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Please kindly dedicate the *מְצוּנָה* of תּוֹרָה לְיַמּוּד involved in using these educational materials, as a זְכוּת for a שְׁלִימָה רְפוּאָה for my brother, בְּיָלָא, אֶלְיָהוּ בֶן בִּילָא.

Note: This shiur is not intended as a source of practical *halachic* (legal) rulings. For matters of *halachah* (practical details of Jewish law), please consult a qualified *posek* (rabbi).

Student's Guide: Multifetal Pregnancy Reduction in *Halacha*

I. Introduction

The focus of this presentation is to explore the *Halachic* permissibility of performing multifetal pregnancy reduction (MPR), by applying the teachings of the Talmud (Mishna and Gemara), Rishonim (medieval-period commentators), *Acharonim* (more recent commentators) and *Poskim* (Halachic decisors).

MPR is an interventional procedure performed by obstetricians in cases of multifetal pregnancies (for our purposes, we will characterize multifetal pregnancy as a triplet or higher order gestation) to reduce the number of fetuses *in utero*, thus increasing the survival probability of the remaining fetuses through a full-term pregnancy. Multifetal pregnancies are associated with several undesirable outcomes including complete pregnancy loss (miscarriage and stillbirth) and preterm birth which is often complicated by neonatal death and long-term disabilities. Reducing the number of fetuses *in utero* to a twin pregnancy leads to improved outcomes, as measured by lower rates of miscarriages, pre-term births and perinatal mortality (see Appendix A). MPR is usually performed between weeks 9 to 12 of gestation and would be medically considered for triplet or higher order pregnancies.

It is understood that the goal of MPR is to optimize the survival chances of the remaining fetuses in cases where there is a high risk of total fetal death without intervention. Yet, since MPR by definition, terminates one or more fetal lives, contemporary *Poskim* and religious physicians have toiled to understand how *Halacha* views this predicament. This dilemma falls into the rubric of the universal question: can we end a life to save another life? Generally, taking a life cannot be justified even if it is the very (and only) means for promoting the survival of another life. This principle is described in the Mishna Ohalot as *Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh* (אין דוחין נפש מפני נפש - we may not push aside one life on account of another life). Nonetheless, in very limited applications discussed below, we are instructed to save a life even if this will lead to the demise of another life. The following describes applications and limits of *Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh* (which will henceforth be referred to as: "*Ain Dochin*") and the relevance to the *Halachic* permissibility of MPR.

In the course of this discussion, we will be exploring two different approaches that may open the door for permitting MPR in cases where the failure to intervene will lead to a high risk of total fetal death. One approach paradoxically is derived from the discussion in the Talmud concerning the ruling that one must give up his or her life not to violate murder (*Yeherag V'al Yaavor*). This is an application of the general principle of *Ain Dochin*. Perhaps the basis for the *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* ruling, which the Talmud describes as a logical reasoning that one may not presume one life is more valuable than any other life, may not apply in a case of multifetal pregnancy if all fetuses are likely to perish without intervention. If this is true, perhaps *Ain Dochin* also will not apply under these conditions and MPR may therefore, be permitted. The second approach for permitting MPR is a derivation of the law of *Rodef* (pursuer), akin to the American legal concept of "justifiable homicide" where a person's life is threatened by another, in which case, the life of the "pursued" party may be saved even at the expense of the life of the "pursuer". We develop this approach through the brilliant writings of Rav Moshe Feinstein, זצ"ל, (who was a leading Halachic decisor, *Posek*, over a half-century period

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in America; henceforth referred to as: "Rav Moshe"), in his magnum opus, *Igrot Moshe*. These approaches are built on two Talmudic sources about which prodigious commentary has been written, in particular, the "obstructed labor" and the "fugitive" cases, which will be explained below with the different interpretations and applications to MPR.

II. Two approaches to potentially permit multifetal pregnancy reduction:

Notwithstanding the general rule of *Ain Dochin*, we look at two approaches that could potentially be applied to permit MPR in certain cases. These approaches originate from two different "life vs. life" discussions in the Talmud: 1) the "coerced murder" case, and 2) the law of the pursuer – "*Rodef*" (רודף).

1. The 'coerced murder' case and the "*Mai Chazit*" (מאי חזית) reasoning:

Key:

α : The coerced person: The Jewish person who was ordered by the governor (hooligan) to kill another Jew (**β**) under the pain of being killed if he refuses.

β : The hooligan's target: The person who **α** is ordered to kill.

- A. The Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin (Source 1) states that avoiding the transgression (*Aveirah*) of לא תרצח (thou shall not kill, *Lo Tirtzach*) is one of the three prohibitions where one must sacrifice his or her own life rather than transgress. This ruling is called *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* ("be killed rather than transgress"). We shall refer to the case mentioned in the Gemara as the 'coerced murder' case in which there were two Jews named " **α** " and " **β** " and one hooligan (the governor). The hooligan coerced **α** : "either you kill **β** or I shall kill you". The *Halacha* is *Yeherag V'al Yaavor*, i.e., **α** must allow himself to be killed rather than kill **β** .

Source 1: Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin 74a: Three cases where *Halacha* requires sacrifice of one's life so as not to transgress - *Yeherag V'al Yaavor*:

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| Rav Yochanan said in the name of Rav Shimon son of Yehotzadak: They took a vote and decided in the attic of Nitzah's home in Lod: Concerning all prohibitions in the Torah, if they tell a person: "transgress and you will not be killed (but if you refuse to do so, we will kill you)", he should transgress and not allow himself to be killed, except for idol worship, illicit relations and murder (for which a person must sacrifice his life rather than commit any of these three sins). | סנהדרין דף עד עמוד א: אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוֹם רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יְהוֹזָדָק נִמְנוּ וְגָמְרוּ בְּעֵלְמִית בֵּית נִתְזָה בְּלוֹד: כָּל עֲבִירוֹת שֶׁבִּתְוֵרָה אִם אוֹמְרִין לְאָדָם עֲבוֹר וְאֵל תִּהְרַג יַעֲבוֹר וְאֵל יִהְרַג, חוּץ מֵעֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְגִלּוּי עֲרִיּוֹת וְשִׁפְכֵי דָמִים. |
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- B. The Talmud Bavli - Yoma (Source 2) states that the Rabbis deduced the *Halacha* of *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* by *Shfichat Damim* (murder) through a logical reasoning (סברא) which the Gemara refers

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to as “*Mai Chazit*” (מאי חזית) - “for what reason do you presume that your blood is redder? Maybe that man’s blood is redder”.

Source 2: Talmud Bavli - Yoma 82b: Reason for *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* in the ‘coerced murder’ case:

“*Mai Chazit*” - מאי חזית:

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| <p>From where do we know that a would-be (coerced) murderer must sacrifice his life rather than commit murder? It is based on logic (סברא) as we see from the following incident: A certain person (α) came before <i>Rava</i> and told him, “The governor of my village said to me, ‘Go kill So-and-so (β), and if you do not (kill him), I will kill you.’” <i>Rava</i> replied to him (α) “Let him kill you and do not kill (β). <u>For what reason do you presume that your blood is redder (than β’s blood)? Perhaps the blood of that man (β) is redder.”</u></p> | <p>יִמָּא דף פב, עמוד ב: ורוצח גופיה מנא לן? סברא היא. דההוא דאתא לקמיה דרבא אמר ליה אמר לי מרי דוראי קטליה לפלניא ואי לא קטילנא לך. א"ל ליקטלוך ולא תיקטול מאי חזית דדמא דידך סומק טפי דילמא דמא דההוא גברא סומק טפי?"</p> |
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- C. What is the meaning of the reasoning of “*Mai Chazit*” and how does it dictate the *Halacha* of *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* by *Shfichat Damim* (the ‘coerced murder’ case)? The following two approaches are presented:
- i. **Approach 1:** “*Mai Chazit*” operates from a perspective of uncertainty (ספק-perspective), i.e., since we do not know whose life is more valuable, therefore the uncertainty dictates that one maintain a passive approach (שב ואל תעשה) to avoid arbitrarily selecting who should be allowed to live versus who should be killed, even at the pain of his own death (Talmedi Rabbeinu Yonah, Avodah Zara 28b) (Reference 1). Rav Nochum Partzovitz (Reference 2) attributes this approach to Tosfot in Sanhedrin 74b.
 - a. According to this approach, in cases of multifetal pregnancy where there is a high probability of total fetal death without intervention, perhaps MPR may be permitted because the logic of “*Mai Chazit*” should be inapplicable in a situation where everyone is likely to otherwise die since we are not selecting between two parties who should live and who should die. This will be discussed further below.
 - ii. **Approach 2:** “*Mai Chazit*” operates from a perspective of certainty (ודאי-perspective), i.e., since α ’s life and β ’s life are deemed equal, the “*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*” does not apply in the ‘coerced murder’ case. This is the approach of Rashi, as explained by Rav Moshe.
 - a. The “*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*” refers to the ruling that we suspend nearly all *Mitzvot* for the preservation of human life. This ruling is derived from the words “והי בהם” (“and he shall live by them”) as seen in Source 3. The aforementioned Rashi is found in Source 4 and explained in Figure 1.

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Source 3: Basis for the dispensation to suspend nearly all *Mitzvot* for the preservation of human life:
V'Chai Bahem (וְחַי בָּהֶם) – Vayikra 18:5 and Talmud Bavli - Yoma 85b:

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| <p>You shall observe my statutes and ordinances which a man shall do and live by them, I am Hashem.</p> | <p>וְיִקְרָא פֶּרֶק יָחַד: פְּסוּקַת הַ: וְשָׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת מִשְׁפָּטַי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אִתְּכֶם הָאָדָם וְחַי בָּהֶם אֲנִי יְקוּק.</p> |
| <p>Rav Yehuda said in the name of Shmuel: The words “וְחַי בָּהֶם” teach us that <i>he shall live by them (the Mitzvot), and he shall not die by them.</i></p> | <p>יוֹמָא דְּפֵה עֵמוּד בֵּי: אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל ... וְחַי בָּהֶם וְלֹא שִׁימוֹת בָּהֶם.</p> |

Source 4: Rashi's explanation of the “*Mai Chazit*” reasoning: The “*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*” will not

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| <p>The reason why α may not push aside β's life (to save his own life) is: If α kills β, there will be two negative results (“תרת”): β's death and a transgression of an <i>Aveirah</i> (sin). However, if α remains passive, there will be one negative result (“חזא”): α's death, but he will not transgress an <i>Aveirah</i>.</p> | <p>רַשִׁי סְנֵהֲדֵרִין דְּפֵה עַד עֵ"א: ד"ה סְבֵרָא הוּא: שְׁלֹא תִדְחַה נֶפֶשׁ חֲבִירוֹ דְּאִיכָא תִרְתִּי אֲבוּד נִשְׁמָה וְעֵבִירָה מִפְּנֵי נֶפֶשׁוֹ דְּלִיכָא אֲלֵא חֲדָא אֲבוּד נִשְׁמָה וְהוּא לֹא יַעֲבֹר.</p> |
| <p>The Torah only permitted us to violate <i>Mitzvot</i> based on the “<i>V'Chai Bahem-dispensation</i>” because a Jewish life is precious to Hashem (more than <i>Mitzvot</i>).</p> | <p>דְּכִי אָמַר רַחֲמֵנָא לַעֲבֹר עַל הַמִּצְוֹת מִשׁוּם וְחַי בָּהֶם מִשׁוּם דִּיקְרָה בְּעֵינָיו נִשְׁמָה שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל.</p> |

apply in the ‘coerced murder’ case (Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin 74a):

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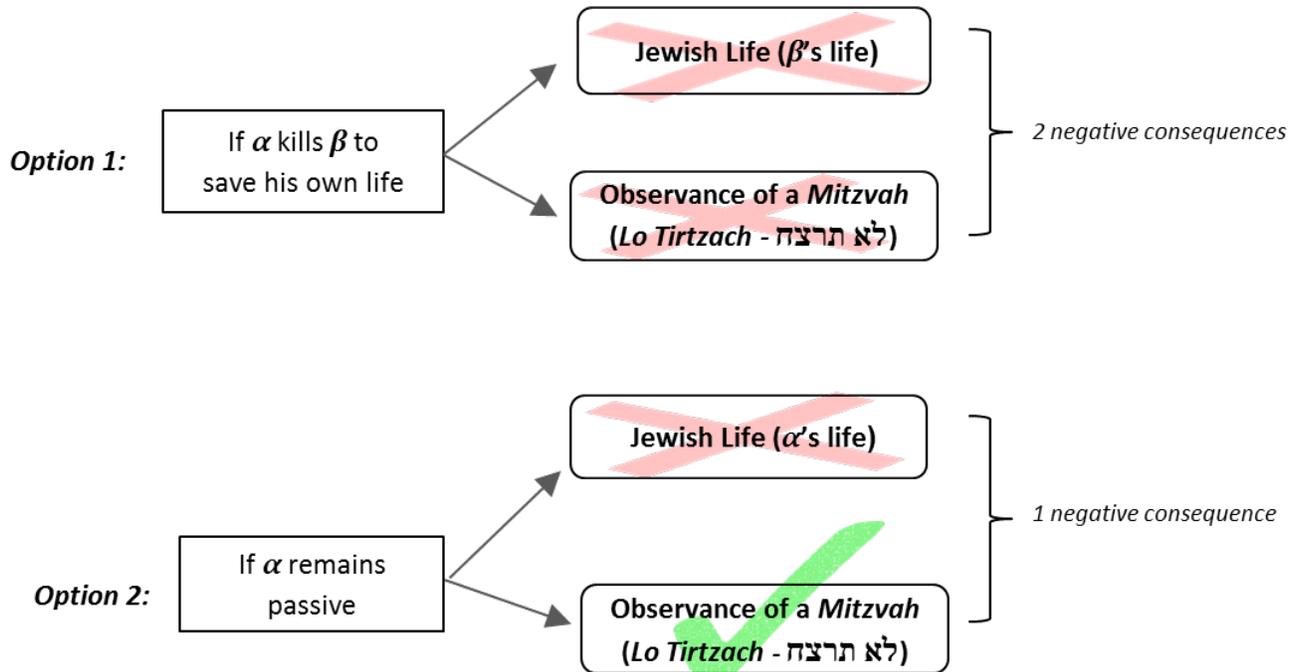
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| <p>However, here, if α kills β, (the "<i>V'Chai Bahem-dispensation</i>" won't apply for the following reason): Since one Jewish life will be anyway lost in the end, why should it be permitted to transgress the <i>Aveirah</i>?</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">והכא גבי רוצח כיון דסוף סוף איכא איבוד נשמה למה יהא מותר לעבור?</p> |
| <p>Who says (<i>lit.</i> who knows) that your (α's) life is more dear to Hashem than your friend β's life?</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">מי יודע שנפשו חביבה ליוצרו יותר מנפש חברו?</p> |
| <p>Therefore, the words of Hashem (<i>Lo Tirtzach</i>) may not be pushed aside.</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">הלכך דבר המקום לא ניתן לדחות.</p> |

Explanation of Rashi: The basis for the ruling of *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* in the 'coerced murder' case is that the "*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*" is not applicable for the following reason: If α would murder β to save his own life (*Figure 1, Option 1*), this would result in two negative consequences: the loss of a life (β 's life) and the transgression of an *Aveirah* (*Lo Tirtzach*). On the other hand, if α remains passive (*Figure 1, Option 2*), only one negative consequence would occur: the loss of α 's life, but no *Aveirah* will transgressed. The entire reason for the "*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*" is that Hashem prefers to forego His *Mitzvot* rather than to lose a Jewish life (נפש ישראל) since a Jewish life is more dear to Him than His *Mitzvot*. However, in the 'coerced murder' case, since a Jewish life will be lost whether or not α transgresses, therefore it is better that α should die without violating His *Mitzvot*. Rashi's argument is referred to by Rav Moshe as: "תרת-נגד-הדא" – "*two negative consequences vs. one negative consequence*".

Figure 1: Rashi's explanation for the *Halacha* of *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* in the 'coerced murder' case, based on the inapplicability of the "*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*".

'Coerced Murder' Case According to *Rashi*:

"תרתני-נגד-הודא" - two negative consequences vs. one negative consequence



“✗” : Denotes the “*abrogation of ...*”, such as the loss of a Jewish life or a violation of a *Mitzvah*.

“✓” : Denotes the fulfillment of a *Mitzvah*.

- **Option 1:** Consequences of (theoretically) utilizing the “*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*”.
- **Option 2:** Consequences of not utilizing the “*V'Chai Bahem-dispensation*”.

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2. Concept of Pursuer - *Rodef* (רודף):

Key:

Pursuer - *Rodef* (רודף): Person who is in the process of endangering the life of a prospective victim

Pursued person - *Nirdaf* (נרדף): The victim, whose life is endangered by the *Rodef*

- A. A pursuer who attempts to kill a victim is called a *Rodef*. The Torah authorizes the victim or anyone else to preemptively take the *Rodef's* life to save the victim (Source 5). This is called the law of *Rodef*.

Source 5: Law of *Rodef*: Saving the victim by killing the pursuer (Mishna - Sanhedrin 73a):

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| These are to be saved at the cost of their (attackers') lives: One pursuing his fellowman to kill him ... | סנהדרין דף עג, עמוד א: וְאֵלֹהֵי הַיָּם שֶׁמֵּצִילִין אוֹתָן בְּנִפְשָׁן הַרֹדֵף אֶחָד תִּבְרֹךְ לְהַרְגוֹ ... |
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- B. For the purposes of this discussion, we will divide pursuit (*Redifah*) into two categories:
- Intentional pursuit: This category refers to the classical *Rodef* who intends to kill or endanger another. This category may perhaps be expanded to a situation where a person displays blatant disregard for another's life by engaging in an activity with the awareness that it may result in loss of a life even if he does not necessarily want anyone dead.
 - Unintentional pursuit: This category refers to the 'pursuer' who has no intention to endanger another, but nonetheless unwittingly poses a threat to another's life. This type of 'pursuer' may be a passive participant in a process that leads to endangerment of another, without knowledge nor intent of any potential harmful consequences. Examples of this category of 'pursuer' are discussed below.
- C. There are two schools of thought whether the law of *Rodef* is only applied in cases of intentional pursuit or even in cases of unintentional pursuit.
- Intentional pursuit only: The law of *Rodef* applies only to cases of intentional pursuit. This approach is taken by Rav Yehoshua Falk (author of the *Sefer Meirat Einayim*), Rav Yosef Babad (author of *Minchat Chinuch*), among many other Talmudic scholars (Reference 3).
 - Intentional and unintentional pursuit: The law of *Rodef* applies to both intentional and unintentional pursuit. This approach is taken by Rav Avrohom Yeshaya Karelitz (author of *Chazon Ish*) and Rav Moshe, among many other Talmudic scholars (Reference 4).
 - However, Rav Moshe adds the following stipulation: In order to apply the law of *Rodef* to the 'unintentional *Rodef*', there may not be mutual, opposing pursuit between the two parties. As will be discussed below, there are situations in which the parties are considered mutual "opposing" unintentional pursuers after each other. In the latter

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case, we say: "*Mai Chazit*" – "why do you presume that party # 1 is more of a pursuer against party # 2 than the converse?" and we must remain passive, even if as a result, some or all people will die through our inaction. Rather, there must be a clear determination that only one party is the definitive *Rodef* before we may apply the law of *Rodef* to actively push aside his life in order to save the other party.

III. Derivation for differing positions whether the law of *Rodef* applies to unintentional pursuit:

1. Mishna - Ohalot: The 'obstructed labor' case (Source 6):

Source 6: Obstructed labor case: When can we save the mother at the expense of the fetus' life?

Mishna - Ohalot 7:6:

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| <p>A woman whose life is endangered during childbirth, we cut the fetus within the womb and remove it limb by limb, because her life takes precedence over its life. However, if the baby's *head has emerged, we do not touch it, for we may not push aside one life on account of another life.</p> <p><small>*According to the text in Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin 72b</small></p> | <p>אהלות פרק ז, משנה ו: האשה נשחיה מקנשה לילד, מחתכין את הנולד במעיה ומוציאים אותו אברים אברים מפני שחיה קודמין לחייו. יצא ראשו, אין נוגעין בו שאין דוחין נפש מפני נפש.</p> |
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Table 1: Obstructed labor: What is the Halacha when only the mother or the baby can be spared?

| Case | Description | What is the <i>Halacha</i> ? | Whose life is spared? | Reason stated in the Mishna |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 'non-emerged fetus' | Fetus is still totally <i>in utero</i> | Cut out the fetus | Mother | The mother's life takes precedence over fetus' life |
| 'partially-emerged fetus' | Baby's head has emerged during birth process | Remain passive | Baby | We may not push aside one life at the expense of another life <i>(Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh)</i> |

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2. Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin 72b (Source 7):

Source 7: Does the law of *Rodef* apply only to an intentional pursuer or even to an unintentional pursuer? Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin 72b.

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| <p>Rav Huna said, If a child pursues his fellow, (the fellow) may be saved at the cost of the child's life Rav Chisda challenged Rav Huna from a Mishnah: If the (baby's) head has emerged we may not touch him for we may not push aside one person's life on account of another person's life. But why not kill the baby – he is a pursuer? The <i>Gemara</i> answers: that (obstructed labor) case is different because they are pursuing her from Heaven.</p> | <p><u>תלמוד בבלי סנהדרין דף עב. עמוד ב:</u> אמר רב הונא קטן הרודף ניתן להצילו בנפשו.... איתיביה רב חסדא לרב הונא יצא ראשו אין נוגעין בו לפי שאין דוחין נפש מפני נפש. ואמאי רודף הוא? שאני התם דמשמיהא קא רדפי לה.</p> |
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3. There are two approaches to explain “משמיהא קא רדפי לה” – “they are pursuing her from Heaven”:

- A. ‘Intentional pursuit only’ school of thought: *Sefer Meirat Einayim, Minchat Chinuch* (Source 8):
The law of *Rodef* does not apply to the ‘partially emerged fetus’ because physiology, rather than volition, has forced the baby to endanger his mother’s life (*per*, Rabbi Dr. Zalman Levine, Reference 5).

Source 8: *Minchat Chinuch, Mitzvah 296*: The law of *Rodef* does not apply to unintentional pursuit.

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| <p>The Mishna in <i>Ohalot</i> states in the case of obstructed labor, that ... once the fetus’ head emerges, we may not touch it because of <i>Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh</i>. The <i>Gemara</i> asks why [don't we save the mother even after the fetus’ head emerges] since the fetus is a <i>Rodef</i> after his mother? The <i>Gemara</i> answers “ שאני לה – “<i>that (obstructed labor) case is different because they are pursuing her from Heaven</i>” – <u>which means to say that the fetus is not a <i>Rodef</i> and therefore it is forbidden to save one life by taking another since <i>Shfichat Damim</i> (murder) is not pushed aside (to save another life).</u></p> | <p><u>מנחת חינוך, מצוה רצו:</u> דהנה מבואר בסנהדרין שם דאף קטן הרודף ניתן להצילו בנפשו. ומקשה הש"ס ממשנה דאהלות ... יצא ראשו, אין נוגעין בו מפני שאין דוחין נפש מפני נפש. ואמאי הא הוי ליה רודף? ומשני הש"ס שאני התם דמשמיהא קא רדפי לה, ואם כן לא הוי רודף ואסור להציל נפש עם נפש אחר כי שפיכת דמים אינו נדחה.</p> |
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- B. ‘Intentional and unintentional pursuit’ school of thought: Rav Moshe explains “... *the phrase לה רדפי לה should not be interpreted that the ‘partially-emerged fetus’ is not a Rodef. Rather it means that because of Heaven’s pursuit, both parties (mother and fetus) are mutual pursuers.*” Since both the mother and ‘partially-emerged fetus’ pursue each other equally and therefore, neither party can be determined to be the definitive *Rodef*.

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IV. Obstructed labor case: Reasons for the difference in Halacha between the 'non-emerged fetus' and the 'partially emerged fetus':

We present two approaches to understand the reason why the mother's life is prioritized over the 'non-emerged fetus', while in the 'partially emerged fetus' case, we do not prioritize any life and instead allow the birth to proceed:

1. The first approach, taken by the *Sefer Meirat Einayim* and the *Minchat Chinuch*, is that the unborn ('non-emerged') fetus does not have the *Halachic* status of a living human being, according to *Rashi* who states that "until a fetus emerges into the air of the world, it is not a deemed a 'Nefesh' (נפש) – a living being" (Source 9). After emergence of the head, the fetus has the *Halachic* status of a living human being.

Source 9: Rashi's explanation of the rulings in the obstructed labor case. Talmud Bavli - Sanhedrin 72b:

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| <p>As long as he (the fetus) has not emerged into the air of the world, he is not a <i>Nefesh</i> (living being) and it is permitted to kill him (and) to save his mother. However, once his head has emerged, one may not touch him since he is as a born person and we may not push aside one life for the sake of another life.</p> | <p>רש"י סנהדרין דף עב ע"ב, ד"ה יצא ראשו: דכל זמן שלא יצא לאויר העולם לאו נפש הוא וניתן להורגו ולהציל את אמו. אבל יצא ראשו אין נוגעים בו להורגו דהוה ליה כילוד ואין דוחין נפש מפני נפש.</p> |
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2. The second approach, which is derived by Rav Moshe from the Rambam (Source 10), is that the dispensation for killing the 'non-emerged fetus' is based on the law of *Rodef*. Similar approaches are taken by Rav Chaim Soloveitchik and Rav Elazar Menachem Man Shach (References 6 and 7). Rav Moshe (Source 11) explains that prior to the emergence of the head (i.e., the non-emerged fetus'), the pursuit between the mother and fetus is unequal and the fetus is determined to be the definitive *Rodef*. However, after emergence of the head, since the pursuit is mutual and equal, no definitive *Rodef* can be determined and we must take a passive approach due to *Ain Dochin*. The same reasoning was advanced by the Talmud Yerushalmi - Shabbat (Sources 12-13).

Source 10: Rambam's view: The 'non-emerged fetus' is viewed as a *Rodef* against the mother. Hilchot Rotzeach U'Shmirat Nefesh 1:9.

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| <p>This is one of the negative commandments not to take pity on the life of a <i>Rodef</i>. On this basis, our Sages ruled regarding a woman in the throes of life-threatening labor, <u>that it is permitted to cut out the fetus in utero, either medicinally or manually, because the fetus is considered a <i>Rodef</i> after her to kill her.</u> However, once the fetus' head emerges, one may not touch it since we may not push aside one life on account of another life and this is the nature of the world.</p> | <p>רמב"ם, פרק א הל' רוצח ושמירת הגוף, הלכה ט': הרי זו מצות לא תעשה שלא לחוס על נפש הרודף. לפיכך הורו חכמים שהעובר שהיא מקשה לילד מותר לחתוך העובר במיעיה בין בסם בין ביד מפני שהוא כרודף אחריה להורגה. ואם משהוציא ראשו, אין נוגעין בו שאין דוחין נפש מפני נפש וזהו טבעו של עולם.</p> |
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Source 11: Rav Moshe: Basis for differentiating between the 'non-emerged fetus' and the 'partially emerged fetus': Law of *Rodef*. *Igros Moshe - Yoreh Deiah, Chelek 2, Siman 60 (2)*.

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| <p>I have written that (when the Gemara states that) the prohibition to kill him (the 'partially-emerged fetus') is due to "מַשְׁמִיא קָא רַדְפִּי לֵה" ("they are pursuing her from Heaven") <u>it is incorrect to interpret (that the reason) that we do not apply the law of Rodef is because the danger occurred through natural means without (the fetus') intent. Rather, since it is Heaven that pursues her, it is considered that both parties are as mutual pursuers after each other since (we see that Heaven has declared that) it is impossible for both to live.</u> Consequently, it is forbidden to kill the fetus due to "Mai Chazit" ("why do you presume that the fetus is any more of a Rodef after his mother than she is Rodefet after the fetus?"). <u>However, this applies only when both parties are equal pursuers, as in the case of the 'partially emerged fetus' who has the identical full Nefesh (life) status as his mother. However, prior to birth, the 'non-emerged fetus' has an incomplete Nefesh status, as we deduce from the fact that one is not liable for capital punishment for killing a fetus. Therefore, regarding the advantage (i.e., the 'Nefesh -differential') that the mother has over the fetus – that she is a complete Nefesh while he is not yet a complete Nefesh - only the fetus is a Rodef and his mother is not a Rodefet. Therefore, we apply the law of Rodef to the fetus because of the advantage that the mother has over him.</u></p> | <p><u>אגרות משה, יורה דעה ח"ב, סימן ס, ענף ב:</u> דהא כתבתי שהא דאסור להרגו משום דמשמיא קא רדפי לה, אינו מחמת שאינו בדין רודף כיון שהוא דרך טבעי שלא בכוננת רדיפה, אלא כיון דמשמיא רדפי לה נחשבו שניהם כרודפים זה את זה מאחר שאי אפשר שיחיו שניהם שלכן אסור מטעם מאי חזית.</p> <p>ואם כן לא שייך זה אלא כשהם רודפים שוים כהא דיצא ראשו שהיא נפש גמור כמו האם. אבל בעובר שעדיין אינו נפש גמור כדחזינן שאין נהרגין עליו, ונמצא שעל היתרון של האם מהעובר שהיא נפש גמור והוא אינו עדיין נפש גמור, הוי רק העובר רודף ואם אינה רודפת. לכן יש להעובר דין רודף מחמת היתרון זה שיש להאם עליו.</p> |
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Source 12: The law of *Rodef* does not apply to the 'partially emerged fetus': Talmud Yerushalmi, Shabbat 14:4.

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| <p><i>Rav Chisda</i> asked, Can you save an adult (who is being pursued) by killing a child (pursuer)? <i>Rav Yirmiya</i> answered, Is this not addressed in the following <i>Mishnah</i> (in <i>Ohalot</i>, above)? "If most of the baby came out we cannot touch it because we may not push aside one life because of another." <i>Rav Yosse son of Rav Bon</i>, quoting <i>Rav Chisda</i> said, That case (the emerging baby) is different because you do not know who is pursuing whom.</p> | <p><u>תלמוד ירושלמי שבת פרק יד, הלכה ד:</u> רב חסדא בעי מהו להציל נפשו של גדול בנפשו של קטן? התיב ר' ירמיה ולא מתני' היא, "יצא רובו אין נוגעין בו שאין דוחין נפש מפני נפש?" ר' יוסה בי ר' בון בשם רב חסדא שנייא היא תמן שאין את יודע מי הורג את מי.</p> |
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Source 13: Explanation of the Talmud Yerushalmi by the P'nei Moshe commentary:

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| <p>That case is different as we do not call the emerging baby a <i>Rodef</i> because we do not know who is pursuing whom. The explanation is: just as the mother is endangered and facing imminent death on account of the baby, so too the baby faces imminent death from her difficult labor. <u>Consequently, we could call her a <i>Rodefet</i> after the baby just as easily as we could call him a <i>Rodef</i> after her.</u> As a result, we leave things as they are (i.e., we allow nature to take its course) without touching the baby.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>פני משה, ירושלמי סנהדרין פרק ח הלכה ט:</u> שנייא היא תמן דלא קרי ליה רודף שהרי אין את יודע מי הורג את מי. כלומר כמו שהיא מסוכנת ועומדת למות מחמת הולד כן נמי הולד עומד למות מחמת קושי לידתה. ויש לקרוא לה רודפת אחריו כמו שהוא רודף אחריה, הילכך מניחין כמות שהוא ואין נוגעין בו.</p> |
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Table 2: Summary of the obstructed labor case: Two different explanations for the *Halachot* pertaining to the 'non-emerged fetus' and the 'partially-emerged fetus' in different situations:

| | | Fetal Position | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | | Prior to emergence of the head (<i>'non-emerged fetus'</i>) | Following emergence of the head (<i>'partially-emerged fetus'</i>) |
| <i>Halacha Stated in the Mishna</i> | | <i>We cut out the fetus to save the mother</i> | <i>We remain passive and allow the birth to proceed</i> |
| Reason Stated in the Mishna | | The mother's life takes precedence over the fetus' life | <i>Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh</i> |
| <i>Explanation of the Mishna's Reason, by:</i> | Minchat Chinuch and Sefer Meirat Einayim | Since the fetus is not a <i>Nefesh</i> (a living being), feticide does not constitute murder. Therefore, the imperative for mother's <i>Pikuach Nefesh</i> (saving her life) overrides the prohibition of feticide. | Since the baby is now a full <i>Nefesh</i>, it is forbidden to save the mother at the expense of the baby's life (which would constitute murder). Thus, we must remain passive. |
| | Rav Moshe <i>(Similar approaches are presented by Rav Soloveitchik and Rav Shach).</i> | The law of <i>Rodef</i> overrides the principle of <i>Ain Dochin</i> . The fetus is pursuing his mother's complete <i>Nefesh</i> , while she is only pursuing his partial <i>Nefesh</i> . Due to the '<i>Nefesh-differential</i>', the fetus is deemed the definitive <i>Rodef</i>. | Since the baby is now a full <i>Nefesh</i> , both the baby and mother are mutual and equal pursuers. Therefore, neither may be viewed as the definitive <i>Rodef</i> and we must remain passive. |

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V. Fugitive case (1): When can the townspeople save themselves at the expense of the fugitive?

Key:

Fugitive: Refers to the individual hiding in the city that the hooligans wish to kill. The hooligans order the townspeople to hand the fugitive over to them.

Townspeople: Refers to the remainder of the people in the city who are ordered by the hooligans to either hand over the fugitive or else they will all be killed.

1. Situation description: A band of hooligans surround a city and demand that the townspeople hand over an individual (fugitive) in the city over to them to be killed or else they will all be killed. The Tosefta Terumot (Source 14) and the Talmud Yerushalmi - Terumot (Source 15) distinguish between a case where the hooligans designate (single out) a specific fugitive to be handed to them versus a case where they simply demand that the townspeople hand any person over to them. If the hooligans do not single out a specific victim, it is forbidden for the townspeople to hand over anyone even though everyone will then be killed. However, if the hooligans single out a specific fugitive to be handed over, under specified conditions, the townspeople may hand him over to save themselves.

Source 14: Fugitive case (I): When can the townspeople save themselves by handing over the fugitive to the hooligans? Tosefta - Terumot 7:20:

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| <p>This is the ruling for a group of people to whom the non-Jews said: "Give us one of you and we will kill him; and if not, we will kill all of you": Let them all be put to death rather than hand over (even) one person of Israel (<i>even if the non-Jews singled him out - per the Matnot Kehuna, Bereishis Rabboh, Perek 94, and Chasdei Dovid on the Tosefta</i>).</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>תוספתא מסכת תרומות פרק ז הלכה כ:</u> סיעה של בני אדם שאמרו להם גוים "תנו לנו אחד מכם ונהרגהו ואם לאו הרי אנו הורגין את כולכם" - יהרגו כולן ואל ימסרו להן נפש אחת מישראל.</p> |
| <p>But if they (the non-Jews) singled out someone (e.g., a "fugitive") in the manner that Sheva ben Bichri was singled out, they should hand him over rather than all being put to death.</p> | <p>אבל אם ייחדוהו להם כגון שייחדו לשבע בן בכרי, יתנו להן ואל יהרגו כולן.</p> |
| <p>Rebbi Yehuda said when does this apply (that we may not hand a person over even if he was singled out)? Only if the fugitive is in the interior (and less susceptible to capture) while the city dwellers are in the exterior (and will likely be killed). However, if both the fugitive and the city dwellers are in the interior, since they will all be killed together, they may hand him over so that all will not be killed.</p> | <p>אמר ר' יהודה במה דברים אמורים בזמן שהוא מבפנים והן מבחוץ. אבל בזמן שהוא מבפנים והן מבפנים הואיל והוא נהרג והן נהרגין, יתנוהו להן ואל יהרגו כולן.</p> |
| <p>As it states "And the woman approached all the people with her wisdom" (Samuel II, Ch. 20). She said to them "since he will be killed and you will be killed, give him over to them so that all of you will not be killed."</p> | <p>וכן הוא אומר ותבא האשה אל כל העם בחכמתה. אמרה להן "הואיל והוא נהרג ואתם נהרגין תנוהו להם ואל תהרגו כולכם."</p> |
| <p>Rebbi Shimon said so she said to them "anyone who rebels against the kingdom of David, is liable to execution."</p> | <p>ר' שמעון אומר כך אמרה להם "כל המורד במלכות בית דוד חייב מיתה."</p> |

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2. Yet, the hooligans' designation of a specific victim (in most cases) is not sufficient to permit handing the fugitive over. In the Tosefta (third statement), Rabbi Yehuda states that the second requirement for permitting handover ('*Mesirah*') is that the fugitive must be unable to escape ('*fugitive without escape capability*') even if they do not hand him over. However, if the fugitive would be able to escape ('*fugitive with escape capability*'), then it is forbidden to hand him over even though he was designated by the hooligans.
3. The dispensation to hand over the 'fugitive without escape capability' is further qualified in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Source 15), where there is a dispute between Rav Yochanan and Rav Shimon son of Lakish (Raish Lakish). Raish Lakish maintains that the fugitive must be deserving of the death penalty in order to permit handing him over. Rav Yochanan argues, stating that even if the fugitive was not deserving of the death penalty, it is permitted to hand him over.

Source 15: Fugitive case (II): When can the townspeople save themselves by handing over the fugitive to the hooligans? Talmud Yerushalmi - Terumot 8:9

This is the ruling for groups of people who were traveling and were accosted by non-Jews, who said: "Give us one of you and we will kill him; and if not, we will kill all of you". Even if all of them will be put to death, they should not hand over even one person of Israel. But if they singled out someone, as in the Sheva ben Bichri episode, they should hand him over and not get killed. Rav Shimon ben Lakish said, This is providing he is subject to the death penalty like Sheva ben Bichri was. But Rav Yochanan said, This applies even if he was not deserving of the death penalty like Sheva ben Bichri was.

תלמוד ירושלמי תרומות פרק ח, הלכה ד:
תני סיעות בני אדם שהיו מהלכין בדרך פגעו להן
גוים ואמרו "תנו לנו אחד מכם ונהרוג אותו ואם
לא תרי אנו הורגים את כולכם", "אפילו כולן
נהרגים לא ימסרו נפש אחת מישראל. ייחדו להן
אחד כגון שבע בן בכרי, ימסרו אותו ואל יהרגו.
אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש והוא שיהא חייב מיתה
כשבע בן בכרי. ורבי יוחנן אמר אף על פי שאינו
חייב מיתה כשבע בן בכרי.

Table 3: Summary of the fugitive case, per the Tosefta and Talmud Yerushalmi:

| Case | Description | Is the fugitive deserving of the death penalty? | Name of the ruling Rabbi | Is handover permitted or forbidden? | Whose life is spared? |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 'fugitive with escape capability' | Fugitive is able to escape if the townspeople do not hand him over | <i>Not applicable</i> | <i>Not applicable</i> | *Forbidden | Fugitive |
| 'fugitive without escape capability' | Fugitive is unable to escape even if the townspeople do not hand him over | No | Rav Yochanan | Permitted | Townspeople |
| | | | Raish Lakish | Forbidden | No one |
| | | Yes | Rav Yochanan and Raish Lakish | Permitted | Townspeople |

*Rashi in Sanhedrin states the reason handover is forbidden is because we may not push aside one life at the expense of another life (i.e., *Ain Dochin*).

VI. Fugitive case (2): Reason for the difference in Halacha between the 'fugitive with escape capability' and the 'fugitive without escape capability':

We present two approaches to understand the reason that it is prohibited to hand over a 'fugitive with escape capability' while it is permitted to hand over a 'fugitive without escape capability':

1. The first approach, by Rav Dovid Pardo (in his treatise on Tosefta, *Chasdei Dovid*, Source 16), is based on the logic of "*Mai Chazit*" - "for what reason do you presume that the townspeople's blood is redder than the fugitive's blood?" This logic would apply only in the case of the 'fugitive with escape capability' but not in the case of the 'fugitive without escape capability', and therefore, it would be permitted to hand him over.

Source 16: Chasdei Dovid on the above Tosefta: Basis for differentiating between the 'fugitive with escape capability' and the 'fugitive without escape capability': Inapplicability of "*Mai Chazit*".

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| <p>Rebbi Yehuda (in the Tosefta) is, in fact, stating - when is it forbidden to hand over even a singled-out fugitive? Only if the fugitive is hidden in the inner sector and concealed from the non-Jew's line of sight so that they cannot find him, while the townspeople are in the outer sector (and are more exposed to attack). Thus, if they don't hand him over, they will all be killed and he will escape. In such cases, even though the hooligans singled him out, it is still forbidden to hand him over based on the reason of "<i>Mai Chazit</i>" (<i>why do you presume your blood is more red, maybe that person's blood is more red?</i>).</p> <p><u>However, if the two parties are in equal danger (if the passive option would be chosen), e.g., they all are in the inner sector ... the primary</u></p> | <p><u>חסדי דוד על תוספתא תרומות, ז': כ':</u> והכי קאמר רבי יהודה: במה דברים אמורים שאסור על כל פנים למוסרו? בזמן שהוא בפנים שהוא טמון וסמוי מן העין שהעכו"ם אינם יכולים למצאו והן מבחוץ, ונמצא שאם לא ימסרו אותו, הן נהרגים והוא נמלט, אז אפילו יחזיקוהו להם אסור מטעמא דמאי חזית דדמא דידך סומק טפי דילמא דמא דההוא גברא סומק טפי כדאמרינן בעלמא ...</p> |
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| <p>point being that all of them are in the same situation such that if the hooligans would come, they would kill the fugitive along with the townspeople – then if the hooligans singled out the fugitive, it is permitted to hand him over. ... since the reason of “<i>Mai Chazit</i>” does not apply when they all are in an equal state of danger.</p> | <p>אבל אם כולם שוין בסכנה כגון שכולם מבפנים ... שאם יבאו עכו"ם הורגים אותו ואותם, אז אם יחדוהו הוא דשרי ... דהא לא שייך טעמא דמאי חזית וכו' כשכולם שוין בסכנה.</p> |
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Table 4: Understanding the “*Mai Chazit*” basis for *Yeherag V'al Yaavor* by *Shfichat Damim* (murder) and its relevance to permissibility to hand over the ‘fugitive without escape capability’

| Basis for <i>Yeherag V'al Yaavor</i> by <i>Shfichat Damim</i> | | | Reason to permit handing over the ‘fugitive without escape capability’ | |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Proponent | Logical Basis | Is “ <i>Mai Chazit</i> ” the primary logic? | Because “ <i>Mai Chazit</i> ” does not pertain? | Why “yes” or “no” (from previous column)? |
| Approach 1: Tosfot | “ <i>Mai Chazit</i> ” | Primary logic | Yes <i>(Chasdei Dovid)</i> | We are not choosing who should live versus who should die |
| Approach 2: Rashi | Inapplicability of the “ <i>V'Chai Bahem-dispensation</i> ” | Adjunct logic | No <i>(Rav Moshe ?)</i> | The “ <i>V'Chai Bahem-dispensation</i> ” does not apply because of “ <i>תרת-נגד-הדא</i> ” (“ <i>two vs. one</i> ”) |

- The second approach, by the Chazon Ish and Rav Moshe, is based on the law of *Rodef*. Just as in the obstructed labor case, Rav Moshe (Source 17) explains that if the fugitive is able to escape, the pursuit between the townspeople and the fugitive is mutual and equal. Thus, no definitive *Rodef* can be determined and the townspeople must take a passive approach due to *Ain Dochin*. However, if the fugitive is unable to escape, the pursuit is unequal and only the fugitive is deemed the definitive *Rodef* and may be handed over to save the others.

Source 17: Rav Moshe: Basis for differentiating between the ‘fugitive with escape capability’ and the ‘fugitive without escape capability’: Law of *Rodef*. *Igros Moshe* (ibid).

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>We must say that “משמיה קא רדפי לה” only works (to protect the fugitive) if he could escape and hide, for the following reason: Since the fugitive has no intent to pursue, it is only Heaven that has arranged the situation such that it is impossible for both parties to survive ... Consequently, <i>Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh</i> determines that we must remain passive. ...</p> <p>The above logic only applies when both parties are equal pursuers, as in the case where the fugitive could escape if they do not hand him over.</p> | <p>אגרות משה, יורה דעה ח"ב, סימן ס', ענף ב': צריך לומר שמועיל טעם זה רק באם היה הוא ניצל כגון שיכול לברוח ולתחבא, שהטעם הוא דמחמת שאינן כוונתו לרדוף רק משמיה נזדמן כן שאי אפשר להו להתקיים שניהם... ואין דוחין נפש מפני נפש. ...</p> |
|---|---|

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For if he flees and is thereby spared, the townspeople will be killed and conversely if they deliver him to be killed, the townspeople will be spared. However, if it is evident that everyone will die (even if they do not hand him over), as in the episode of *Sheva ben Bichri* where no one would not survive beyond several hours or days when *Yoav* would capture the city, then the townspeople only pursue after the fugitive's *Chayei Sha'ah* (temporary life) while he pursuers after all their life (*Chayei Olam*- normal life expectancy). Thus, regarding the essential life – which is the 'life expectancy differential' that the townspeople have over the fugitive's *Chayei Sha'ah* - the fugitive is a *Rodef* after them while they do not pursue after him at all. Thus, the law of *Rodef* is applied to the fugitive despite his lack of intent to harm, since he nevertheless is the cause of their impending danger. This is a proper and clear explanation.

ואם כן לא שייך זה אלא בששניהם רודפים שוים כגון שיכול לברוח אם לא ימסרוהו דשיברח הוא וינצל, יהרגו בני העיר. וכשימסרוהו ליהרג ינצל בני העיר, דהוא ממש כהא דעובר שיצא ראשון. אבל באם ברור שימותו כולם כהעובדא דשבע בן בכרי לאחר איזה שעות וימים כשיתפשנה יואב, נמצא שהם רודפים אותו רק על חיי שעה והוא רודף אותם בכל חייהם. הרי נמצא שעל עיקר החיים שהוא היתרון מחיי שעה, הוא רודף אותם והם אינם רודפים אותו כלל, יש לו דין רודף אף שהוא שלא בכונה כיון שעל כל פנים הוא הסבה. וזהו טעם נכון וברור.

- A. We mentioned that Raish Lakish stipulates that a 'fugitive without escape capability' must be deserving of the death penalty in order to permit handing him over. Rav Moshe interprets "deserving of the death penalty" to mean that the hooligans wish to kill the fugitive because of a grievance they specifically have on him, and not necessarily that he was sentenced to death in a legitimate justice system. Raish Lakish's reasoning is explained in Source 18:

Source 18: Rav Moshe's explanation of Raish Lakish's view: A grievance by the hooligans is required in order to permit handing over the fugitive. *Igros Moshe* (ibid).

Raish Lakish believes that we cannot assign the status of a *Rodef* to the person that the hooligans designated to kill since they have no basis to demand his death. The fact that an idea "fell upon" their minds to demonstrate their fearsomeness and kill a person who they singled out from the group, does not render the fugitive as the cause for the pursuit (against the townspeople), since if he were not present, it is possible that the hooligans would have designated someone else. Therefore, it is impossible to permit handing him over. Although the fugitive will be killed shortly thereafter along with them when the hooligans apprehend them, we must forbid (handing him over) because (this will deprive him) of his remaining *Chayei Sha'ah* (transient life).

Therefore, ... (according to Raish Lakish) if hooligans want to kill the fugitive because of any (unlawful) grievance on him, this will assign the status (law) of a *Rodef* onto him, even though he lacks intention to pursue. Thus, the townspeople will be permitted to hand him over even according to Raish Lakish, just as (we assign the status of a *Rodef* to) the 'non-emerged fetus'.

אגרות משה, יורה דעה ח"ב, סימן ס', ענף ג': אבל בייחדו סובר שאין להחשיבו למי שייחדו העכו"ם להרגו לרודף כלל כיון דאין להם עליו שום חיוב מיתה רק שכך נפל בדעתם להראות אימתם ולהרוג אחד שייחדו מהסיעה, שאין זה אף סיבה לרדיפה שאפשר אם לא היה זה שם היו מייחדין אחר. ולכן לא שייך להתיר כלל דאף שיהרג גם הוא עמם אחר שעה שיתפסו אותם, מכל מקום הרי יש לאסור מחמת חיי שעה.

... שגם ליסטים בעלמא כיון שהם רוצים להרגו מחמת טענה שיש להם עליו, הוא בדין רודף אף שהוא בלא כוונת רדיפה ומותרין למסרו לריש לקיש כמו בעובר.

Table 5: Summary of the fugitive case: Two different explanations for the *Halachot* pertaining to handing over a fugitive (who was singled-out by the hooligans) in different situations:

| | | 'fugitive with escape capability' | 'fugitive without escape capability' | |
|--|----------------------|--|---|--|
| | | | Hooligans have NO grievance against the fugitive | Hooligans have a grievance against the fugitive |
| Is handover permitted or forbidden? | | Forbidden due to: <i>Ain Dochin Nefesh</i> <i>Mipnei Nefesh</i> | Permitted according to Rav Yochanan | Permitted according to Rav Yochanan and Raish Lakish |
| Explanation by: | Chasdei Dovid | "Mai Chazit" forbids us to choose between: (1) the fugitive living and the townspeople dying; vs. (2) the townspeople living and the fugitive dying. | Since the fugitive will die either way, we are not choosing between his life vs. the townspeople's lives. The only available choices are: (1) the fugitive will die alone; vs. (2) everyone else will die with him. Thus, "Mai Chazit" does not apply. | Raish Lakish believes that the logic of "Mai Chazit" does not apply when the fugitive deserves the death penalty. |
| | Rav Moshe | Both the fugitive and the townspeople are mutual (and equal) pursuers. Since the fugitive can escape, therefore by handing him over, the townspeople deprive him of life as much as he does to them by refusing to surrender. Therefore, the law of Rodef does not apply. | The fugitive only has <i>Chayei Sha'ah</i> (temporary life) since he will be killed anyway when the hooligans attack. Therefore, he pursues after the townspeople's <i>Chayei Olam</i> (normal life expectancy) potential while they only pursue after his <i>Chayei Sha'ah</i> . Due to the 'life expectancy differential', the fugitive is deemed the definitive Rodef. | Raish Lakish believes that only if the hooligans have a grievance on the fugitive, he is deemed the definitive Rodef against the townspeople since the hooligans have fixed on him as their target. |

Table 6: Rav Moshe Feinstein's analysis of Raish Lakish's view of the fugitive case: When is a grievance or inability to escape a requirement to permit hand over?

| Prior to taking asylum in the city, was the fugitive aware that the hooligans knew where he was headed and able to capture the city? | When did the fugitive flee to the city? <i>Before or after he was designated by the hooligans?</i> | Is a grievance against the fugitive a requirement to permit handing over the fugitive? | | Is inability to escape a requirement to permit handing over the fugitive? | |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| | | Yes/No | Reason | Yes/No | Reason |
| No <i>The fugitive thought they would not find him in his city of asylum or that they lacked the ability to capture the city.</i> | Before | Yes | A grievance is required to call the fugitive "legally" designated; otherwise the hooligans' targeting him is merely capricious. | Yes | If he is able to escape, the townspeople and the fugitive are equal <i>Rodfim</i> against each other. Therefore, we say: " <i>Mai Chazit</i> to call him the definitive <i>Rodef</i> ?" |
| | After | No | Perhaps: Since the fugitive was designated prior to fleeing, the hooligans' designation is fixed on him. | Yes | |
| Yes | After | No | Since the fugitive is considered an intentional <i>Rodef</i> , no additional designation is required (see next column) | No | The fugitive is considered an intentional <i>Rodef</i> since he knew that he was endangering the townspeople by taking asylum there. As such, he is the definitive <i>Rodef</i> even if he could escape. |

VII. Application of *Ain Dochin Nefesh Mipnei Nefesh* and law of *Rodef* to multifetal pregnancy reduction:

1. The following points provide the basis for the ensuing discussion:
 - A. This discussion refers to clinical cases where none of the fetuses have gross abnormalities or malformations and furthermore, no apparent health difference is observed between fetuses. Rabbi Dr. Zalman Levine suggests that selective termination of a fetus with a gross abnormality that would result in its death could be *Halachically* viewed with greater leniency than performing MPR where none of the fetuses demonstrate an abnormality.
 - B. This discussion refers to clinical cases where there is a high probability of total fetal death if MPR is not performed.
2. In light of the above discussions, several arguments can be made to either allow or prohibit MPR:

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- A. At first glance, it would appear that the principle of *Ain Dochin* should theoretically forbid MPR even though it would increase the survival probability of the remaining fetuses, since we would be forced to save some lives at the expense of others.
- B. However, the 'fugitive without escape capability' case may serve as a model to derive the *Halacha* in the multifetal pregnancy situation since in both cases the survival likelihood is low for all parties if the passive option were taken.
- C. We have looked at two different approaches to understand the basis for the *Heter* (permissibility) to hand over the 'fugitive without escape capability'. We will examine the logic inherent in these approaches for possible application to the MPR permissibility dilemma:
- i. Approach 1: Chasdei Dovid: Since the fugitive has no capability to escape, the fugitive will die whether or not the townspeople hand him over. Accordingly, the logic of "*Mai Chazit*" does not apply since we are not selecting between two parties - who should live and who should die.
 - ii. Approach 2: Rav Moshe: Since the fugitive is unable to escape, the fugitive is deemed the definitive *Rodef* against the townspeople due to the '*life expectancy-differential*' between the two parties. The fugitive pursues after the townspeople's *Chayei Olam* potential while they only pursue after his *Chayei Sha'ah*.
- D. According to the Chasdei Dovid (Approach 1), just as the lack of "*Mai Chazit*" applicability serves to permit handing over the 'fugitive without escape capability', his approach could apply equally well to permit MPR if there is a high probability of total fetal death without the procedure. This approach was suggested by Rabbi Dr. Zalman Levine.
- E. According to Rav Moshe (Approach 2), perhaps we can reason that each fetus has the status of a *Rodef* against the other fetuses just as the 'fugitive without escape capability' is a *Rodef* against the townspeople. However, Rav Moshe explains that the permissibility to hand over 'fugitive without escape capability' is based on the '*life expectancy-differential*' between the two parties. This approach does not seem applicable to multifetal pregnancy since there is no differential between fetuses (assuming all are of equal health and have the same survival probability). Thus, even if we deem the fetuses as *Rodfim*, they are all engaged in "*equal and opposing*" pursuit against each other and we have no basis to assign the definitive *Rodef* status to any fetus. Accordingly, multifetal pregnancy seems more analogous to the 'fugitive with escape capability' case in that all parties are on equal footing without any differential (see Tables 7 and 8 for comparison between multifetal pregnancy and each of two fugitive cases). Thus, perhaps we should say "*Mai Chazit*" - *why should we presume that the fetus X is more of a Rodef after the other fetuses than they are Rodfim after fetus X?*" and the law of *Rodef* should not apply to reduce any fetus(es) to save the remaining ones?

Table 7: Analyzing MPR from the perspective of the rule of *Rodef*, with comparison to the 'fugitive without escape capability' case

Note: "fetuses x&y" refers to the fetuses that we wish to reduce to save the remaining fetuses (see Figure 3).

| Case | Which parties are engaged in pursuit? | Available Options | | | Can we apply the law of <i>Rodef</i> ? | | |
|---|--|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--|---|---|
| | | Passive | Active | | Is there a differential between parties? | | Who is assigned the definitive <i>Rodef</i> status? |
| | | Who will be saved? | What is the action? | Who will be saved? | Yes/No | Why "yes" or "no" | |
| Fugitive without Escape Capability | Fugitive vs. Townspeople | No one | Hand-over | Townspeople | Yes | ¹ <i>There is a life expectancy-differential</i> | ² Fugitive |
| Multifetal Pregnancy | <i>fetuses x&y</i> vs. remaining fetuses | No one | MPR | Remaining Fetuses | No | <i>All fetuses have similar survival probability</i> | ³ ?? <i>fetuses x&y</i> |

¹Townspeople's *Chayei Olam* (normal life expectancy) vs. the fugitive's *Chayei Sha'ah* (transient life).

²Applying the law of *Rodef* requires us to assign the definitive *Rodef* status to the fugitive.

³Can we assign the definitive *Rodef* status to any fetus without a differential?

Table 8: Analyzing MPR from the perspective of rule of *Rodef*, with comparison to the 'fugitive with escape capability' case

Note: "fetuses x&y" refers to the fetuses that we wish to reduce to save the remaining fetuses (see Figure 3).

| Case | Which parties are engaged in pursuit? | Available Options | | | Can we apply the law of <i>Rodef</i> ? | | |
|--|--|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--|---|---|
| | | Passive | Active | | Is there a differential between parties? | | Who is assigned the definitive <i>Rodef</i> status? |
| | | Who will be saved? | What is the action? | Who will be saved? | Yes/No | Why "yes" or "no" | |
| Fugitive with Escape Capability | Fugitive vs. Townspeople | Fugitive | Hand-over | Townspeople | No | <i>Either one of the two parties can survive – it is mutually exclusive</i> | ¹ No one |
| Multifetal Pregnancy | <i>fetuses x&y</i> vs. remaining fetuses | No one | MPR | Remaining Fetuses | No | <i>All fetuses have similar survival probability</i> | ² ?? <i>fetuses x&y</i> |

¹Assignment of the definitive *Rodef* status to any one party (i.e. fugitive or townspeople) is unjustified since we have no basis to presume that one party is more of a *Rodef* than the other.

²Can we assign the definitive *Rodef* status to any fetus without a differential?

- In *Sefer Nishmat Avraham* (Source 19), Rabbi Dr. Abraham records the ruling of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (henceforth referred to as "Rav Shlomo Zalman") who permitted MPR in cases of high risk to the pregnancy on the basis that each fetus has the status of a *Rodef*.

Source 19: Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach permits MPR in certain cases of high risk due to the law of *Rodef* (Nishmat Avraham, Siman 425):

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>In a sextuplet pregnancy case, the Gaon, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, ZT"l told me that it was permitted to reduce a portion of fetuses to save the others. In another case where doctors believed that a quadruplet pregnancy would become inviable due to the mother's narrow pelvis, the Gaon, ZT"l permitted reduction of one or two fetuses, as the situation required. <u>The Gaon, ZT"l explained me that in cases where the pregnancy is at high risk due to multiple fetuses, each of the fetuses has the status of a <i>Rodef</i> and therefore the physicians are permitted to select those fetuses for reduction whose termination will cause the least risk of aborting the entire pregnancy.</u> He also agreed that this is permissible even beyond 40 days, based on the opinion of contemporary physicians that the optimal time for reduction is between 9-12 weeks of gestational age. The Gaon, Rav Yosef</p> | <p><u>נשמת אברהם חשן משפט סימן תכה:</u> בשאלה של ששיה אמר לי הגרש"ז אויערבאך זצ"ל שמותר לגרום להפלה חלק מהעוברים כדי להציל האחרים. במקרה אחר באשה עם רביעיה דעת הרופאים שלא תוכל להמשיך עם הריונה עקב האגן הקטן והתיר הגאון זצ"ל שיפילו אחד או שנים מהעוברים לפי הצורך. <u>הסביר לי הגאון זצ"ל שבמקרה של הריון בסיכון גבוה עקב ריבוי עוברים כל אחד מהעוברים יש לו דין של רודף ולכן מותר לרופא להרוג חלק מהם בזריקה בבחירת אותם לפי שיקול רופאי שהריגתם יגרום לסיכוי הקטן ביותר של הפלת כולם.</u> והוא זצ"ל גם הסכים שמותר לעשות זאת אחרי</p> |
|---|---|

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Sholom Elyashiv, Shlita (now ZT"l) since the doctors state in the case of a quadruplet pregnancy that there is danger that all fetuses will be miscarried, it is permitted to reduce. On the other hand, it is known to me that the Gaon (Rav Elyashiv), ZT"l, forbade reducing a triplet pregnancy.

ארבעים יום (מבחינת רפואי הזמן האופטימי לבצע דילול הוא בין תשע לשנים-עשרה שבועות של הריון). ואמר לי הגרי"ש אלישיב שליט"א שכיון שהרופאים אומרים שיש סכנה ברביעיה שתפיל את כולם, מותר לדלל. מאידך ידוע לי שהגאון שליט"א אסר דילול בשלישיה.

4. In personal correspondence with Rabbi Dr. Zalman Levine (Reference 5), *Rav Yosef Sholom Elyashiv* ruled that the single deciding factor for permitting MPR is the probability of mortality for each of the fetuses. *Rav Elyashiv* permitted MPR (in a specific case presented to him by Dr. Levine) if the probability of all fetuses perishing was greater than 50% (in the absence of intervention). In addition, *Rav Elyashiv* ruled that major disability or morbidity (which is common in surviving multifetal-pregnancy babies) may not be considered a factor in allowing MPR.

VIII. Possible approaches for viewing MPR in *Halacha*, according to Rav Moshe's teachings:

NOTE: Rav Moshe has not published any ruling on the permissibility of MPR probably due to the fact that this procedure only became available in the 1980s. Thus, any thoughts below are intended as merely an attempt to logically extend Rav Moshe's *Halachic* analysis from the fugitive and obstructed labor situations discussed above to multifetal pregnancy.

1. Rav Hershel Schachter (Reference 8) explains that the position of Rav Moshe, i.e., the prohibition of feticide is included under *Lo Tirtzach*, is based upon the eventuality that a fetus would become a viable born person. Therefore, if the physicians state with near certainty that all fetuses will die unless MPR is performed, since the eventuality of a viable born person does not exist, there would be no prohibition of *Lo Tirtzach* and therefore MPR would be permitted to save the remaining fetuses. According to this explanation, Rav Moshe would not agree with Rav Elyashiv that a mortality risk of greater than 50% would suffice to permit MPR, as Rav Moshe would require a much higher mortality risk to permit MPR.
2. Despite the various questions raised above, there is reason to suggest that Rav Moshe would agree with Rav Shlomo Zalman that MPR could be permitted by defining the fetus(es) that the physicians wish to reduce as a *Rodef* (or *Rodfim*) since Rav Moshe believes that the law of *Rodef* applies even to unintentional pursuit. However, we previously challenged this approach, asserting that all the fetuses are "equal and opposing" pursuers just as in the 'fugitive with escape capability' case. As such, we should say: "*Mai Chazit - why should we presume that the fetus X is more of a Rodef after the other fetuses than they are Rodfim after him?*"
3. An approach is presented in Figures 2a&b and 3 to resolve this difficulty based on Rav Moshe's writings regarding the obstructed labor and the fugitive cases. This approach posits that there is a fundamental difference between the 'partially emerged fetus' and the 'fugitive with escape

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capability' situations, on one hand, versus the multifetal pregnancy situation on the other hand. We suggest that the problem of "equal and opposing pursuers" would only apply to prohibit feticide and hand-over in the 'partially emerged fetus' and 'fugitive with escape capability' situations, respectively, but would not apply in the multifetal pregnancy situation.

- A. In the fetus and fugitive situations, there are clearly mutually "opposing" pursuit-forces, i.e., the pursuit is bidirectional (see *Figure 2a&b*). Thus, unless the following two conditions are met, we may not select between the competing pursuit-forces to assign a definitive *Rodef*: 1) a designated (singled-out) *Rodef*, and 2) a quantitative 'pursuit-differential' between the two parties. Thus, we may only assign a definitive *Rodef* status in the 'non-emerged fetus' and 'fugitive without escape capability' situations, because there is either a 'Nefesh-differential' (between the full *Nefesh* of the mother and the partial *Nefesh* of the fetus) or a 'life span-differential' (between the *Chayei Olam* of the townspeople and the *Chayei Sha'ah* of the fugitive), respectively. However, if both conditions are not met, *Ain Dochin* dictates that that we must remain passive, even if everyone will thereby die.
- B. By contrast, we suggest that in the multifetal pregnancy situation, the pursuit is unidirectional. Perhaps the fetuses that are designated to be reduced by the physician (*fetuses x&y*, see *Figure 3*) are not considered as direct *Rodfim* (pursuers) against any other fetus. Rather, *fetuses x&y* would only be considered *Rodfim* directly against the pregnancy entity as a whole (through the cumulative effect of multiple fetuses on the pregnancy), but the pregnancy entity cannot be considered as a pursuing force against any fetus since the fetuses themselves are a part of the same pregnancy entity. Since *fetuses x&y* threaten the pregnancy but not vice versa, the pursuit is unidirectional and therefore, we are not proscribed by the "equal and opposing *Rodfim*" problem which only applies to bidirectional pursuit. Only in bidirectional pursuit situations, no one individual can be assigned as the definitive *Rodef* unless there is a quantitative 'pursuit-differential'. However, by multifetal pregnancy, even though there is no quantitative 'pursuit-differential', perhaps we can still assign the definitive *Rodef* status to any fetus(es) the physician wishes to reduce since the pursuit is unidirectional.

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Figure 2a: Fugitive Situation: Townspeople vs. Fugitive – Bidirectional Pursuit

Situation Description: A band of hooligans threatens the townspeople to hand over a designated fugitive to them to be murdered or else they will kill all the city's inhabitants.



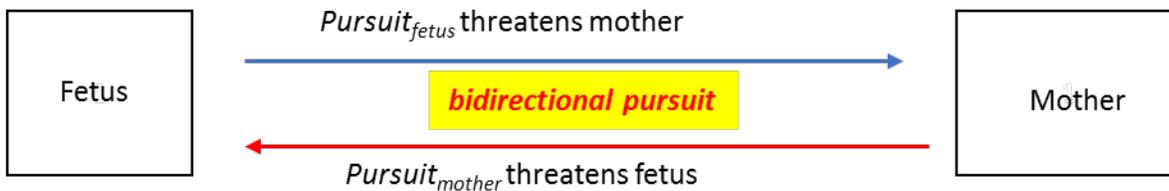
$Pursuit_{fugitive}$ – refers to the pursuit from the fugitive that is the cause of the threat facing the townspeople;

$Pursuit_{townspeople}$ – refers to the pursuit from the townspeople that is the cause of the threat facing the fugitive;

Halacha: Remain passive unless the fugitive can be assigned as the definitive *Rodef* by establishing a quantitative 'pursuit-differential' between the two "opposing" pursuing forces (e.g., a 'life expectancy-differential', in the 'fugitive without escape capability' case), in which case the fugitive may be handed over to save the townspeople.

Figure 2b: Obstructed Labor Situation: Mother vs. Fetus – Bidirectional Pursuit

Situation Description: In an obstructed labor situation, the mother will die unless the fetus is killed.



$Pursuit_{fetus}$ – refers to the pursuit from the fetus that is the cause of the threat facing the mother;

$Pursuit_{mother}$ – refers to the pursuit from the mother that is the cause of the threat facing the fetus;

Halacha: Remain passive unless the fetus can be assigned as the definitive *Rodef* by establishing a quantitative 'pursuit-differential' between the two "opposing" pursuing forces (e.g., a 'Nefesh-differential', by the 'non-emerged fetus' case), in which case the fetus may be killed to save the mother.

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Figure 3: Multifetal Pregnancy Situation – Unidirectional Pursuit

Situation Description: In the case of a quintuplet pregnancy, the physician determines there is a high risk of total loss of fetal life if MPR is not performed. The physician recommends reducing from quintuplets to triplets.



Pursuit_{fetuses x&y} – refers to the pursuit from fetuses x&y that is the cause of the threat facing the entire pregnancy.

Halacha: Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv permitted MPR in a case where there was a greater than 50% risk of total loss of life without the procedure. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach permitted MPR in cases of high risk to the pregnancy because each fetus is a *Rodef* against the others.

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IX. Conclusion

1. Table 9 summarizes the two potential approaches we discussed to permit MPR when there is a high risk of total fetal death. These two approaches are similar to the explanations offered by the Chasdei Dovid and Rav Moshe, respectively, for permitting the hand-over of the 'fugitive without escape capability':
 - A. The logic of "*Mai Chazit*" is inapplicable since the fetuses who the physicians wish to reduce are destined to die whether or not MPR is performed.
 - B. We apply the law of *Rodef* since the fetuses that the physicians wish to reduce are deemed *Rodfim* (pursuers) against the other fetuses.

Table 9: Summary of two potential approaches for permitting MPR in cases of high of total fetal death

| | | Permissibility to hand over the 'fugitive without escape capability' | Would the basis for permitting fugitive handover apply to permit MPR? |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Approach Proponent | Reason | Explanation | |
| Chasdei Dovid | Inapplicability of " <i>Mai Chazit</i> " | We are not selecting between two parties - who should live and who should die. | The same logic in the fugitive situation would apply to the multiple pregnancy situation. |
| Rav Moshe | Law of <i>Rodef</i> | Based on the ' <i>life expectancy-differential</i> ' between the <i>Chayei Olam</i> of the townspeople and the <i>Chayei Sha'ah</i> of the fugitive. | Difficulty: There is no apparent similar ' <i>pursuit-differential</i> ' among the fetuses. Resolution (?) : Perhaps it is a unidirectional pursuit situation and we can assign the definitive <i>Rodef</i> status to selected fetus(es) without a ' <i>pursuit-differential</i> ' |

2. Table 10 summarizes Rav Moshe's analysis of the fugitive and obstructed labor cases – when the law of *Rodef* is applied and the reasons for its application or lack thereof. The table also looks at the multifetal pregnancy situation – how it compares to Rav Moshe's view of the fugitive and obstructed labor cases with regard to possible application of the law of *Rodef*.
3. We have presented several different logical arguments in support of permitting MPR in cases of high risk of total fetal death:
 - A. Rabbi Dr. Zalman Levine reasoned that if there is a high probability of fetal death, "*Mai Chazit*" should not apply (as in the 'fugitive without escape capability' case) and therefore MPR would be permitted.

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- B. Rav Shlomo Zalman ruled that in cases of high risk to the pregnancy “*each of the fetuses has the law of Rodef*” and on this basis, he permitted MPR.
 - C. Rav Hershel Schachter explained that even according to *Rav Moshe* who believes that feticide usually is a violation of *Lo Tirtzach*, if there is a near certainty that all fetuses will die without MPR, there would be no prohibition of *Lo Tirtzach* and therefore MPR would be permitted to save the remaining fetuses.
 - D. Perhaps Rav Moshe would agree with Rav Shlomo Zalman that we may apply the law of *Rodef* to permit MPR, since Rav Moshe believes that the law of *Rodef* applies even to unintentional pursuit. Perhaps the multifetal pregnancy situation differs from the fugitive situation in that we can assign the title of definitive *Rodef* to any fetus(es) whose reduction is deemed to offer the best chances of survival for the remaining fetuses, even though there is no quantitative ‘*pursuit-differential*’ between fetuses.
4. The question as to how *Rav Moshe* would have ruled regarding the permissibility of MPR cannot be definitively answered based on his rulings and insights that we have presented here. There does not appear to be an exact fit between multifetal-pregnancy and any of the fugitive cases. If we had the fortune to still have *Rav Moshe* leading us today, we could be certain that he would have marshaled his immense and profound understanding of all areas of *Shas* and *Poskim*, as well as his great *Yirat Shomayim* and *Mesirat Nefesh* for *K’lal Yisroel* to properly determine the *Halacha* in each type of multifetal pregnancy situation to guide us through these very critical situations.

חבל על דאבדין ולא משתכחין, מי יתן לנו תמורתו

Woe is to us that he is lost and not found. Who will give us another as him.

Table 10: Summary of Suggested Analyses of the Fugitive, Obstructed Labor and Multifetal Pregnancy Cases, Using *Rav Moshe's* Insights

| Type of Situation | Sub-category | What will be lost, as a consequence of the _____ option? | | Is there a differential between the pursuit of the two parties'? | | Who is assigned definitive <i>Rodef</i> status? | How does <i>Halacha</i> decide? | |
|----------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------------------|--|
| | | Active | Passive | Yes/No | Why? | | Which option? | Reason? |
| Fugitive Dilemma | <i>with escape capability</i> | Fugitive (F)'s <i>Chayei Olam</i> | Townspeople (T)'s <i>Chayei Olam</i> | No | Both (F) and (T) threatens each other's <i>Chayei Olam</i> equally | No one | Passive | Since the law of <i>Rodef</i> cannot be applied to any one party, the townspeople cannot claim their life at the expense of the fugitive's life due to <i>Ain Dochin</i> . |
| | <i>without escape capability</i> | Fugitive (F)'s <i>Chayei Sha'ah</i> | (F)'s and (T)'s <i>Chayei Olam</i> | Yes | (F) threatens (T)'s <i>Chayei Olam</i> while (T) only threatens (F)'s <i>Chayei Sha'ah</i> | Fugitive | Active (Hand-over) | Since the law of <i>Rodef</i> is applied to the fugitive, <i>Ain Dochin</i> is not applicable. |
| Obstructed labor | <i>non-emerged</i> | Baby (B)'s <u>incomplete</u> <i>Nefesh</i> | Mother (M)'s <i>Nefesh</i> | Yes | (B) threatens (M)'s complete <i>Nefesh</i> while (M) only threatens (B)'s incomplete <i>Nefesh</i> | Fetus | Active (Feticide) | Since the law of <i>Rodef</i> is applied to the fetus, <i>Ain Dochin</i> is not applicable. |
| | <i>partially emerged</i> | Baby (B)'s <u>complete</u> <i>Nefesh</i> | <u>complete</u> <i>Nefesh</i> | No | Both (B) and (M) threatens each other's complete <i>Nefesh</i> equally | No one | Passive | Since the law of <i>Rodef</i> cannot be applied to any one party, the mother cannot claim her life at the expense of the baby's life due to <i>Ain Dochin</i> . |
| Multifetal Pregnancy | ¹ <i>high risk of total fetal death</i> | Partial Loss of Pregnancy | Probable total loss of pregnancy | No | All fetuses are equally <i>Rodfim</i> against the viability of the pregnancy. | Perhaps fetuses x&y <i>(Figure 3)</i> | ?? | Perhaps <i>Rav Moshe</i> would rule that the law of <i>Rodef</i> may be applied to permit MPR despite the lack of a differential between fetuses if the pursuit is considered unidirectional (see Figure 3). |

¹I am unclear if the risk of fetal death alone was not high, but the anticipated combined risk of fetal death and post-natal death was high, would this qualify to permit MPR?

References

| | |
|---|---|
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