this act needs a bet din they may not immerse him on Shabbat and not on Yom Tov or at night. However if they did immerse him [at one of these times], he is [still] considered a convert.
Halacha 7
One may immerse a convert who is a minor with the permission of the bet din because it is a benefit for him [to convert]. A pregnant woman who converted and immersed, her child does not need to be immersed [to be considered Jewish. A convert who immersed alone and who converted alone—or even in the presence of two [witnesses]—he is not considered a convert. If he came and said “I was converted in the bet din [Jewish court] of so and so and they immersed me,” he is not considered reliable and we do not allow him to enter the community [i.e., marry into the community as a Jew] until he brings witnesses.

Halacha 8
If he was married to an Israeliite woman or a female convert and he had sons and he said “I converted alone” he is considered reliable to invalidate himself [i.e., to disrupt his own Jewish status], but he is not considered reliable to invalidate his children. And he [must] return and immerse in the presence of a bet din.

Halacha 9
A female convert whom we have observed behaving according to the ways of Israel always, for example that she will immerse during her time of niddah [i.e., menstrual impurity] and she will separate out the terumah portion from her dough [i.e., she abides by the requirements of offering terumah, giving certain portions to the priests] or the like; and, likewise, a male convert who behaves according to the ways of Israel, that he immerses after a seminal emission and he observes all the mitzvot, they are presumed to be gerei tzedek (righteous converts). And even if there are no witnesses there who testify before whom they converted. Even so, if they came to marry an Israeliite we do not allow them to marry until they will bring witnesses or will immerse before us, since they are presumed to be idolaters.

Halacha 10
However, one who came and said that he was an idolater and he immersed in a bet din, he is considered reliable because the mouth that forbid him is the [same] mouth that permitted him. With what [case] are we dealing here? In the land of Israel during the time when the presumption was that everyone was a Jew; but outside of Israel, he is required to bring proof and afterward he may marry an Israeliite woman. And I say this as an additional stringency in the Jewish pedigree.

Halacha 11
A female convert whom we have observed behaving according to the ways of Israel always, for example that she will immerse during her time of niddah [i.e., menstrual impurity] and she will separate out the terumah portion from her dough [i.e., she abides by the requirements of offering terumah, giving certain portions to the priests] or the like; and, likewise, a male convert who behaves according to the ways of Israel, that he immerses after a seminal emission and he observes all the mitzvot, they are presumed to be gerei tzedek (righteous converts). And even if there are no witnesses there who testify before whom they converted. Even so, if they came to marry an Israeliite we do not allow them to marry until they will bring witnesses or will immerse before us, since they are presumed to be idolaters.
Just as we circumcise and immerse converts; so, too, do we circumcise and immerse slaves that are taken from idolaters for the sake of slavery. The one who takes a slave from idolatry and the slave precedes [the handover] and immerses [himself] for the sake of freedom, he acquired his freedom. And if he will say at the time of his immersion, “behold, I am immersing myself before you for the sake of conversion,” or if he immersed in the presence of his master, he does not need to express this [explicitly] since he immersed and is now free. Therefore, his master needs to push him into the water until he comes up [from the water] and he is under his servitude and he must make known to him before the three judges that it is for the sake of servitude that immersed. And a servant only immerses in the presence of three and during the day like a convert, for it is a partial conversion.

**Halacha 12**

כשישחרר העבד יברוח ויבהל את חברו בצפייה בים שבת נפרノー גיורת והיה כשראלו, וואם עריע לקבל עליי פיצת הдолינושה עקריה נהרג ש뽀בייה צשבלי לשם עבירה.

When releasing a slave, he [the slave] needs another immersion in the presence of three during the day during which he will finish his [partial] conversion, and he will be like an Israelite. And he does not need to accept upon himself the mitzvot and they don’t need to make known the essential roots of the religion because they already did this for him when he immersed for the sake of his servitude.

**Halacha 13**

ובמהוТЕ תכשר יגד deut משלכיה איה הגרית ישראל ועהדיה את המשחררים וכל העבדים ואת המנהיגים וכל הדוברות בני הגרים והעבידים.

In a mikveh that is suitable to immerse for niddah, there they immerse converts, slaves, and free slaves. And all things that impede [immersion for] niddah [by blocking the water from totally covering the skin], these things impede [in the case of] converts, slaves and free slaves.

**Halacha 14**

אל יהל דל העבר שמשלים המגורשים את ישראל ואשתם שלהיל ישראלי שגריא דידי יושב דוגויה בנוה שגדirie ובנוריה ובאתי שלום. ואל רם הממודuffs ובמדת וכד הוודיה אולא ישראל והיה כויה באתי שלום. ואת הארץ בהויה אולא ישראל והיה כויה באתי שלום. ואת הארץ בהויה אולא ישראל והיה כויה באתי שלום.

You should not think that Samson, who saved the Jewish people, or Solomon who was called the “dear one of God” married foreign women in their non-Jewish state. Rather the secret of the matter is thus: the correct way to observe the commandment is that when a male or female convert will come to convert, they check up on him [or her], perhaps he is coming for the sake of money that he will take or because of an authority that will benefit them or because of fear he comes to enter into the religion. And if he is a man, they check up on him, perhaps he is doing so because he has cast his eyes on a young man from the young men of Israel. And if we don’t find a reason [to disqualify them], we inform them of the honor of the yoke of the Torah and the burden that is upon the amei ha'aretz [people of the land] in observing it so that they will leave [their desire to convert]. If they accepted, and did not leave and they [the bet din] saw that they [the converts] returned out of love, we accept them, as it is said, “And when she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her.” (Ruth 1:18)

**Halacha 15**

לפי ימי הקהל בתו עד מרד לימי אף שלמה, ביימיו ימי התה ועוד, ובימי שלמה שמחה באב תלמידי ההלכות עמהו וההזהות שמי יישראלי ומי שניהם הם בידיו של שמעון ושמעון עשה מי הגירא בברפיקות.
Therefore, a bet din did not accept converts during all the days of David and Solomon. [The reason is because] in the days of David, perhaps from fear they returned [to convert]; and in the days of Solomon, perhaps because of the sovereignty, goodness, and greatness that were within Israel they returned. For anyone who returns from idolatry because of a vain thing of this world is not considered among the righteous converts. Nevertheless, there were many converts who converted during the days of David and Solomon in the presence of common people [i.e., those less skilled and educated in the law]. And the Sanhedrin suspected them not accepting them after they immersed in any case, and not bringing them close until after their end was clarified (that is, until after they observed their behavior).

Halacha 16

Since Solomon converted his wives and married them and likewise Samson converted [women] married [them], and it is known that these only converted for the sake of something and they did not convert them according to the court, Scripture considers them as if they are still idolaters and they remain in their prohibition. And furthermore, since their ultimate action proved their original [intent] that they were idolaters who built platforms. Therefore, Scripture counted them it as if he [Solomon] built them, as it is said, “Then did Solomon build a high place...” (1 Kings 11:7).

Halacha 17

A convert whom no one checked up on or to whom no one made known the commandments and their punishments, and he was circumcised and immersed before three regular people, he is considered a convert. Even if it was known that he was converting for the sake of some ulterior motive, since he was circumcised and immersed he has left the general category of an idolater, but they suspect him until his righteous intention is clarified. And even if he returns and worships idols, he is still considered like an Israelite apostate, and his betrothal [to an Israelite woman] is still valid. And it is a mitzvah to return his lost property, since after he immerses he is like an Israelite. Therefore, Samson and Solomon kept their wives even though their secret was revealed.

Halacha 18

Because of this our Sages said that “converts are as hard on Israel as a leprous sore” because the majority of them convert with ulterior motives and cause Israel to err. This thing is hard to separate from them once they have converted. Go out and learn what happened in the desert during the incident of the Golden Calf and the kevarot hata'aveh [graves of desire] (see Num. 11), and likewise, it was principally the rabble first during the majority of the times [when the Jews would assemble and try God].
Halacha 1

How do they receive righteous converts? When one comes to convert from idolatry, and they will check up on him, and if they will not find a reason to [disqualify him] they say to him, “what did you see [in Judaism] that you came to convert? Don’t you know that Israel at this time is anguished, pushed around, strained, ravaged and affliction comes upon them?” If he says, “I know I am not worthwhile,” we accept him immediately.

Halacha 2

They inform him of the essential aspects of the religion, which are the unity of God and the prohibition against idolatry. and they expand on this explanation. They inform him of the mitzvot with lighter penalties and some of the mitzvoth with more serious penalties, but they do not expand too much on this explanation. They inform him of the transgression associated [with failing to comply] with the laws of gleanings, forgotten sheaths, leaving the corners of the field, and ma’aser sheni [the second tithe], and they inform him of the punishments of some of the mitzvoth. How? They say to him: “you should know that before you came to the religion if you ate forbidden fat you would not be punished by karet [early death by the hands of heaven], if you profaned Shabbat, you would not be punished by stoning; but now, after you have converted, if you ate forbidden fat you would be punished by karet, if you profaned Shabbat you would be punished by stoning. And they do not expand too much nor are they too exacting for perhaps it will cause trouble and cause him to turn from a good path to a bad path. Because at the outset they only draw a person in with appealing and soft words. And likewise it is said, “I drew them with cords of a man,” and afterwards, “with bands of love” (Hos. 11:4).

Halacha 3

Just as they inform them [the converts] of the punishments of [failing to observe] the commandments, likewise they inform them of the rewards of the commandments, and inform them that in their observance of these mitzvot they will warrant life in the world to come. And that the only truly righteous person is one who is wise, who does these mitzvot and knows them.

Halacha 4

They say to him, “You should know that the world to come is only hidden away for the righteous and they are Israel. The fact that you see Israel suffering in this world shows that the good is hidden away for them, since [Israel] cannot receive the majority of the good [destined for them] in this world like the other nations, for perhaps they would become haughty and they would err and they will lose the reward.
in the world to come. And this matter is said in Scripture, “But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked [--thou didst wax fat, thou didst grow thick, thou didst become gross--and he forsook God who made him, and contemned the Rock of his salvation]” (Dt. 32:15).

**Halacha 5**

A man accepts to become a ‘ger toshav’ and says that he will not worship any idol but follows the commandments of God. But he is not circumcised or immerse, he who accepts upon himself that he will not worship idolatry. Additionally, he accepts the remaining commandments that were commanded to Noah, but he was not circumcised nor did he immerse. We accept him and he is considered one of the pious of the nations of the world. And why do we call him a “toshav”? Because it is permitted us to settle him among us in the land of Israel as we explained in the [section of this book on the] laws of Idolatry.

**Halacha 8**

One can only receive a “ger toshav” during the time when the Jubilee year is observed. However, in this time, even if he accepted upon himself the entire Torah except for one minute law, we do not accept him.

**Halacha 9**

Who is a “ger toshav” [or, a resident alien]? He is an idolater who accepts upon himself that he will not worship idolatry. Additionally [he accepts] the remaining commandments that were commanded to Noah, but he was not circumcised nor did he immerse. We accept him and he is considered one of the pious of the nations of the world. And why do we call him a “toshav”? Because it is permitted us to settle him among us in the land of Israel as we explained in the [section of this book on the] laws of Idolatry.
They don’t say “what did you see [in Judaism] that made you come to convert?” to a slave taken from an idolater, rather they say to him, “is it your will that you will enter into the category of slaves of Israel and will you be one of the suitable ones?” If he wanted to [accept the rules], they inform him of the principles of the religion and a few of the *mitzvot* with lighter and more serious punishments, and their punishments and their rewards just as they inform the convert and they immerse him like a convert, and inform him when he is in the water. And if he did not want to accept, we keep him around another twelve months and [then] sell him to an idolater. And it is forbidden to keep him longer than this. If he stipulated at the outset that he would not be circumcised or would not immerse but he would be a “ger toshav” it is permitted to keep him in his service since he is a “ger toshav.” One may only keep a slave like this during the time of Jubilee.

**Halacha 10**

An idolater who converted and a slave who was freed are like a newborn child. And all blood relatives that he had when he was an idolater or when he was a slave are not considered blood relatives, and if he converted he is not liable for transgressing a general sexual prohibition with any of them at all.

**Halacha 11**

According to Torah law, an idolater is permitted to marry his mother or his maternal sister who converted, but the Sages forbid this thing so that they will not say, “we came from a more severe level of holiness to a lesser level of holiness. That last night this one was forbidden to him, and today she is permitted to him.” Likewise, a convert who cohabited with his mother or maternal sister when she was in her non-Jewish state, it is like one who cohabited with a stranger.
father, despite this, the rabbis did not decree [this prohibition] on his father’s relatives. Therefore, a convert may marry the wife of his paternal brother, the wife of his father’s brother, his father’s wife, and his son’s wife even though they married his brother, his father, his father’s brother, or his son after they converted. Likewise, his mother’s paternal sister, his paternal sister, and his daughter who converted are permitted to him. However he may not marry his maternal sister, nor his maternal aunt, nor a woman who married his maternal brother after he converted. However, if she married his brother when she was an idolater, she is permitted to him.

**Halacha 14**

Twin brothers who were not conceived in holiness [i.e., whose conception took place before conversion] but were born in holiness [i.e., their birth took place after conversion], are liable concerning each other’s wife [and thus may not have intercourse with the wife of the other].

**Halacha 15**

One who marries a woman and her daughter (who both converted), or two sisters from the same mother [who converted], he should stay married to one of them and divorce the second. If he marries a female convert and she dies, he is permitted to marry her mother or daughter, because they [the rabbis] only decreed [this prohibition] during their lifetime. It is permitted for a person to marry two converted sisters from the same father since they [the rabbis] did not decree this for the relatives of the father, as we have explained.

**Halacha 16**

[The rabbis] did not decree [a prohibition] on all the shniot [rabbinically prohibited relatives of secondary relationship] for converts, therefore it is permitted for a convert to marry his mother’s mother. A man may marry a convert and her maternal grandmother or the daughter of her daughter’s daughter, and likewise all the shniot relatives.

**Halacha 17**

A slave is permitted to marry his mother when he is a slave. Needless to say [this is true for] his daughter, sister, and the like. Since he has already left the classification of the idolater, and the sexual prohibitions upon idolaters are not prohibitions for him. But he has not entered into the category of Israel, in order that the sexual prohibitions of the convert apply to him.

**Halacha 18**

It appears to me that if a slave cohabits with a man or beast, we should put him to death, because these two sexual prohibitions are equally applicable among all people.
Slaves that are free, they are like converts, and all that is prohibited to them [converts] and all that is permitted to them, is permitted to them [freed slaves]. A person may give his female slave to his male slave or to his friend’s male slave. He may give one female slave to two male slaves a priori and they do not require anything since they are like beasts. There is no difference whether a female servant is set aside for a [particular male] servant or not, since there is no marriage except within the Jewish people or between idolater and idolater, but not between slave and slave or between slaves and Jews.