

Shabbath 1:2 (יך ן: Compare B.T. *Kiddushin* 30A)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi was accustomed to listen to the weekly *Torah* portion each Friday afternoon from his grandson. One time, he forgot and went in to bathe in the bathhouses of Tiberias. He was leaning on the shoulder of Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba when he remembered that he had not heard the weekly *Torah* portion from his grandson, so he exited the bathhouse.

What happened? [The *Mishnah* states that one should not enter a bathhouse close to the time set for reciting the afternoon prayer because one may get so involved in bathing that he fails to pray on time. However, if one did not know about this rule, or forgot about it and started bathing, he need not interrupt his bath if there is still sufficient time left to finish bathing and recite the afternoon prayer on time.¹ Accordingly, the *Talmud* asks why Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi interrupted his bath to listen to the weekly *Torah* portion from his grandson. Surely this personal custom was no more stringent than the obligation to pray.]

Rabbi Drusai said: He remained as he was. [Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi had not yet undressed. Since he had not commenced to bathe or even prepared himself to do so, he felt obligated to go back.²]

Rabbi 'Lazar, son of Rabbi Yossi, says: He was already undressed, and Rabbi Chiya bar Abba³ asked him, "Did not my

¹ *Shabbath* 1:2. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 232:2.

² *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

³ The Jerusalem *Talmud* often shortens names, so "Abba" becomes "'Ba", so Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba is identical to Rabbi Chiya bar Abba.

master teach us [in the *Mishnah*], ‘if he commenced, he need not interrupt?’”

“Chiya my son,” he answered, “Is it insignificant in your eyes that whoever hears the weekly *Torah* portion from his grandson is as though he hears it from Mount Sinai? What is the Scriptural basis for this? ‘And you shall make them known to your sons and to the sons of your sons. The day when you stood before *Hashem*, your God, at Horeb [i.e., Mount Sinai].’⁴”

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Rabbi Chizkiyah quoted Rabbi Yirmiah, who quoted Rabbi Chiya, in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If you can trace a tradition to *Moshe Rabbeinu*, trace it, and if not, cite either the very first or very last authority. What is the Scriptural basis for this? “And you shall make them known to your sons and to the sons of your sons. The day when you stood before *Hashem* your God at Horeb [i.e., Mount Sinai].”⁵ [The verse implies that when one informs his offspring of the teachings of the *Torah*, he should relate them back to when they were given at Mount Sinai. Since it may not be practical to recount a lengthy list of sages, one should either quote the earliest known authority or the most recent.⁶]

⁴ Deuteronomy 4:9-10.

⁵ Deuteronomy 4:9-10.

⁶ B.T. *Nazir* 56B states that if one cannot quote all authorities back to *Moshe Rabbeinu*, he should quote only the most recent *and also* the earliest. *Torah Temimah* on Deuteronomy 4:9, note 28, suggests that the text of this passage

Giddol said: One who repeats a statement from whoever said it should view the originator of the statement as though he is standing before him. [Conjuring up the image of the person one is quoting helps jog a person's memory and ensure a more accurate recital of his teachings.⁷] What is the Scriptural basis for this? "Indeed, by an image man guides himself."⁸

It is written, "Most men proclaim their kindness [towards others], but who can find a reliable one [among them]?"⁹ "Most men proclaim their kindness" refers to everyone else while "but who can find a reliable man" refers to Rabbi Z'eira. [Most people quote the teachings of others without verifying whether they actually said them. By contrast, Rabbi Z'eira checked carefully to make sure that the source was correct, so he was a uniquely "reliable one."] For Rabbi Z'eira said: We need not concern ourselves with the teachings of Rav Shesheth, for he is a blind man. [Since Rav Shesheth could not see who was talking, he could not be certain that he was quoting the right

of the Jerusalem *Talmud* should be altered to be consistent with the Babylonian *Talmud*.

⁷ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. *Maharsha* on B.T. *Eruvin* 13B notes that a person's facial expression can convey added meaning to his words, so picturing how the speaker acts helps ensure correct understanding. Alternatively, even if one does not know how a sage looked, he should figuratively view himself as though he is in the presence of the highly respected master, taking care to preserve every nuance of the teaching and to recite it with due reverence.

⁸ Psalms 39:7.

⁹ Proverbs 20:6 according to *Metzudoth David*.

person.¹⁰ This observation shows how strongly Rabbi Z'eira felt about the importance of citing the correct authority for a statement.]

Said Rabbi Z'eira to Rabbi Yassa, "Do you know Bar Padya that you recite teachings in his name?"

He responded, "Rabbi Yochanan said them in his name."

Said Rabbi Z'eira to Rabbi 'Ba bar Zavda, "Do you know Rav that you recite teachings in his name?"

He responded, "Rav Adda bar Ahavah said them in his name." [These incidents again demonstrate how strict Rabbi Z'eira was about making sure that traditions were accurately quoted.]

Shabbath 1:3 (פד ה Compare B.T. *Baba Kama* 16A)

Rabbi Yossah, son of Rabbi 'Bon, said in the name of Rav Zavid: Once every seven years, the Holy One, Blessed be He, changes His world. The nettle becomes a great thistle, after which it becomes a type of bat, and then turns into a demon.¹¹ The head-louse becomes a scorpion, and a clothing-louse

¹⁰ *Korban Ha'Eidah* citing *Y'feh Mareh*. *Korban Ha'Eidah* adds that Rav Shesheth's blindness prevented him from imagining that the originator of a teaching stood in front of him. As the *Talmud* stated earlier, that is an important element in assuring accurate transmission of *Torah* knowledge.

¹¹ This translation follows *P'nei Moshe*, who identifies the קמקמה as the קמוש found in Isaiah 34:13 and Hosea 9:6 — a nettle. He interprets the words פרה and אפר as species of bat.

Korban Ha'Eidah, however, understands קמקמה as referring to a kind of rodent which becomes a serpent. He also claims that פרה refers to Rabbi Pada and reads the text, "Rabbi Pada said: A bat becomes a demon."

becomes a poisonous spider.¹² A horse-worm becomes a frog,¹³ and an ox-worm becomes a bee. A male striped rodent¹⁴ becomes a female. The mountain rat becomes a wild pig. The spine of a fish becomes a centipede and that of a person becomes a snake [after death]. When [does the latter occur]? When he does not bend the entire length of his spine [during the *Modim* prayer in which Jews thank God for all they have].

Shabbath 1:3 (דף ה.ה.:-)

We learn in a *Mishnah*: **Do not trust yourself until the day of your death.**¹⁵ [Even if one has carefully observed the

¹² *P'nei Moshe*, evidently understanding the word שממי as identical with שְׂמָמִית (spider) found in Proverbs 30:28. *Korban Ha'Eidah*, however, interprets שממי to mean "its name" and reads the text, "The head-louse becomes a scorpion and 'demanya' is its name." Perhaps he understood דמניא as a form of the word תמניא, meaning "eight", and thus referring to a scorpion which, like all arachnids, has eight legs.

¹³ *P'nei Moshe*. According to the Venice edition, however, the text should read אורעי — "wasps."

¹⁴ The identity of the צבוע is unclear. *Breishith Rabbah* 7:4 describes it as an animal which has 365 colors corresponding the 365 days of the solar year. *Rashi* there says that it may be a type of snake or bird. In his commentary to I Samuel 13:18, however, *Rashi* identifies it as a type of rodent or reptile (שָׂרָץ), and in B.T. *Yoma* 84A sub verba "*Mashka D'afa*" (משכא דאפא) he identifies it in French as *Putois* — polecat. *Rashi* also notes that since the *Gemara* teaches that this animal undergoes metamorphosis, it has several identities (*Rashi* on B.T. *Baba Kama* 16A sub verba "*Lo Kashya*" (לא קשיא)).

¹⁵ *Pirkei Avoth* 2:4.

Torah throughout his life, he should not assume that he is imperious to the blandishments of the evil inclination.]

There was an incident with a certain pious person who was sitting and reciting: Do not trust yourself until your old age. [This person may have made a mistake about the correct wording of the *Mishnah* or he may have adopted this view on his own. Either way, this implication is that one *can* trust himself not to sin if he reaches old age after remaining righteous throughout his life.] He thought, “This applies to me.”

A female demon came and tested him [by disguising herself as a woman. He felt himself giving in to temptation], so he started to become upset.

The demon said, “Don’t be upset. I am a demon. Go and liken yourself to your colleagues.” [Stop assuming that you are better able to resist temptation than others.]

Shabbath 1:3 (דף ה' ט:) Compare B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 20B; *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:9; J.T. *Shekalim* 3:3)¹⁶

Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair said: Industriousness leads to cleanliness. [One who is enthusiastic about observing the precepts of the *Torah* will reject anything connected with

¹⁶ Standard editions of the *Mishnah* include the first section of this passage in *Sotah* 9:15. However, most commentators state that it is not a *Mishnah* but a *Braitha* (*Tosafoth Yom Tov*, *Tifereth Yisrael*, and others ad. loc.).

wrongdoing and lead a life of cleanliness, free of sin.¹⁷] Cleanliness leads to purity. [Once one achieves spiritual cleanliness, his prior sins will be pardoned and his soul will be pure.] Purity leads to holiness. [Once a person's soul becomes free of sin, his thought processes and personality will be directed towards holiness.] Holiness leads to humility. [One who is holy will strive to increase his holiness out of a humble realization of how much more remains to be achieved.] Humility leads to fear of sin. [One who is humble recognizes that he cannot withstand temptation and will not put himself into situations where he may stumble.] Fear of sin leads to a prophetic spirit. [Fear of sin will lead a righteous person to decreased interaction with others. Such isolation offers individuals the opportunity to engage in the type of introspection that produces a prophetic spirit.] A prophetic spirit leads to piety. [A prophetic spirit will cause the individual to reject all physical desires — the essence of piety.] Piety leads to revival of the dead. [Those who achieve an elevated level of piety are rewarded by participating in the initial resurrection.] Revival of the dead leads to Elijah, of blessed memory. [Prior to the final resurrection, Elijah will come.¹⁸]

¹⁷ This and the other bracketed comments in this passage are based on the commentary of *Korban Ha'Eidah* unless otherwise indicated.

¹⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah* evidently understands this passage as following the opinion that there will be two resurrections — the first for great pious people and the second for everyone else.

Rabbeinu Nissim on the *Rif* on B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 20B, however, seems to adopt the view that there is one resurrection for everyone. Since

Industriousness leads to cleanliness, as it says, “He completed cleansing the Sanctuary.”¹⁹ [The expression “completed” (וְכִלְּתָהּ) implies finishing a task quickly.²⁰] Cleanliness leads to purity, as it says, “The *Kohen* shall cleanse her, and she shall be pure.”²¹ Purity leads to holiness, as it says, “He shall purify it and make it holy.”²² Holiness leads to humility, as it says, “For so said the High and Exalted [One] who dwells forever and whose Name is holy: ‘Lofty and holy I dwell, [but I am with] the downtrodden and humble-spirited to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the downtrodden.’”²³ Humility leads to fear of sin, as is written, “On the heels of humility is fear of *Hashem*.”²⁴

Rabbi Yitzchak bar Elazar said: Just as wisdom forms a crown for [the *Torah*’s] head, so humility forms a heel for its sole, as it is written, “The beginning [or head] of wisdom is fear of *Hashem*,”²⁵ and, “On the heels of humility is fear of *Hashem*.”²⁶

Elijah will appear to announce the advent of that resurrection, it is the resurrection which will cause him to come.

¹⁹ Leviticus 16:20.

²⁰ The verse refers to the *Kohen Gadol* completing a portion of the sacrificial service on *Yom Kippur*. The *Talmud* repeatedly remarks that the *Kohanim* who served in the Temple were highly industrious (פְּהַיִּים וְרַזִּיין הֵן) (B.T. *Shabbath* 20A and 114B; B.T. *Pesachim* 59B).

²¹ Leviticus 12:8.

²² Leviticus 16:19.

²³ Isaiah 57:15.

²⁴ Proverbs 22:4.

²⁵ Psalms 111:10.

²⁶ Proverbs 22:4.

[One who fears *Hashem* studies the *Torah* thoroughly to make sure he can observe its precepts properly. Rabbi Yitzchak bar Elazar therefore understands “fear of *Hashem*” as referring to *Torah* learning. Its “head” is the wisdom one develops from years of intense study, as the *Mishnah* states, “One who sits at length [studying] acquires extensive wisdom.”²⁷ Its “sole” is humility. Just as feet support the body, so humility supports and maintains a person’s *Torah* learning, as the sages teach, “Words of *Torah* do not endure except in one whose mind is humble.”²⁸]

Fear of sin leads to a prophetic spirit, as is written, “Then you will understand fear of *Hashem*, and Divine knowledge you will find.”²⁹ A prophetic spirit leads to piety, as is written, “Then You spoke in a vision to Your pious ones.”³⁰ Piety leads to revival of the dead, as is written, “I shall place my spirit in you, and you shall live.”³¹ [This verse seems to say that a spirit of prophecy, not piety, leads to revival of the dead. Based on the version of this passage which appears in J.T. *Shekalim* 3:3, *Korban Ha’Eidah* suggests that the text here should be transposed to read “Piety leads to a prophetic spirit, and a prophetic spirit leads to

²⁷ *Pirkei Avoth* 2:7 מְרֻבָּה יְשִׁיבָה מְרֻבָּה חִקְמָה

²⁸ B.T. *Ta’anith* 7A דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה אֵין מִתְקַיְמִין אֶלָּא בְּמִי שֶׁדַּעְתּוֹ שְׁפֵלָה

²⁹ Proverbs 2:5. Although the phrase “דעת א-להים” more commonly translates as “knowledge of God,” the word א-להים is rendered here as a modifier meaning “Godly” or “Divine,” producing the phrase “Divine knowledge,” consistent with the idea of prophecy.

³⁰ Psalms 89:20.

³¹ Ezekiel 37:14.

revival of the dead.”³²] Revival of the dead leads to Elijah, of blessed memory, as is written, “Behold I shall send for you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of *Hashem*. He shall return the hearts of the fathers to the sons and the hearts of the sons to their fathers.”³³

It is learned in the name of Rabbi Meir: Whoever is settled in the Land of Israel, eats [even] his ordinary food in a state of purity,³⁴ speaks the holy tongue, and recites *Shema* morning and evening is assured a share of the world to come. [Such a person will merit resurrection without difficulty.³⁵]

Shabbath 1:4 (טו הך Compare B.T. *Shabbath* 153B)

[In *Talmudic* times, the followers of Hillel and Shammai founded two great schools. The *Halachic* disputes between them

³² This is also the version of the text in B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 20B and *Shir Hashirim Rabbah* 1:1:9. It may be possible, however, to uphold the Romm Vilna version of the text. The verse the *Talmud* cites refers to God’s prophecy to Ezekiel to revive myriads of corpses whose only remains were dry bones. Ezekiel was unusually pious. He even suffered torments to atone for the sins of Israel (B.T. *Sanhedrin* 39A). It may have been in the merit of Ezekiel’s great piety that this miracle of resurrection occurred. If so, the *Talmud* is adducing its proof that piety leads to revival of the dead not from the wording of the verse, but from the verse’s reference to Ezekiel’s piety which enabled him to revive the dead.

³³ Malachi 3:23-24.

³⁴ The *Torah* requires Jews to consume certain food such as the second tithe (מעשר שני) in a state of ritual purity. However, in Temple times, pious people took care to consume all their food in this state.

³⁵ *Korban Ha’Eidah*. Another possibility is that such a person will merit inclusion in the first resurrection reserved for the highly righteous.

were usually decided in favor of *Hillel's* Academy because they were the majority. However, the *Mishnah* teaches that one time, when the sages met in the attic of Chananyah ben Chizkiah ben Garon, the disciples of Shammai outnumbered those of Hillel, and eighteen decrees were promulgated in accordance with the view of *Shammai's* Academy.]

That day was as difficult for Israel as the day when the golden calf was made. [Many sages thought that the decrees of *Shammai's* Academy were too difficult for the Jewish people to obey and would create more problems than they would solve. They feared that just as the golden calf caused mass rebellion, so would the promulgation of these decrees.]

Rabbi Eliezer says: On that day they heaped the measure generously. [In *Talmudic* times, a merchant who sold a customer a measure of flour might smooth the flour so that it was exactly even with the edges of the measuring cup. On the other hand, he might be generous and leave any excess piled above the brim. Rabbi Eliezer praised the decrees of *Beth Shammai* as being similar to the second approach. Their measures strengthened *Torah* observance by requiring Jews to act beyond the letter of the law.]

Rabbi Yehoshua says: On that day they smoothed the measure. [The decrees had the opposite effect of that intended by *Beth Shammai*. For example, suppose a person is caught away from home at sunset on Friday afternoon. The *Torah* forbids carrying more than four cubits in a public area on the Sabbath. The sages ruled that, in this situation, one could carry his money less than four cubits, stop for a while, then carry again less than four

cubits, continuing the process until he arrives at home. *Beth Shammai* ordained that if a non-Jew is present, one may not use this procedure, but must let the non-Jew carry the money home for him. The problem with this is that people often do not want to rely on the honesty of strangers. The Jew might therefore become so anxious about his money that he would carry it home himself without pausing every four cubits, thereby violating a *Torah* precept. *Beth Shammai's* decree would thus result in less *Torah* observance, not more. The attempt to “fill the measure above the brim” actually resulted in smoothing it off.³⁶

Rabbi 'Lieber said to him, “The measure was lacking, and they filled it nicely. [This is comparable] to a barrel full of nuts. If you stuff it with sesame seeds, it will hold them [more tightly because the seeds will fall between the nuts].”

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him, “The measure was full, and they diminished it nicely. [This is comparable] to a barrel full of oil. If you put in water, it will cause the oil to overflow.”

Rabbi Yehoshua learned: A contingent of disciples of *Beth Shammai* took up positions downstairs, and they were killing the disciples of *Beth Hillel* [figuratively, with clever argumentation].

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: Six of the disciples of *Beth Hillel* went upstairs, but the disciples of *Beth Shammai* overpowered the rest with swords and spears.

³⁶ *Korban Ha'Eidah*; *Rashi* on B.T. *Shabbath* 153B, sub verba “*Machaku Seah*” (מחקו סאה).

Shabbath 2:6 (:ט ףי Compare B.T. *Shabbath* 31B-32A)

***Mishnah*: Due to three sins, women die when they give birth: Because they are not careful with family purity,³⁷ with *Challah*,³⁸ or with kindling the Sabbath lights.**

Gemara: There are *Tannaim* who recite the *Mishnah* as “**Due to three sins, women die in their youth (יְלִדוֹת)**,” and there are *Tannaim* who recite it as “**Due to three sins, women die when they give birth (יְלִדוֹת)**.”

Those who say “in their youth” (יְלִדוֹת) learn in the name of Rabbi Yudah: Due to the sin of broken oaths, children die. [Men are as much obliged to obey the *Mitzvoth* listed in the *Mishnah* as women are. Since these *Mitzvoth* are usually carried out by women, however, women are viewed as having made an oath to perform them. Ordinarily, a woman who violates an oath might be punished by having her offspring die. However, if a young woman does not yet have children, she herself is punished for failing to perform these *Mitzvoth*.³⁹] What is the

³⁷ A woman is forbidden to have marital relations without immersing herself in a ritual bath.

³⁸ The *Torah* requires Jews to give a portion of the dough they prepare to a *Kohen*. This can only be done when the dough is ritually pure. Nowadays, when everyone is ritually impure, the dough which is removed is not given to the *Kohen*, but burned. Since women most often handle food preparation, they are the ones who typically fulfill this *Mitzvah*.

³⁹ See *Korban Ha'Eidah*. This explains why the *Mishnah* includes kindling the Sabbath lights. Although this is only a Rabbinic ordinance to which such a severe punishment would not normally apply, once ordained, it counts as an oath.

Scriptural source for this? “For nothing have I stricken your children.”⁴⁰ [The *Gemara* interprets this to mean “Because you have made nothing out of your oaths, I have stricken your children.”⁴¹]

Those who say “when they give birth” (יולדות) infer from the *Mishnah* that the *Satan* does not accuse except in time of peril. [Childbirth entails medical risks, so that is when Heaven may judge a woman, just as would be the case with anyone else in a dangerous situation.⁴²]

Rabbi Pinchas quoted Rabbi Yirmiah in the name of Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba: “And before Elazar the *Kohen* [Joshua] shall stand and inquire of him according to the judgment of the lights before *Hashem*.”⁴³ [As *Kohen Gadol*, Elazar wore a breastplate bearing twelve gemstones upon which were engraved the names of the Tribes. When Joshua or subsequent Jewish leaders sought advice, the letters on the gemstones would indicate a response.⁴⁴] It is not written here “according to the *arrangement* of the lights,” but “according to the *judgment* of the lights” to

HaKotzev, however, suggests that the *Tanna* who has this version of the *Mishnah* would change the rest of the text to read, “Women die in their youth due to broken oaths” and omit the other three sins.

⁴⁰ Jeremiah 2:30.

⁴¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁴² B.T. *Shabbath* 32A.

⁴³ Numbers 27:21.

⁴⁴ According to Rabbi Yochanan, the letters on the gemstones would protrude, but Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish states that the letters would move around to form a word or two (B.T. *Yoma* 73B). *Zohar* II:230A states that the letters both protruded and glowed.

teach that at a time when Israel goes forth to war, the Heavenly Tribunal sits in judgment upon them to determine whether they will be victorious or be vanquished. [Jewish leaders usually inquired of the breastplate during time of war.⁴⁵ This again shows that judgment occurs during times of danger.]

Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba said: It is written, "When you go forth in an encampment against your enemies, you shall guard yourselves from every evil thing."⁴⁶ Does this mean that if one does not go forth, no guarding is needed? [Should not a person always take precautions against danger? Why does the *Torah* command this specifically during wartime?] Rather, from here one sees that the *Satan* does not accuse except during times of danger.

Rabbi Achai bar Yaakov said: It is written [that Jacob objected against his sons' taking Benjamin on a journey to Egypt because], "An accident may befall him on the road."⁴⁷ Could nothing occur at home? Rather, from here one sees that the *Satan* does not accuse except during times of danger.

Rabbi Bisna in the name of Rabbi 'Laya said: It is written, "A day of trouble, reproach, and strife is this day, for the children have come to the birthing-stool yet have no power to give birth."⁴⁸ Does this mean that on another day it would not be so? [When the Assyrian army stood poised to attack Israel, the

⁴⁵ See, for example, B.T. *Berachoth* 3B.

⁴⁶ Deuteronomy 23:10.

⁴⁷ Genesis 42:38.

⁴⁸ Isaiah 37:3. The same verse also appears in II Kings 19:3.

Prophet Isaiah compared the crisis to the perilous torment of a woman trying to give birth but unable to do so. However, certainly other days could also be dangerous. Why does the prophet stress “*this day?*”⁴⁹] Rather, from here one sees that the *Satan* does not accuse except during times of danger.

Rabbi Aibi bar Nagri said: It is written [concerning King David’s enemies], “At his judgment may the wicked one emerge.”⁵⁰ It is not written, “[At his judgment] may the righteous one leave,” but, “At his judgment may the wicked one emerge.” From here one sees that the *Satan* does not accuse except during times of danger. [King David prayed that when God would judge his enemies, He would permit “the wicked one,” the *Satan*, to emerge and level accusations. Why did King David not also request that “the righteous one,” the defending angel, leave God’s presence? This implies that the defending angel is not present anyway during a time of judgment.⁵¹]

Rabbi ‘Ba bar Kina said: It is forbidden to tread upon a board which is stretched from one roof to another even if [the board] is quite wide. Why should this be forbidden? From here one sees that the *Satan* does not accuse except during times of danger.

⁴⁹ *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

⁵⁰ Psalms 109:7.

⁵¹ *Korban Ha’Eidah* and *P’nei Moshe*. *HaKothev*, however, understands the *Talmud* as questioning why King David begged that the *Satan* emerge when his enemies were being judged. Why wait for a time of judgment? Why not seek to have the *Satan* come forward immediately? The answer must be that the *Satan* only accuses at a time of danger.

Rav said: One who dwells in a rickety house makes the Angel of Death his creditor,⁵² as it is written, “May death dun them; may they descend live to the pit, for evil is their habitation.”⁵³ [King David prayed that death pursue Doeg and Ahitophel, two traitors to the crown, as a creditor might dun a debtor. The phrase “evil is their habitation” in Hebrew (רעות במקורם) alludes to a “rickety habitation” (מרועע).] As you would say, “When you dun your neighbor for any type of debt, do not come into his home to seize a pledge. Outside you shall stand, and the man whom you are dunning shall bring forth the pledge to you outside.”⁵⁴ [This verse uses the Hebrew word “*Thasheh*” (תִּשֶׂה) to mean “dun,” proving that the word “*Yashee*” (יָשִׂי) in the verse Rav cited above also means “dun.”⁵⁵]

⁵² The *Aruch* defines *Danistos* (דניסטוס) as Greek for “creditor.” Perhaps Rav intended a play on words. A similar sounding Greek word, *Thanatos*, means “death,” and one who resides in a dangerously shaky structure courts death.

⁵³ Psalms 55:16.

⁵⁴ Deuteronomy 24:10-11.

⁵⁵ A creditor, or an agent of the court acting on his behalf, is forbidden to enter a debtor’s home to seize collateral, but an agent of the court may seize a debtor’s property that is lying outside (*Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 97:6). If a debtor’s house collapses, then all of his property becomes exposed and subject to seizure. Just as a person who dwells in a rickety house exposes himself to the possibility that a creditor may seize his belongings, so he exposes himself to the Angel of Death.

Moreover, the rule against seizing collateral only applies *before* a debt comes due. After the debt comes due, the agent of the court may enter the debtor’s home to seize collateral (*Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 97:15). One who places himself in a dangerous situation is like a debtor whose obligation has come due.

Rabbi Levi said: In three instances the *Satan* frequently accuses: One who travels upon a road alone, one who sleeps in a darkened house by himself, and one who sets out upon the ocean.

Rabbi Yitzchak bar Miryon said: Were it not written, “So says *Hashem* who places upon the sea a path and among mighty waters a passage,”⁵⁶ once a person would descend into it, he would [certainly] die.

The rabbis say that “who places upon the sea a path” refers to [the period] from *Shavuoth* until *Sukkoth*, while “and among mighty waters a passage” refers to [the period] from *Sukkoth* until *Chanukah*. [The rabbis did not consider ocean travel unduly dangerous except at certain times of year when bad weather was prevalent.⁵⁷]

Rabbi Yossah, the son of Rabbi Tanchum of the village of Agin, said: There was an incident in Asia where Acha wanted to put out to sea between *Sukkoth* and *Chanukah*. A certain Roman noblewoman saw him and remarked, “Do they put out to sea now?” His father also appeared to him [in a dream and warned him with the verse], “Also [a proper] burial he did not have.”⁵⁸ However, he listened to neither this one nor to the other and went to sea [since he was traveling for purposes of fulfilling

⁵⁶ Isaiah 43:16.

⁵⁷ *Korban Ha'Eidah* and *P'nei Moshe*.

⁵⁸ Ecclesiastes 6:3.

a *Mitzvah*,⁵⁹ and one who goes on such a journey is protected from danger.⁶⁰]

Rabbi Kohen, the brother of Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba, was putting out to sea. He wanted to set out between *Sukkoth* and *Chanukah* so he said to his brother, "Pray for me."

"Indeed I shall pray for you," he answered, "but if you observe that the community prays for rain, do not rely on my prayer. When you tie up your *Lulav*, tie up your legs [and stay home]." [The community starts to pray for rain on *Shemini Atzereth* because that is the beginning of the rainy season in the Land of Israel. Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba meant that God would probably ignore his prayer for good weather in favor of the community's prayer.⁶¹]

Shabbath 2:6 (ג. ה. Compare B.T. *Shabbath* 31B-32A; *Breishith Rabbah* 17:8)

Adam was the blood of the world, as is written, "No bush of the field was yet upon the Earth, and no grass of the field had yet sprouted, because *Hashem*, God, had not caused rain to fall upon the Earth, and there was no man to work the ground. A mist arose from the land and watered all the surface of the

⁵⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁶⁰ B.T. *Pesachim* 8A-B. This rule only applies if the risk is uncertain as was the case here since most people who put out to sea return safely.

⁶¹ The prayer of a community is far more powerful than that of a lone individual (B.T. *Berachoth* 7B-8A). Furthermore, the *Kohen Gadol* used to pray on *Yom Kippur* that *Hashem* ignore the prayers of travelers for clear weather in favor of the prayers of the community for rain (B.T. *Yoma* 53B).

ground. *Hashem*, God, formed the man [from] dust from the ground and blew into his nostrils a living soul, and the man became a living soul... *Hashem*, God, caused every tree of delightful appearance and good to eat to sprout from the ground.”⁶² [Nothing grew or developed upon the Earth and no rain fell until Adam was created. Just as blood instills life into the body, Adam caused life to be instilled in the world.⁶³] Chavah caused his death. Therefore, they gave the commandment of family purity to women.

[Regarding] *Challah*, Adam was the ritually pure *Challah* of the world, as is written, “*Hashem*, God, formed the man [from] dust from the ground.”⁶⁴ [Just as *Challah* is a choice portion removed from the dough as a gift for the *Kohen*, so Adam’s body was formed from the choice dust where the Temple would be erected.⁶⁵] This goes according to that which Rabbi Yossi bar Katzarta said: Once the woman pats her dough with water, she is liable to remove the *Challah*. [The *Torah* states that after a mist watered the ground, God formed Adam from dust. Adam was thus formed from a mixture of dust and water similar to the way dough is formed from a mixture of flour and water.⁶⁶] Chavah

⁶² Genesis 2:5-7 and 9.

⁶³ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁶⁴ Genesis 2:7.

⁶⁵ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. Alternatively, just as dough is considered a finished product once *Challah* is removed from it, so the universe was only deemed finished after the creation of Adam (*Mathmoth Kehunah*).

⁶⁶ *P'nei Moshe*.

caused his death. Therefore they gave the commandment of *Challah* to women.

[Regarding] kindling the Sabbath lights, Adam was the lamp of the world, as it says, “The soul of man is a lamp of *Hashem*.”⁶⁷ Chavah caused his death. Therefore, they gave the commandment of the Sabbath lights to women.

It is learned [in a *Tosefta*]: Rabbi Yossi says: Three fatal hazards exist, and all three were handed over to women. They are these: The commandment family purity, the commandment of *Challah*, and the commandment of lighting Sabbath lights.

Shabbath 2:7 (דף כז: ב) Compare B.T. *Sanhedrin 68A*)

An incident took place in the home of Rabbi Eliezer, who was approaching death on the Sabbath eve near dark. His son, Hyrcanus, came in to remove [the rabbi’s] *Tefillin*.

“My son,” said Rabbi Eliezer, “you abandoned the commandment of the Sabbath lights which is a rabbinic enactment [the neglect of which may lead one to] be liable for the punishment of excision (כרת), but came to remove *Tefillin* which are merely optional and merely a *Mitzvah*.” [Those who delay lighting the Sabbath lights may end up kindling them on the Sabbath itself, thereby incurring the penalty of excision (כרת). Wearing *Tefillin* on the Sabbath, although improper, does not entail such a risk.]

⁶⁷ Proverbs 20:27 נֶר ה' נִשְׁמַת אָדָם חֶפֶשׁ כָּל חֲדָרָי בָּטֶן Just as a lamp illuminates darkness, so the soul illuminates the body (*Zohar Chadash, Midrash Ruth, Maamar Gadol Koach Birkath Hamazon*).

Hyrchanus left and cried out, “Alas, my father’s mind is disturbed!” [He did not follow his father’s reasoning.]

“It is your mind which is disturbed,” replied Rabbi Eliezer. “My mind is not disturbed.”⁶⁸

When his disciples observed that he gave them an intelligent response, they entered and posed questions. He answered them upon the ritually impure that it was impure and upon the ritually pure that it was pure. At the end, when he said “pure,” his soul departed. Those present said, “It is evident from this that the master was pure.”

Said Rabbi Manna, “Only now is it evident?”

Rabbi Yehoshua entered, removed Rabbi Eliezer’s *Tefillin*, embraced and kissed him, wept and said, “Master, master, the oath is released! Master, you are the chariot of Israel and its

⁶⁸ The sages disagree about whether the *Torah* commands the wearing of *Tefillin* on the Sabbath or forbids it.

Even if the *Torah* requires one to wear *Tefillin* on the Sabbath, the rabbis nevertheless forbade doing so for fear that someone might take them off and carry them outside (B.T. *Shabbath* 61A).

If the *Torah* forbids wearing *Tefillin* on the Sabbath, the prohibition only applies when one dons the *Tefillin* intending to fulfill the commandment (*Be’er Heitev* on *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim* 31:1). The rabbis forbade the wearing of *Tefillin* on the Sabbath even in such a case again for fear that a person might take them off and carry them outside.

This rabbinic prohibition would have applied to Rabbi Eliezer even though he was bedridden and could not carry his *Tefillin* anywhere (*Tosafoth* on B.T. *Sanhedrin* 68A sub verba “*Lachalotz*” (לחלוץ)). Nevertheless, as a practical matter, wearing *Tefillin* would not have led Rabbi Eliezer to violate any *Torah* commandment. A delay in kindling the *Shabbath* lights, however, could have resulted in a serious transgression.

horsemen!” [Rabbi Eliezer had a difference of opinion with the other sages concerning the ritual purity of a certain type of oven. The dispute developed to the point where his colleagues were compelled to excommunicate him to show that the *Halachah* follows the majority view.⁶⁹ Once Rabbi Eliezer died, the ban was automatically dissolved. The Prophet Elisha used the expression “you are the chariot of Israel and its horsemen” when Elijah departed to Heaven in a whirlwind.⁷⁰ He meant that Elijah’s prayers shielded Israel more effectively than any army could.⁷¹ Although Rabbi Yehoshua had been among the sages who excommunicated Rabbi Eliezer, he used the same expression to show the high esteem in which he held Rabbi Eliezer.]

Shabbath 6:1 (.דך לך)

It happened that Rabbi Akiva made his wife a “city of gold,” [i.e., a golden tiara with the outline of Jerusalem etched upon it]. Rabban Gamliel’s wife saw it and became jealous of her. She came and discussed it with her husband [seeking to have him acquire one for her too].

Rabban Gamliel responded, “Did you do for me as she did for him? She sold the braids of hair from her head [to make wigs] and gave the proceeds to him that he might toil in *Torah*.”

⁶⁹ B.T. *Baba Metzia* 59B.

⁷⁰ II Kings 2:12.

⁷¹ *Targum Yonathan* ad. loc.

Shabbath 6:2 (:ד לר Compare B.T. *Shabbath* 60B; *BaMidbar Rabbah* 14:4; *Koheleth Rabbah* 12:11)

[The *Mishnah* forbids Jews to wear wooden sandals with nails sticking out of them on the Sabbath.]

Gemara: Why did they issue a decree against nailed sandals? Some say that pregnant women would see their heads and miscarry [due to fright since the nails appeared sharp and dangerous]. Others say that pregnant women would hear their sound and miscarry. Finally, there are those who say that it is because people were pressed against one another and killed one another. [During a period of Roman persecution, many Jews hid together in a crowded place — either a cave or a synagogue. One time, the fugitives thought they had been discovered. During the ensuing panic, they struck one another with their nailed sandals, thinking they were attacking their pursuers. They inflicted greater casualties upon themselves than did their enemies.⁷²]

...How many nails may be in it [for decoration and remain permitted]?⁷³

⁷² This tragedy occurred on the Sabbath when a large group of people were packed into a small area. The rabbis only forbade the wearing of nailed sandals in situations which resemble this tragedy. The prohibition therefore applies only on Sabbaths and holidays but not on other occasions when Jews congregate (B.T. *Shabbath* 60A-B).

According to the view that the problem had to do with women miscarrying out of fright, perhaps people are more shocked by frightening sights and sounds on Sabbaths and holidays since those are times when one would expect peace and quiet.

⁷³ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

Rabbi Yochanan said: Five — like the five books of the *Torah*.

Rabbi Chanina said: Seven. “Iron and copper shall be your shoes, and as the days of your [youth] shall be your old age.”⁷⁴ [The verse compares the metal in shoes to days. Just as there are seven days in the week, so one’s sandals should have seven nails.⁷⁵] The sages conducted themselves according to this view of Rabbi Chanina.

Rabbi Acha, [however], expounded in the name of Rabbi Chanina: Nine. [One should decorate his or her sandals with nine nails symbolizing the nine months of pregnancy.⁷⁶]

Rebbi would put thirteen in one and eleven in the other like the number of priestly watches. [The Prophet Samuel and King David organized the *Kohanim* into twenty-four watches which served in the Tabernacle and Temple on a rotating basis.⁷⁷ Rebbi did not put twelve nails in each sandal to make it clear to onlookers that the nails were for the permissible purpose of decoration and not for strengthening the sandals, which the rabbis forbade.⁷⁸ Had the purpose of the nails been to strengthen the

⁷⁴ Deuteronomy 33:25.

⁷⁵ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁷⁶ *Kohleth Rabbah* 12:10. Perhaps this was intended to help counteract any ill effects the sandals might have on pregnant women.

⁷⁷ B.T. *Ta'anith* 27A.

⁷⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah* on B.T. *Sanhedrin* 10:1. He suggests that Rebbi may also have wanted to avoid using even numbers because to do so might attract demons. B.T. *Pesachim* 109B-110B teaches that drinking an even number of cups or otherwise using even numbers may attract demons.

sandals, there would be no reason to construct one differently from the other.] “The words of the wise are like prods and like embedded nails.”⁷⁹ Just as there are twenty-four watches so there are twenty-four nails. [The Hebrew word which the verse uses for “nails” (מִשְׁמְרוֹת) can also be read as “watches” (מִשְׁמְרוֹת).]

Shabbath 6:9 (דף לה-:לט.) Compare B.T. *Chullin* 95B)

Rabbi ‘Lieber ben Yaakov learned: “You shall neither foretell nor divine.”⁸⁰ Although fortunetelling is forbidden, an indication is permitted, provided that there are [at least] three indicators. For example, [Jacob observed that], “As I came from Padan, Rachel died on me.”⁸¹ [Then, later on, he said], “Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin?”⁸²

[Since Jacob experienced the misfortune of losing three close relatives, he had a right to worry that something bad might befall Benjamin. A person’s fate is determined by the merit he acquires by observing the *Torah*. Nevertheless, every person has certain characteristics which are preordained by *Hashem*. These characteristics include personality traits, such as anger or generosity, as well as external attributes, such as wealth.⁸³ Although one may not make use of magic or divination to foretell the

⁷⁹ Ecclesiastes 12:11.

⁸⁰ Leviticus 19:26.

⁸¹ Genesis 48:7.

⁸² Genesis 42:36.

⁸³ B.T. *Shabbath* 156A.

future, the occurrence of three misfortunes gave Jacob the right to worry that his family might be accident prone.]

Rabbi Elazar said: We go according to a Heavenly voice. [Although the *Torah* forbids Jews from following superstitious practices, it is proper to act according to a Divine message. The *Talmud* records several incidents where a voice from Heaven (בַּת קוֹל) manifested itself to the sages.⁸⁴ However, as will be seen from what follows, a Heavenly voice (בַּת קוֹל) can also refer to a verse or statement uttered by another person which may foreshadow future events.] What is the Scriptural source for this? “Your ears shall hear a word from behind you saying, ‘This is the path in which you shall go.’”⁸⁵

Rabbi ‘Lazar entered Puna. A Roman army officer came, made him rise from his place, and sat himself down.

The rabbi said to himself, “Note how none of the soldiery has made anyone rise but me. It is impossible for me to leave here until I know what his fate will be.” There was a snake there which started forth, bit the officer, and plucked out his intestine.⁸⁶ Rabbi ‘Lazar applied to him the verse, “And I will place

⁸⁴ For example, a Divine voice proclaimed that in disputes between the Academy of Hillel and that of Shammai, the final ruling should always go according to the Academy of Hillel (B.T. *Eruvin* 13B). In several places, the *Talmud* reports that a Heavenly voice declared that someone was destined for a share in the world to come (B.T. *Berachoth* 61B; B.T. *Mo’ed Katan* 9A; B.T. *Kethuboth* 103B; B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 10B, 17A, 18A).

⁸⁵ Isaiah 30:21.

⁸⁶ *P’nei Moshe*.

a person in your stead.”⁸⁷ [This verse is particularly appropriate because the Hebrew it uses for “person” (אָדָם) resembles “Edom” (אֱדוּמִים), the ancestor of Rome.⁸⁸]

A disciple of Bar Kappara went out to cut wood. A certain woodchopper observed a snake pursuing him and told him, “A snake is chasing you!” The snake quit the disciple and went after him, whereupon the disciple quoted the verse, “And I will place a person in your stead.”⁸⁹

A German servant of Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi went out to escort Rabbi Hilla. A mad dog approached ready to attack Rabbi Hilla. The German scolded it. It quit Rabbi Hilla and went after him, whereupon the rabbi quoted the verse, “And I will place a person in your stead.”⁹⁰

Bar Kappara was entering a certain town. When he did so, he struck his finger.⁹¹ He entered and heard the sound of schoolchildren reciting, “If alone he comes, alone he will leave.”⁹² He said to himself, “It appears that I shall accomplish

Korban Ha'Eidah had a text which read “ויתב ליה עד דו תמן אחת דריבוי” which he interprets to mean, “one of the guards of the dignitaries sat down while it [the snake] was there.”

⁸⁷ Isaiah 43:4.

⁸⁸ *P'nei Moshe*.

⁸⁹ Isaiah 43:4. Although it is not natural for a snake to chase a person, *Hashem* operates through many agents, sometimes causing animals which would normally avoid contact with people to attack (See B.T. *Ta'anith* 18B).

⁹⁰ *Ibid*.

⁹¹ Alternatively, this phrase could be translated “he stubbed his toe” since the word *Etzba* (אֶצְבָּע) in Hebrew can mean either “finger” or “toe.”

⁹² Exodus 21:3.

nothing here but this blow alone,” and so it happened to him. [The letters of the Hebrew used in this verse for “alone” (יָחַד) resemble the word for “struck” (חָבַט), so the verse could be taken to mean, “If he comes in with a blow, he will leave with but a blow.”]

Rabbi Yochanan and Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish yearned to see the face of Sh’muel. [They lived in the Land of Israel where Rabbi Yochanan was the leading scholar while Sh’muel, who was their senior, lived in Babylonia.] They said, “Let us abide by a Heavenly voice.” As they passed by a classroom, they heard the sound of children reciting, “Samuel died, and all Israel mourned him.”⁹³ They noted the time, and so it happened [that Sh’muel died precisely at that moment].⁹⁴

Rabbi Yonah and Rabbi Yossah went up to visit Rabbi Acha, who was ill. They said, “Let us abide by a Heavenly voice.”

They heard the voice of a woman asking her friend, “Did the lamp go out?”

The other responded, “It did not go out, and may the lamps of Israel never go out.” [The rabbis took this as a sign that Rabbi Acha would recover.]

⁹³ I Samuel 28:3.

⁹⁴ According to the version of this story in B.T. *Chullin* 95B, however, Sh’muel did not die at that time. Rather, Heaven furnished Rabbi Yochanan with this false prediction so that he would not be troubled with an arduous journey to Babylonia.

Shabbath 6:9 (:-טל ףד)

Rabbi Yochanan was passing through the marketplace when he observed someone vending a type of sweets. He remarked, “From these you earn a living?” [He was surprised that anyone could earn a living selling something so insubstantial.]

“Yes,” answered the vendor.

Rabbi Yochanan left and went his way. A bit later he passed by him again. “Rabbi,” pleaded the vendor, “pray for me, for from the very moment that you left me I have not sold anything!”

“Change your location,” instructed Rabbi Yochanan. “Sometimes changing a name causes [one’s *Mazal* to change], and sometimes changing one’s location causes [one’s *Mazal* to change].” [A person’s spiritual essence and, therefore, his fate is closely related to his name and location. In this instance, Rabbi Yochanan was also offering sound business advice because a business’s name or location often affects its success.]

Two of Rabbi Chanina’s students set out to cut wood. A certain [non-Jewish] astrologer observed them. “[As for] these two,” he remarked, “once they leave, they will not return.”

After they departed, an old man met them who said, “Gain merit through [helping] me, for it is three days since I have tasted anything.”

Having a round loaf of bread with them, they cut off half and gave it to him. He ate and prayed for them, saying, “May your lives be prolonged today, just as you prolonged my life today.”

They left in peace and returned in peace. There were certain people present who had heard the remark of the astrologer. They said, "Didn't you say about these two that once they leave, they will not return?"

"If it is so [that they have returned]," he answered, "then I am a charlatan, for my astrology is a fraud."

Even though [the astrologer confessed that his predictions were unreliable, those present] went and investigated. The bystanders found half of a poisonous snake in one bundle of wood and half in the other. [During the course of cutting the wood, the students inadvertently killed a snake which had been destined to bite them.] They inquired, "What good deed did you do today?" [They] recounted the above incident.

"What could I possibly do," exclaimed the astrologer, "when the God of the Jews is appeased by a half a loaf of bread?"

Rabbi Chuna related the following incident: A certain convert had been an astrologer. One time, he wanted to set out on a journey. He thought to himself, "Is now an auspicious time to go?" Upon reflection, he said, "Did I not attach myself to this holy nation to leave off from these sort of things? I will set out in the Name of our Creator."

He approached a dangerous place [where he was set upon by a wild beast]. He gave [the beast] his donkey, and [the beast] ate it. What caused him to fall [into danger]? That he considered [relying upon astrology]. What caused him to be saved? That he trusted his Creator. [The *Torah* forbids Jews to make plans based on fortunetelling. Instead, they must have

faith that *Hashem* will protect them.⁹⁵ Just as the convert initially considered following the dictates of the stars but then refrained, so he initially found himself in trouble but was rescued.]

[Rabbi Chuna] told him, “Whoever predicts matters through sorcery, in the end it will come upon him as he predicted. What is the Scriptural source for this? ‘For there is no sorcery in Jacob,’⁹⁶ [which may be interpreted to mean], ‘for sorcery is his.’ [The Hebrew word “no” (אין) resembles the word for “his” (הוא), so rather than declaring that “there is no sorcery in Jacob,” the verse can mean that sorcery belongs to and affects Jacob. The *Talmud* teaches that, “A person is led upon the path he chooses to tread.”⁹⁷ If a person seeks closeness with God, He will oblige him. However, if a person wishes to head in the opposite direction, Heaven will assist in that. Once someone starts to believe in sorcery and abide by the predictions of its practitioners, God will fulfill some of those predictions, permitting the individual to continue on this errant path if he or she chooses to do so.]

Rabbi Acha bar Ze’ira said: Whoever refrains from divining holds a place closer to God than the ministering angels. What is the Scriptural source for this? “For there is no sorcery in Jacob and no wizard in Israel; a time like now [will arrive when] it will be said to Jacob and to Israel, ‘What has God

⁹⁵ *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah* 179:1-2.

⁹⁶ Numbers 23:23.

⁹⁷ B.T. *Makoth* 10B.

done?'"⁹⁸ [In the merit of refraining from sorcery, Jews will eventually study *Torah* directly from *Hashem*, enjoying such a close relationship with Him that even the angels will seek enlightenment from them.⁹⁹ This reward is measure for measure. Those who refrain from seeking wisdom in an inappropriate fashion will merit acquiring even greater wisdom in a legitimate fashion.]

Rabbi Chanina, the son of Rabbi Abahu, said: At about half the days of the world that wicked one [Balaam] was standing. What is the Scriptural basis for this? "A time like now [will arrive when] it will be said to Jacob and to Israel, 'What has God done?'"¹⁰⁰ [The wicked Balaam uttered this verse. The phrase "a time like now" suggests that just as Israel merited a tremendous revelation of God during its sojourn in the Sinai desert, so it will merit such a revelation at the time of the final redemption. Since Balaam said this in the year 2486 according to the Hebrew calendar, "a time like now" implied that the final redemption would occur after another two thousand four hundred eighty-six years, meaning in the year 4972. However, God only fulfills such predictions if the world deserves it. Unfortunately, such has not been the case.¹⁰¹]

Shabbath 6:9 (:ט ל ף ך Compare B.T. *Sanhedrin* 93A-B)

⁹⁸ Numbers 23:23.

⁹⁹ See further on in the text.

¹⁰⁰ Numbers 23:23.

¹⁰¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

Rabbi Yirmiah ben Elazar said: In the future a Heavenly voice will burst forth in the tents of the righteous and proclaim, “Whoever worked with God, let him come and take his reward!” [The *Talmud* does not say “worked for God,” but “worked with God” because whoever studies *Torah* and performs *Mitzvoth* creates spiritual worlds and, in a manner of speaking, is a partner with God in the act of creation.¹⁰²]

Rabbi Berachyah said in the name of Rabbi Abba bar Kahana: In the future, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will make the domain of the righteous closer to Him than the domain of the ministering angels. The ministering angels will inquire of the righteous, saying “What has God done?¹⁰³ What has the Holy One, Blessed be He, instructed you?”

Rabbi Levi bar Chayutha said: And has He not done so already in this world? Thus it is written that [after casting Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah into a furnace, Nebuchadnezzar] “cried out and said, ‘Behold, I saw four unfettered men strolling inside the fire, yet no injury was upon them, and the appearance of the fourth resembled a son of God [i.e., an angel].’”¹⁰⁴

Why does the verse need to say that “no injury was upon them?” [Further on, the *Tanach* states that Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah suffered not the slightest harm — even “the odor of

¹⁰² *Korban Ha'Eidah. Breishith Rabbah* 98:3 states that just as God created worlds, so Jacob created worlds.

¹⁰³ Numbers 23:23.

¹⁰⁴ Daniel 3:25.

fire did not permeate them.”¹⁰⁵ The phrase “no injury was upon them” is therefore superfluous.¹⁰⁶ Rather, it teaches that they had been neutered and were healed. [Not only did Nebuchadnezzar’s effort to kill them fail, but their health improved. Prior to the Babylonian exile, Isaiah prophesied that, “From the children who shall emerge from you, whom you shall bear, they will take, and they will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”¹⁰⁷ *Rashi* explains that this referred to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah who, were seized as children to be raised in the royal palace to serve the king.¹⁰⁸ Part of their preparation for a career in the king’s service included neutering. Heathen kings adopted this practice so that their servants would not be distracted from their duties by the demands of family life.¹⁰⁹]

It is not written here, “and the appearance of the first [resembled a son of God],” but “the appearance of the fourth [resembled a son of God],” [implying that the angel was inferior to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah]. They were subduing the fire

¹⁰⁵ Daniel 3:27 ומתפושין אחר שדורפניא סגניא ופחותא והדברי מלפא חזון לגבריא אלה די לא שלט נקרא בגשמהון ושער ראשהון לא התחרף וסרבליהון לא שנו וריח ניר לא צדת בהון

¹⁰⁶ B.T. *Sanhedrin* 93B. In addition, if they were strolling around, then obviously the fire did not harm them, so Nebuchadnezzar must have been referring to another injury.

¹⁰⁷ Isaiah 39:7 ומבניך אשר יצאו ממך אשר תוליד יקחו ויהיו סריסים בהיכל מלך בבל

¹⁰⁸ *Rashi* on Isaiah 39:7, and see Daniel 1:3-7.

¹⁰⁹ This is the view of Rav in B.T. *Sanhedrin* 93B, according to *Rashi*.

One wonders how Nebuchadnezzar could have known that these men were healed because the *Tanach* states that they were fully clothed when they were thrown into the furnace (Daniel 3:21).

Etz Yosef explains that upon being cured, the men immediately grew beards.

before [the angel]. [This shows that the righteous are superior to angels even in this world, not just in the future.¹¹⁰]

[King Nebuchadnezzar said that the angel] “resembled a son of God.” Rabbi Reuven said: At that time, an angel descended and struck that evildoer on the mouth. It admonished him, “Correct your words! Does He have a son?” Nebuchadnezzar then went back and said, “Blessed is the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego who sent His angel and saved His servants who trusted in him.”¹¹¹ [Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were the Babylonian names which Nebuchadnezzar’s minister assigned to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah when they were drafted into the king’s service.¹¹²] It is not written afterwards “who sent His son,” but “who sent His angel and saved His servants who trusted in him.” [This shows that Nebuchadnezzar corrected his terminology].

Shabbath 8:1 (דף נד :ג) Compare B.T. *Berachoth* 55A; B.T. *Nedarim* 49B; J.T. *Pesachim* 10:1; J.T. *Shekalim* 3:2; *Koheleth Rabbah* 8:1:4)

Rabbi Yonah drank the four cups [of wine] on Passover night, and his head hurt until *Shavuoth*.¹¹³ Rabbi Yuda bar Ilai,

¹¹⁰ Interestingly, the *Midrash* expresses the same idea using reverse logic. It was the angel who subdued the fire before these men, and the fact that he served them proves that they were superior (*Devarim Rabbah* 1:12).

¹¹¹ Daniel 3:28.

¹¹² Daniel 1:7 וישם להם שר הסריסים שמות וישם לדניאל בלטישאצר ולחנניה שדרף ולמישאל מישף ולעזריה עבד נגו

¹¹³ Even someone who dislikes wine or suffers discomfort from it should nevertheless try to drink the four required cups at the *Seder* (*Aruch*

drank the four cups [of wine] on Passover night, and his head hurt until *Sukkoth*. A certain [non-Jewish] noblewoman observed that his face glowed. She said to him, “Old man, old man! One of three things must apply to you. Either you are drunk with wine, or you lend at interest, or you raise pigs.” [Lending at interest and raising pigs were especially lucrative enterprises, so those engaged in them enjoyed content, robust lives, causing their faces to gleam.]

He responded, “May your spirit be blasted! None of those three things apply to me.¹¹⁴ Rather, my *Torah* learning pervades me, as is written, “The wisdom of a person causes his face to shine.”¹¹⁵

HaShulchan, Orach Chaim 472:14). Those who cannot should consult a rabbi about diluting the wine or substituting grape juice.

The translation here follows *Korban Ha'Eidah*. The sages sometimes used euphemisms, saying the opposite of what they really intended. For example, they referred to a blind person as “one who has much light” (סגי נהור). Here, the word חזק means “strong,” so the text literally reads “his head was strong,” a euphemism meaning that it hurt him. Alternatively, the parallel passage in *Koheleth Rabbah* has the word אֵיִק — “injured.”

P'nei Moshe interprets the word חזק as meaning to tighten or bandage, so this phrase would mean that “he bandaged his head.” (See *Mathnoth Kehunah* on *Koheleth Rabbah* 8:1:4 for additional discussion of this issue.)

¹¹⁴ Although the *Talmud* itself said that wine had an unusually strong effect on Rabbi Yuda bar Illai, it did not state that it caused his face to shine (Rabbi Yosef Wiener). Alternatively, this incident happened at a time when he had not been drinking.

¹¹⁵ Ecclesiastes 8:1.

Rabbi Abahu went down to Tiberias. The students of Rabbi Yochanan observed his face glowing. They told Rabbi Yochanan, "Rabbi Abahu must have discovered a treasure!"

"Why [do you think so]?" he asked them.

"His face glistens."

"Perhaps he learned a new *Torah* concept."

When Rabbi Abahu reached Rabbi Yochanan, the latter asked him, "What new *Torah* concept did you learn?"

"An ancient *Tosefta*."

Rabbi Yochanan quoted concerning him, "The wisdom of a person causes his face to shine."¹¹⁶

Shabbath 8:1 (ׁׁ ׁׁ Compare B.T. *Menachoth* 103B)

[The *Talmud* discusses the laws pertaining to the ritual impurity of the blood of an animal not slaughtered in accordance with *Halachic* requirements.]

An incident occurred where a mule from the household of Rebbi died and they declared its blood pure [from the ritual contamination] associated with animals that have not been ritually slaughtered.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

...Rav Bibi was sitting and recounting this incident. Rabbi Yitzchak bar Kahana asked him, "Is up to a quarter [of a *Log*¹¹⁷ of such blood] pure, while more than that impure?"

Rav Bibi kicked him.

Rabbi Zerikan said to Rav Bibi, "Since he asked you a question, you kicked him?"

"This," explained Rav Bibi, "was because my mind was not settled, as Rabbi Chanin said, 'Your life shall be hanging [in doubt] before you'¹¹⁸ refers to one who purchases wheat for the year; 'And you shall be afraid night and day'¹¹⁹ refers to one who purchases from a grain merchant; 'And you shall not have faith in your life'¹²⁰ refers to one who purchases from a baker. And I rely upon a baker."

[The verse Rabbi Chanin analyzed describes one of the punishments God will visit upon the Jewish people if they fail to obey him. When a person owns no farmland and must rely upon buying grain from others, his life hangs in doubt because he does not know whether he will have funds to do so during the coming year. One who buys grain on a weekly basis lives in even greater fear that he will not have enough money or that supplies may run out. A person who must buy bread from a

¹¹⁷ Opinions concerning the quantity of a *log* in modern measurements vary from approximately one-third to one-half of a liter, or roughly twelve to eighteen fluid ounces.

¹¹⁸ Deuteronomy 28:66.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

baker daily is in the most precarious situation of all because he has nothing stockpiled.^{121]}

Shabbath 9:3 (פ.ט. דף Compare B.T. *Yoma* 67A; J.T. *Yoma* 6:5)

At first, Jews would fasten [scarlet threads] to their windows [just before *Yom Kippur*]. Some of them turned white while others remained red [miraculously indicating whose sins were forgiven and whose not]. Those [whose sins were not pardoned] were mortified before those [whose sins were]. They [therefore] altered their practice and fastened it to the entrance of the Sanctuary. There were years when it turned white and years when it remained red. [This interfered with the observance of *Yom Kippur* because people would constantly monitor the threads instead of focusing on prayer and repentance.] They [therefore] altered their practice and fastened it to a boulder [near the spot where the scapegoat was dispatched. Since no one accompanied the person who led the scapegoat all the way to that spot, people would not know whether the thread turned white or not.^{122]}

Shabbath 9:3 (פ.ט. דף Compare B.T. *Shabbath* 89B; J.T. *Yoma* 6:5)

It is written, "'Come, please, and let us investigate,' says *Hashem*, 'if your sins shall be as scarlet, they shall become as white as the snow; if they grow red as a worm, they shall become [as white] as wool.'"¹²³

¹²¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

¹²² B.T. *Yoma* 67A.

¹²³ Isaiah 1:18.

It is learned in a *Braitha*: Rabbi Eliezer says: ‘if your sins shall be as scarlet’ [The Hebrew for “scarlet” (שָׁרִיט) can also mean “years.” This phrase can therefore mean that if your sins are] like the years [it would take to travel] between Heaven and Earth, they shall become as white as the snow. If [the distance is] more than that, they shall become [as white] as wool. [Wool is not as bright as snow. If a person’s sins distance him from God more than the distance between Heaven and Earth, but he repents, God will forgive him, but his sins will not be cleansed as thoroughly as those of one who has not distanced himself so greatly.¹²⁴]

Rabbi Yehoshua says: ‘if your sins shall be as scarlet’ [means that if they are] like the years of the forefathers [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whose lifespans totaled five hundred two years, then] they shall become as white as the snow; if more than that, they shall become [white] as wool.

Rabbi Yudan bar Pazi said: ‘If your sins shall be as scarlet, they shall become as white as the snow’ applies to the first time [a person sins]. ‘If they shall grow red as a worm, they shall become [as white] as wool’ applies to the second time [a person sins].

The rabbis say: If a person’s sins are according to his years, they shall become as white as the snow. If they are more than that, they shall become [as white] as wool. [Depending upon their age, people find certain sins more tempting than

¹²⁴ *P’nei Moshe*.

others. An older person may be lured by honor whereas a younger one is more prone to immorality. God grants a greater degree of forgiveness to people who fall prey to sins which match their stage in life than to those whose sins are inconsistent with their age group.^{125]}

Rabbi Yudan of Anthadraya said: At a time when sins are minor, “they shall become as white as the snow.” At a time when they are severe, “they shall become [as white] as wool.”

Shabbath 10:3 (דף סב:) Compare *BaMidbar Rabbah* 4:20)

It is written, “And the charge of Elazar, son of Aaron, the *Kohen*, [was] the lighting oil, incense spices, the flour offering which accompanies [the daily] *Tamid* offering, and the anointing oil.”¹²⁶ The lighting oil [used to kindle the *Menorah*] was in his right hand, the incense spices were in his left hand, and the flour offering which accompanied the *Tamid* offering for that day hung from his forearm. Where was the anointing oil [used to sanctify utensils for service in the Tabernacle] placed? Rabbi Abon in the name of Rabbi Elazar explained that there was a sort of small flask on his belt.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

¹²⁶ Numbers 4:16. *Tamid* (תָּמִיד) means “constant” or “continual” and refers to the two lambs which were sacrificed daily in the Temple — one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

¹²⁷ In ancient times, belts consisted of narrow strips of cloth wrapped around the waist. The oil flask may have been wrapped inside the cloth belt or may have been suspended from it.

If you will say that Elazar was of minor stature [since the task of transporting the above-mentioned items was assigned to him], Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: It is written, “The prince of the princes of the Levite [tribe] was Elazar, son of Aaron, the *Kohen*.”¹²⁸ He was a duke among dukes. Rabbi Yehudah, the distinguished, said: He was a director.

[The word which the *Talmud* uses for “director” is *Markol* (מַרְקָל).¹²⁹] It is learned: Rabbi Chiya said: Why is the name [used for the directors of the Temple] *Markol* (מַרְקָל)? Because he was the commander of all. [The title *Markol* (מַרְקָל) can be broken into מַר, meaning “master” or “commander,” and קָל, meaning “all.”]¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Numbers 3:32. The text could also be interpreted as meaning that Elazar was a minor (קטן) and, therefore, assigned this task. The *Talmud* would then be responding that this was not possible since he supervised the Levites, who had to be at least thirty years old to serve (Numbers 4:3), and a child would not have supervised adults. (The case of Bezalel was different. Although he directed construction of the Tabernacle when he was only thirteen years old (B.T. *Sanhedrin* 69B), the *Torah* does not consider a boy that age to be a minor.)

¹²⁹ In *Shekalim* 5:2 (22B), this word appears as *Amarkol* (אמרכל). Onkelos on Numbers 3:32 has it as *Amarkila* (אַמְרִיקְלָא).

¹³⁰ *Tosefta Shekalim* 2:15 quotes Rabbi Yehudah as making this comment. Since some texts employ the term *Amarkol* (אמרכל), it could also mean one who speaks (אמר) about and directs everything (כל) (*Korban Ha'Eidah* on *Shekalim* 5:2 (22B)).

Markol and *Amarkol* may be variations of foreign titles of nobility, possibly derived from the Latin “*marchensis*” which is the source of the modern word “marquis”. Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura on *Shekalim* 5:2 states that the Arabic word “*emir*” is related to *Amarkol*.

Rather, [the reason Elazar performed these seemingly menial functions was because] there is no concept of rank in the palace of a king.

Rabbi Levi said: “The *Kohen* donned his linen uniform...and removed the ashes [from the altar].”¹³¹ [One would think that the humble task of clearing ashes away from the altar would be relegated to a non-*Kohen*.] Rather, [the fact that the *Torah* requires that a *Kohen* do it demonstrates that] there is no concept of rank in the palace of a king.

Shabbath 10:5 (:ג סג Compare B.T. *Baba Metzia* 84B and *Koheleth Rabbah* 11:2)

[The *Mishnah* discusses the case of a labor forbidden on the Sabbath which is normally performed by a lone individual. If two people perform such a labor jointly, they have not violated a *Torah* prohibition.]

[For example, suppose one person is capable of carrying a small wooden through the public domain by himself. If two people hold the board and carry it, neither has violated a *Torah*

The *Talmudic* sages frequently interpreted foreign terms by associating them with Hebrew ones. This provided a convenient way to remember what the words meant. In addition, the *Torah* teaches that whatever occurs in the world results from Divine Providence, not accident. When people use even a non-Hebrew word to denote something, it is not mere coincidence, and it is appropriate to try to find a hint in it. Moreover, since all languages are based on Hebrew, it is logical to relate them back to their origin. (See *Maor Einayim*, *Parshath Noah* אף שנתבלבלו כל הלשונות מכל מקום (נשאר בכל הלשונות דבר מה מלשון הקודש

¹³¹ Leviticus 6:3.

prohibition, although such an activity is Rabbinically forbidden.]

[Rebbi quotes Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai as holding a view consistent with the *Mishnah*, but Rabbi Elazar, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's son, claimed that his father disagreed with the *Mishnah*.]

Rebbi said to Rabbi Elazar, "So I heard from your father [that when two people jointly perform a labor on the Sabbath which could have been performed by just one, they have not violated a *Torah* prohibition]."

Answered Rabbi Elazar, "I served my father standing in a manner you did not serve him sitting." [I paid greater attention to my father's teachings even when dealing with him on a casual basis than you did when dealing with him on a formal basis.¹³²]

Was Rebbi a disciple of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai? Was he not a disciple of Rabbi Yaakov bar Kodshi? [Rabbi Elazar's retort suggests that Rebbi's principal master was Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, yet that cannot be the case.¹³³] Rather, thus Rabbi

¹³² *Korban Ha'Eidah*. Rabbi David Luria notes that *Torah* scholars used to study simple matters standing, while dealing with more complex ones sitting (B.T. *Megillah* 21A). Rabbi Elazar intimated that he was more precise even with minor matters that one ordinarily learns while standing than Rebbi was when studying complicated issues which one would sit down to reflect upon.

¹³³ *P'nei Moshe*. *Rashbatz* identifies Rabbi Yaakov ben Kodshi as the grandson of Elisha ben Abuya, being the same Rabbi Yaakov mentioned in B.T. *Kiddushin* 39B (*Magen Avoth* 2:21). The *Talmud* also calls him Rabbi Yaakov bar Korshai (קורשי או קורשאי) (B.T. *Horayoth* 13B).

Elazar answered him: “I served my father standing in a manner in which you did not serve your master sitting.”

When Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon, entered the academy, the face of Rebbi darkened [because Rabbi Elazar always outwitted him in scholarly debate]. Rebbi’s father, [Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel], told him, “It is fitting. He is a lion, son of a lion, whereas you are a lion, son of a fox.” [Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel humbly acknowledged the superiority of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and attributed Rebbi’s inability to match Rabbi Elazar’s intellectual achievements to his own failure to convey the *Torah’s* wisdom to his son.¹³⁴]

When Rabbi Elazar died, Rebbi proposed to his widow. She told him, “May a vessel that was used for the sacred be used for the profane?”

Shabbath 12:3 (דף סט:) (J.T. *Horayoth* 3:5)

Rashbatz points out that Rebbi did study under Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai as reported in B.T. *Shabbath* 147B and B.T. *Eruvin* 91A (*Magen Avoth* 4:17). He also studied under his own father, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, as well as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Karcha (B.T. *Baba Metzia* 84B).

According to the passage translated here, however, Rabbi Yaakov ben Kodshi must have been Rebbi’s principal teacher. In addition, Rebbi may have been especially fond of Rabbi Yaakov since the latter helped preserve Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel’s right to serve as *Nassi* (See B.T. *Horayoth* 13B).

¹³⁴ The *Talmud* views the fox as a sly, crafty creature whose advice is often unsound. See, for example, *Berachoth* 61B and *Rashi* on B.T. *Sanhedrin* 39A sub verba “*Avoth Yochlu*” (אבות יאכלו).

Rabbi Immi said: “You shall erect the Tabernacle according to its statute which you were shown on the mountain.”¹³⁵ Is there a statute (טִּבְעָה) for pieces of wood? [God should simply have told *Moshe Rabbeinu* to construct the Tabernacle according to the design He showed him on Mount Sinai.¹³⁶ The phrase “according to its statute (טִּבְעָה)” suggests that some concept of justice applies here, but how can such a concept apply to inanimate pieces of wood?] Rather, [the meaning is that] whichever board merited to be placed in the north should be placed in the north, while whichever was in the south should be placed in the south. [Each time *Moshe Rabbeinu* set up the boards of the Tabernacle, placed them in exactly the same order.]

The relatives of Rabbi Hoshaya and Bar Pazi used to visit the *Nassi* each day. Those of Rabbi Hoshaya used to enter first and exit first. [Later on,] those of Bar Pazi went and married into the family of the *Nassi*, whereupon they came and sought to enter first.

The question [of who had the right to enter first] was posed to Rabbi Immi. Rabbi Immi said: “You shall erect the Tabernacle according to its statute.”¹³⁷ Is there a statute for pieces of wood? Rather, [the meaning is that] whichever board merited to be placed in the north should be placed in the north, while whichever was in the south should be placed in the south.

¹³⁵ Exodus 26:30.

¹³⁶ *P'nei Moshe*.

¹³⁷ Exodus 26:30.

[Whoever traditionally had the right to enter first should continue to have that right.]

Two clans which lived in Sepphoris — the aristocrats and the commoners¹³⁸ — used to greet the *Nassi* each day. The aristocrats would enter first and exit first. The commoners went and acquired *Torah* learning, whereupon they came and sought to enter first.

The question [of who had the right to enter first] was posed to Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, in turn, asked Rabbi Yochanan. Rabbi Yochanan entered into the study hall of Rabbi Banaya and expounded: [The *Mishnah* teaches regarding questions of priority that] even [in the case of] a scholar of illegitimate parentage [versus] an unlearned *Kohen Gadol*, “**a scholar of illegitimate parentage has priority over an unlearned *Kohen Gadol*.**”¹³⁹ [Accordingly, the commoners who became scholars were entitled to priority when visiting the *Nassi*.]

¹³⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. The word *Paganaya* (פגניא) derives from the Latin *Paganus* which originally meant “villager” (*Ma'arechet HeAruch*) — a “country bumpkin” or “boor.” Only later in history did the word pagan gain its present connotation of “uncivilized non-believer.”

Bullvati (בלוטי) in B.T. *Yoma* 8B means “officials.” (See *Rashi* ad. loc.). *Bulli* means “tycoon” or “dignitary” (B.T. *Gittin* 37A. See *Torah From Jerusalem*, Vol. II on Peah 1:1, note 66). The modern English “veto” means “I forbid” in Latin. It was used by Roman tribunes when opposing council measures. *Bullavatia* (בולוטיא) may therefore have referred to dignitaries who held veto rights in the city council.

¹³⁹ *Horayoth* 3:8.

Those listening [to Rabbi Yochanan] considered saying that this rule applies to redeeming from captivity, or to providing clothing or support, [which depend upon the limited resources of the community], but not to seating arrangements, [which are merely a matter of prestige]. Rabbi Avin said: Even for seating arrangements. What is the Scriptural source for this? “[The *Torah*] is more precious than jewels”¹⁴⁰ — even more than the one who enters the innermost [Sanctuary of the Temple. The Hebrew for “precious” (קָרָה) can also mean “honor”¹⁴¹ and the term for “jewels” (פְּנִינִים) resembles the phrase for “innermost” (לְפָנֵי וְלִפְנֵימָה). Therefore, the verse implies that those who study *Torah* deserve greater honor than the *Kohen Gadol* who enters the innermost part of the Temple on *Yom Kippur*.]

Shabbath 14:1 (דף ע"ד: Compare B.T. *Shabbath* 121B)

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: Rabbi Yaakov says: He who sees a snake or scorpion within four cubits [should realize that] it was fitting that he should die from them, but the mercy of the Omnipresent is great.¹⁴²

Rabban Shimon said: When is this true? At a time when [they are within four cubits, and] he did not kill them, but if he

¹⁴⁰ Proverbs 3:15.

¹⁴¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. See, for example, Esther 6:3 which uses the word יקר in the sense of “honor.”

¹⁴² The *Talmud* considers four cubits an individual's personal space. For instance, in some circumstances, a person may acquire an object if it is within a distance of four cubits from him (B.T. *Baba Metzia* 10A; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Choshen Mishpat* 243:22 and 268:2).

killed them, they did not appear before him except so that he should kill them. [If the person did not kill them, they appeared as a sign of Divine displeasure. If the person killed them, God caused them to appear so that he could have the merit of ridding the world of a menace.]

The sages say: One way or another, they did not appear before him except through his merit. [Even if he did not slay them, the fact that he had a chance to do so shows that Heaven considers him a worthy person, for only those who are meritorious are given the opportunity to perform good deeds such as ridding the world of dangerous creatures.¹⁴³]

Shabbath 14:1 (:ד ע Compare *Zohar* I:65B)

It is written, “Listen to this all the nations; give ear all inhabitants of the Earth.”¹⁴⁴

Rabbi Acha, quoting Rabbi Abahu, and the rabbis [each had an interpretation of this verse].

One said: Why does Scripture compare all who enter the world to a mole? [The word which the verse uses for “world” (עֲלָמָה) resembles “mole” (חֲלָמָה).] Because [almost] everything which exists on dry land has a counterpart in the sea. There are many species in the sea which are not on dry land, yet there is no mole in the sea. [The Psalmist used the unusual term “חֲלָמָה” for “world” because it alludes to the “חֲלָמָה” which lives only

¹⁴³ *P’nei Moshe* based on B.T. *Chullin* 127A.

¹⁴⁴ Psalms 49:2.

upon land, and he wished to refer only to the land, not to the entire globe.^{145]}

The other one said: Why does Scripture compare all who enter the world to a mole? Just as the mole drags and stores [items it does not need], but does not know for whom it is storing, so all who enter the world constantly drag and store, but do not know for whom they are storing. [People amass material goods beyond their immediate needs, often dying without ever using them. As the *Tanach* states,] “He will store up and not know who gathers them.”¹⁴⁶

Shabbath 14:3 (:הע Compare B.T. *Baba Metzia* 107B and *VaYikra Rabbah* 16:8)

Rav and Rabbi Chiya the Great both said: Ninety-nine die due to the evil eye and one through Heaven.

Rabbi Chanina and Sh’muel both said: Ninety-nine die due to cold and one through Heaven.

Rav spoke according to his circumstances, while Rabbi Chanina spoke according to his. Rav, since he was living there [in Babylonia,] where the evil eye is prevalent, used to say that ninety-nine die due to the evil eye and one through Heaven. Rabbi Chanina, since he was living in Sepphoris where it is cold, used to say that ninety-nine die due to cold and one through Heaven.

¹⁴⁵ *P’nei Moshe*.

¹⁴⁶ Psalms 39:7.

Rabbi Sh'muel bar Nachman said in the name of Rabbi Yonathan: Ninety-nine die due to heat and one through Heaven.

The Sages say that ninety-nine die due to carelessness and one through Heaven. [Many people die prematurely because they are negligent about their health — indulging their appetites and refusing to avoid unhealthy activities.¹⁴⁷]

Rabbi Chonya Yaakov of Efrathayim said in the name of Rebbi: “*Hashem* shall remove from you every sickness”¹⁴⁸ refers to burning fever [which is alluded to by the expression “every sickness” because it is common with many illnesses].

Rabbi Chunah said, and some learn it in the name of Rabbi Elazar ben Yaakov: “*Hashem* shall remove from you every sickness”¹⁴⁹ refers to mentality. [A person’s frame of mind can cause or exacerbate illness. A depressed state of mind, for example, can cause a person to experience physical symptoms. Also, a poor attitude can delay a sick person’s recovery.¹⁵⁰ Since he believes his situation to be hopeless, he refuses to follow his physician’s instructions and does not pray or repent properly. Again, this is a problem which can exist with “every sickness”.] As Rabbi Eliezer said: “[Your enemy] shall place an iron yoke upon your neck”¹⁵¹ refers to mentality. [This last verse talks

¹⁴⁷ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

¹⁴⁸ Deuteronomy 7:15.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁵⁰ See *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

¹⁵¹ Deuteronomy 28:48.

about the evils which will befall Jews if they fail to observe the *Torah*. Since the beginning of the verse says, “You shall serve your enemies,” the subsequent phrase “[Your enemy] shall place an iron yoke upon your neck” is redundant and must allude to psychological conditions such as fear which enslave a people to its adversaries.^{152]}

Rabbi Abon said: “*Hashem* shall remove from you every sickness”¹⁵³ refers to the evil inclination whose beginning is sweet but whose end is bitter. [The Hebrew for “sickness” [חֲלוּיָ] can mean “sweetness” in Aramaic.^{154]}

Rabbi Tanchuma in the name of Rabbi Elazar, and Rabbi Menachema in the name of Rav, said: “*Hashem* shall remove from you every sickness”¹⁵⁵ refers to the gall bladder, as Rabbi Eliezer said: Ninety-nine die due to the gall bladder and one through Heaven. [Gall, or bile, is a substance produced by the liver which aids the digestive process. It is stored in the gall bladder. If the liver or gall bladder do not function properly or are diseased, the pigmentation in the bile may spread through the circulatory system causing the affected individual’s skin to

¹⁵² *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

¹⁵³ Deuteronomy 7:15.

¹⁵⁴ *Korban Ha’Eidah*. For examples of this usage, see B.T. *Berachoth* 56A and *Targum Yonathan* on Ezekiel 3:3.

Rambam notes that one who is ill may find bitter foods sweet and vice versa. Similarly, those who suffer spiritual sickness because they are under the sway of the evil inclination mistake that which is wrong for something beneficial (*Shemonah Perakim*, chap. 3).

¹⁵⁵ Deuteronomy 7:15.

appear yellowish. This condition is called jaundice and *Korban Ha'Eidah* understands this passage as referring to that. Other commentators, however, interpret *Talmudic* references to gall bladder problems as alluding to a psychiatric disorder characterized by shunning contact with others.¹⁵⁶ The sages may also have used the term to connote a phobia.¹⁵⁷ The *Midrash* identifies the gall bladder as the source of jealousy.¹⁵⁸ Rabbi Eliezer may therefore mean that a person's psychological attitude can affect his or her health.]

Shabbath 14:4 (דף ע"ו:) Compare B.T. *Yoma* 84A and J.T. *Avodah Zarah* 2:2)

[Rabbi Yochanan suffered from scurvy.] He was being treated by the daughter of Domitian of Tiberias, [who was a Gentile]. On the Sabbath eve close to nighttime, he visited her.

"Do I need anything [in the way of medication] for tomorrow?" he inquired.

¹⁵⁶ *Rambam, Perush HaMishnayoth, Pirkei Avoth* 2:11 and Rabbi Ovadia of Bartenura on *Shabbath* 2:5. "Black bile" causes this condition. Other types of bile may be beneficial. The *Talmud* states that "The liver causes anger, but the gall bladder squirts a drop of bile which calms it" (B.T. *Berachoth* 61B).

¹⁵⁷ Rebbi used the term bile to mean fear when he instructed his son to "cast bile among the disciples," meaning to create an atmosphere of reverence (B.T. *Kethuboth* 103B according to *Rashi*).

¹⁵⁸ *VaYikra Rabbah* 4:4 and *Koheleth Rabbah* 7:19.

“No,” she replied, “but if you do feel a need, take date seeds which are half burned...and do not utter [this remedy] before any person.” [As a doctor of high reputation, she commanded a top price for her services. She feared that if her cures became widely known she would lose business.]

The next day, Rabbi Yochanan entered [the *Yeshivah*] and publicly discussed [that remedy]. Some say [that when the physician heard this,] she choked herself. Others say she converted. [Rabbi Yochanan could have used this knowledge to earn fees for himself but chose to publicize it for the benefit of the community. The doctor was so impressed by his altruism that she converted.¹⁵⁹]

Shabbath 14:4 (דף ע"ו א:) Compare J.T. *Avodah Zarah* 2:2)

The grandson [of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi] had a choking fit.¹⁶⁰ A certain person came, uttered an incantation for him, and he was cured. When [the healer] emerged, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asked him, “What did you recite for him?”

“A certain word,” he answered [referring to an idolatrous incantation].

“It would have been better for him had he died and that this had not occurred!”

¹⁵⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

¹⁶⁰ The term “בלע” means “swallowing”, and suggests that the boy swallowed something which caused him to choke. *P'nei Moshe* states that this word may mean “abscess” or may imply that the child ingested some type of insect which became caught in his throat.

So it happened to him. [The youngster died, consistent with the verse which says,] “as an inadvertent [word] that issued forth from before the ruler.”¹⁶¹ [Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi did not mean to cause his grandson’s death, but uttering those words unwittingly gave rise to that result.]

Shabbath 14:4 (דף עז. Compare B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 27B)

There was an incident involving Rabbi Elazar ben Dama where a snake bit him, and Yaakov, of the village of Samma, came to heal him [by idolatrous means],¹⁶² but Rabbi Yishmael did not permit him. [Rabbi Yishmael was Rabbi Elazar ben Dama’s uncle.¹⁶³]

Rabbi Elazar ben Dama said, “I will cite a proof that he should heal me,” but he did not have enough time to cite a proof before he died.

Rabbi Yishmael said to him, “Happy are you, ben Dama, that you departed the world in peace and did not breach the

¹⁶¹ Ecclesiastes 10:5.

¹⁶² The Venice edition adds the words “with the name of an idol” to the text.

This Yaakov was a well-known heretic. (See *Rashi* on B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 27B, sub verba “*Yaakov Ish*” (יעקב איש) and *Tosafoth* on B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 17A sub verba “*VeYaakov Ish*” (ויעקב איש)).

Tosafoth on B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 27B sub verba “*Shani Minuth*” (שני מנייה) had a version of this passage which read “with the name of his master,” suggesting that this Yaakov may have been an early Christian who sought to heal Rabbi Elazar ben Dama by invoking the name of the founder of his religion.

¹⁶³ B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 27B.

fence of the sages, for it is written, 'And a snake will bite one who breaches a fence.'"¹⁶⁴

Did not a snake already bite him? [A snakebite had already caused his death, so what does he gain from an assurance of future protection?] Rather, that a snake should not bite him in the future [world to come. This refers to the *Satan* who will prosecute wrongdoers in the future after God resurrects the dead.]

And what could Rabbi Elazar ben Dama have said [in support of using idolatry to save his life]? "Observe My statutes and My ordinances which [if] a person shall perform them, he shall live through them."¹⁶⁵ [The verse implies that people should observe the *Torah's* laws in a manner by which they can continue to live. This is the basis for the well-known rule that one must set aside the prohibitions of the *Torah* in order to save a life.¹⁶⁶ Idolatry is an exception to this rule, and a Jew may not worship an idol even when threatened with death.¹⁶⁷]

Shabbath 15:3 (דף ע"ה) Compare B.T. *Pesachim* 68B and B.T. *Shabbath* 150B)

¹⁶⁴ Ecclesiastes 10:8. A snake is the proper vehicle through which to punish one who breaches the fences erected by the sages to protect Jewish observance because it was a snake which first enticed Adam and Chavah to breach *Hashem's* commandment (*VaYikra Rabbah* 26:2).

¹⁶⁵ Leviticus 18:5.

¹⁶⁶ B.T. *Yoma* 85B; *Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Yesodei HaTorah* 5:1.

¹⁶⁷ B.T. *Sanhedrin* 74A; *Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Yesodei HaTorah* 5:2; *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah* 157:1.

Rabbi Chaggai said in the name of Rabbi Sh'muel bar Nachman: Sabbaths and holidays were not given except for eating and drinking, but because the mouth reeks [with improper speech such as *Lashon Hara*], they permitted one to engage in words of *Torah*.

Rabbi Berachyah in the name of Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba said: Sabbaths and holidays were not given except to engage in words of *Torah*.

A *Braitha* supports both points of view: What should one do? Either sit and eat or sit and engage in words of *Torah*. [Sabbaths and holidays should be wholly devoted to one or the other.]

[Another *Braitha* says:] One verse states, "It is a Sabbath for *Hashem*,"¹⁶⁸ while another verse states, "It shall be a holiday for you."¹⁶⁹ How does this work? Devote a portion to *Torah* study and a portion to eating and drinking.

Rabbi Abahu said: "A Sabbath for *Hashem*"¹⁷⁰ [means] "rest like *Hashem*." Just as the Holy One, Blessed be He, rested from speech, so you rest from speech. [God created the universe by uttering ten expressions.¹⁷¹ Just as He ceased His creative speech on the Sabbath of Creation, so people should refrain from speaking on the Sabbath about weekday matters.]

¹⁶⁸ Leviticus 23:3.

¹⁶⁹ Numbers 29:35.

¹⁷⁰ Exodus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:14.

¹⁷¹ *Pirkei Avoth* 5:1 בעשרה מאמרות נברא העולם

An incident took place involving a certain pious person who went for a stroll in his vineyard on the Sabbath and observed a break [in the fence around it]. He figured to patch it up on Saturday night. He then said to himself, "Since I thought about closing it up [on the Sabbath when one should not occupy oneself with worldly matters], I will not patch it up ever!"¹⁷²

What did the Holy One, Blessed be He, do for him? He arranged for him that a branch of a caper tree grow into the breach and block it up. From that tree he was fed, and from it he supported himself all his days.

Rabbi Chanina said: With difficulty the rabbis permitted greeting others on the Sabbath.

Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba reported about Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai that when he observed his mother talking excessively, he would say to her, "Mother, it is the Sabbath."¹⁷³

¹⁷² The sages only forbade *speaking* about plans to do work after the Sabbath. This pious individual went beyond the letter of the law by avoiding even *thinking* about such matters (*Maharsha* on B.T. *Shabbath* 150B).

¹⁷³ The sages prohibited discussion on the Sabbath of plans for performing labor after the Sabbath (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 307:1 according to *Mishnah Berurah*, note 1). Although the rabbis did not forbid speaking about other worldly matters on the Sabbath, it is an act of piety to refrain from or, at least, to avoid such topics (*Aruch HaShulchan, Orach Chaim* 307:2 explains that this is why the *Rama* ruled that conversations about current events and similar subjects are permitted for those who find them enjoyable even though this passage of the Jerusalem *Talmud* appears to forbid them.)

Shabbath 16:1 (דף ע"ט. *VaYikra Rabbah* 15:4; *Eichah Rabbah* on verse 4:23)

An incident occurred where Rebbi, Rabbi Chiya the Great, and Rabbi Yishmael, the son of Rabbi Yossi,¹⁷⁴ were sitting and elucidating the Book of Lamentations after *Minchah* on a *Tisha B'Av* eve which fell out on the Sabbath. [The verses of each of the first four chapters of the Book of Lamentations are written in alphabetical order. When the end of the alphabet is reached, the verses start over again from *Alef* (א).] They left over one alphabetical set [of verses]. They said, "Tomorrow we will come and finish it."

When Rebbi left for home, he stubbed his toe and recited about himself, "Many are the pains of a wicked person."¹⁷⁵

Rabbi Chiya said, "Due to our sins it happened to you, as it is written, 'The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of *Hashem*, was ensnared by their corruption.'"¹⁷⁶

Rabbi Yishmael, the son of Rabbi Yossi, said, "Even if we were not occupied with this subject, we should have said so. How much more so when we were occupied with the subject [of

¹⁷⁴ Yossi (יוסי) and Yossah (יוסה or יוסא) are nicknames for Yosef (יוסף). Although the text here has יוסה, a bit further on it mentions יוסי. Both refer to Rabbi Yossi ben Chalafta (*Rashbam* on B.T. *Baba Bathra* 56B sub verba "*Abba Chalafta*" (אבא חלפתא)), a disciple of Rabbi Akiva. The *Talmud* frequently quotes his son, Rabbi Yishmael. (See, for example, B.T. *Shabbath* 15A and 51B; B.T. *Pesachim* 37B and 118B.)

¹⁷⁵ Psalms 32:10.

¹⁷⁶ Lamentations 4:20. Rabbi Chiya referred to Rebbi as "the anointed of *Hashem*" because Rebbi was a descendant of King David and was himself the leader of the Jewish people.

the Book of Lamentations should we apply a verse from it to this situation.]”¹⁷⁷

Shabbath 16:1 (דף ע"ט: Compare B.T. *Baba Metzia* 33A-B)

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught: One who occupies himself with Scripture has a degree of merit. One who occupies himself with *Mishnah* has a degree of merit for which reward is received. [As for] one who occupies himself *Talmud*, there is no greater degree of merit than this. One should always run after *Mishnah* more than *Talmud*.

Rabbi Yossi, son of Rabbi Bon said: So it was said before Rabbi inserted most of the *Mishnayoth* [into the *Talmud*], but once Rabbi inserted most of the *Mishnayoth*, one should always run after *Talmud* more than *Mishnah*.

Shabbath 16:1 (דף ע"ט: *Sofrim* 16:10-12)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: I never looked into books of *Aggadah* except for one time when I looked¹⁷⁸ and found written in it [the following]:

The one hundred seventy-five paragraphs written in the *Torah* [which start with the words] “spoke”, “said”, or “command” correspond to the years of our father Abraham, as it is

¹⁷⁷ They had studied up to the fourth chapter of the Book of Lamentations and that chapter contains this verse.

¹⁷⁸ For a full discussion concerning why Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi disdained *Aggadic* works, see *Torah From Jerusalem* Vol. II on J.T. *Ma'aseroth* 3:4.

written, “You [*Moshe Rabbeinu*] rose to the heights, captured a prisoner, [and] took gifts for the sake of the man,”¹⁷⁹ and it is written, “the great man [Abraham] among giants.”¹⁸⁰ [When *Moshe Rabbeinu* ascended to Heaven to receive the *Torah*, the angels objected. The verse refers to *Moshe Rabbeinu* as having “captured a prisoner” because he overcame those objections and brought the *Torah* back to the Jewish people.¹⁸¹ He “took gifts,” meaning the *Torah*, for the sake of “the man,” meaning Abraham, whom the *Tanach* calls “the great man.”]¹⁸²

The one hundred forty-seven chapters written in the Book of Psalms correspond to the years of our father Jacob.¹⁸³ This teaches that all the praises which Israel offers to the Holy One, Blessed be He, correspond to the years of Jacob, as it says, “And You are holy, dwelling among the praises of Israel, [another name for Jacob].”¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Psalms 68:19.

¹⁸⁰ Joshua 14:15. Abraham lived among the giants of Hebron.

¹⁸¹ See B.T. *Shabbath* 88B-89A.

¹⁸² The version of this passage in Tractate *Sofrim* states that this is why the custom in the Land of Israel was to divide the *Torah* into one hundred seventy-five weekly readings over a three and a half year cycle, rather than the fifty-four readings of the yearly cycle currently in use (*Nachalath Yaakov* ad. loc.).

¹⁸³ Although current editions of the Book of Psalms contain one hundred fifty chapters, some chapters should really be combined and counted only as one. For instance, B.T. *Berachoth* 9B states that the first two chapters are really all one chapter (*Amudei Yerushalayim*).

¹⁸⁴ Psalms 22:4.

The one hundred twenty-three times that Israel responds “Hallelujah!” correspond to the years of Aaron. “Hallelujah! Praise God in His holy place”¹⁸⁵ refers to Aaron, His holy one, as it says, “Aaron, holy one of *Hashem*.”¹⁸⁶ [Today, each member of the congregation recites the *Hallel* for himself, mentioning “Hallelujah!” only a small number of times. During the *Talmudic* period, however, it was customary for the leader to read each phrase aloud with the congregation responding “Hallelujah!”¹⁸⁷ The total of those readings and responses was one hundred twenty-three.]

Shabbath 16:7 (פא. פא. - פא. : J.T. *Yoma* 8:5; B.T. *Shabbath* 121A)

There was an incident when a fire broke out in the courtyard of Yossi ben Simai in Shichin [on *Shabbath*]. The quaestor’s men¹⁸⁸ came down from Sepphoris to extinguish it, but he did not permit them.

“Let the Collector collect His debt,” he told them.

Immediately, a cloud formed over him and extinguished [the fire].

¹⁸⁵ Psalms 150:1.

¹⁸⁶ Psalms 106:16.

¹⁸⁷ *Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Chanukah* 3:12.

¹⁸⁸ A quaestor was a Roman official in charge of public funds. *P’nei Moshe* states that there was some type of financial relationship between this official and Yossi ben Simai.

On Saturday night, he sent each one of them a *Sela'* [a coin worth four *Dinarii*], and to the governor fifty *Dinarii*.¹⁸⁹

The rabbis said [that] he need not have done so.

A certain Nabatean¹⁹⁰ [Gentile] resided in Rabbi Yonah's neighborhood. A fire broke out in Rabbi Yonah's neighborhood [on *Shabbath*]. The Nabatean went and wanted to quench it, but he would not let him.

"[My property] depends upon your luck," he told him. [The Gentile was concerned that the flames would spread to his property, but agreed to refrain from extinguishing the fire if the rabbi would reimburse him for any damage.¹⁹¹]

"Indeed," he replied, [accepting the responsibility].

[As a result of Rabbi Yonah's piety,] everything was saved, [including his own property].

Rabbi Yudan of K'far Immi spread his cloak over a haystack, [which was in the path of a fire], and the fire fled from it.

Eruvin 3:2 (דף כ: J.T. *Eruvin* 7:9 (49B))

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Why [did the sages decree] the making of *Eruvin* in courtyards? To promote peace.

¹⁸⁹ The term אֵפִירְכוֹס derives from אֵפִירְכָא, meaning "province." The prefix *Epi* in Greek means "over," and *Archos* means "chief." In modern English, "eparchy" refers to a Greek province or district, and "eparch" to its governor. A silver *Dinar* was a small coin about the size of a dime.

¹⁹⁰ The letters פ and ב sometimes interchange in Hebrew and Aramaic, so נַבְתָּי means Nabatean. Nabatea was an ancient Arabian kingdom repeatedly referred to by the *Rambam* in the *Moreh Nevuchim*.

¹⁹¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah; P'nei Moshe*.

There was an incident with a woman who was hated by her neighbor. [The neighbor] sent her contribution to the *Eruv* through her [little] son. [The first woman] took him and hugged and kissed him. He came and reported this to his mother who said, "She likes me so much, and I didn't realize it." As a result, they made peace [with one another]. Thus it is written [concerning the *Torah*], "Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."¹⁹²

Eruvin 3:9 (דף כו.) *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 1:6:5 and *Peskita D'Rabbi Kahana* 14:4)

Rabbi 'Ba [and] Rabbi Chiya, in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, said: "Children of my mother duped me; they placed me as a guard for [their] vineyards, but my own vineyard I did not guard."¹⁹³ What caused me to become a guard for [their] vineyards? Because my own vineyard I did not guard. What caused me to observe two days [for each festival] in Syria? Because I did not observe [even] one in the Land of Israel. I reasoned that I would receive reward for two days, but I only receive reward for one.

[In ancient times, the rabbis of the *Sanhedrin* determined the first day of each month by taking testimony from witnesses

¹⁹² Proverbs 3:17.

¹⁹³ Song of Songs 1:6.

who had seen the new moon. Once that day was established, people could figure out when to observe holidays such as *Pesach*, *Sukkoth*, or *Shavuoth*, which fell later in the month. Because news of the *Sanhedrin's* decision did not travel to some places outside the Land of Israel rapidly enough, Jews who lived there did not know the correct date and had to observe two days of each holiday as a result of their uncertainty.]

[This should not have applied to Syria, a region immediately adjacent to the Land of Israel, where messengers were able to arrive in time to inform the Jews of the correct date.¹⁹⁴ Rather than making fine distinctions, however, the sages decreed the observance of two days throughout the Diaspora.]

[Even though Jews now follow a fixed calendar and no longer need to wait for the *Sanhedrin* to set the date for each new month, those living outside of the Land of Israel must still observe two days of each festival because that was the custom of their ancestors.¹⁹⁵]

[Although one would suppose that observing two days would bring additional merit, this passage teaches that Jews living in exile only receive reward as though they had observed one day. This is because observing a festival in the holy

¹⁹⁴ The "Syria" to which the *Talmud* refers is an area to the north and west of the Land of Israel which King David conquered and annexed to the Land of Israel. Since he did this prior to completing the conquest of the Land itself, Syria has an intermediate status, being regarded as part of the Land of Israel for some *Halachic* purposes but not for others (*Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth T'rumoeth* 1:2-4 based on *Sifrei* to Deuteronomy 11:24).

¹⁹⁵ See the end of this passage in the original and see B.T. *Beitzah* 4B.

environment of the Land of Israel accomplishes twice as much as doing so elsewhere.]

What caused me to separate two *Challah* loaves in Syria? Because I did not separate [even] one in the Land of Israel. I reasoned that I would receive reward for two, but I only receive reward for one.

[The *Torah* commands Jews to donate part of their dough to a *Kohen*. This *Mitzvah* is called *Challah*, and the *Torah* only commands its performance inside the Land of Israel. The sages ordained the taking of *Challah* outside the Land of Israel so that this important *Halachah* would not be forgotten.¹⁹⁶]

[However, *Kohanim* may only eat *Challah* when both it and they are ritually pure, and the rabbis decreed that all territories outside the Land of Israel be considered impure. Therefore, the sages originally ordained that Jews who lived outside the Land of Israel remove two portions of *Challah*. They burned one portion since it was impure and gave the second portion to a *Kohen* who ate it in memory of this *Halachah*.¹⁹⁷]

Rabbi Yochanan applied to them the verse, "I also gave them laws which are not good and statutes through which they

¹⁹⁶ *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah* 322:3.

¹⁹⁷ *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah* 322:4-5. The *Rama* explains that this decree of removing two portions of *Challah* outside the Land of Israel applied when the *Kohanim* inside the Land of Israel could maintain their ritual purity and eat *Challah* there. Since all *Kohanim* today are impure and may not eat *Challah* even inside the Land of Israel, Jews who live elsewhere only remove one portion of *Challah* which they burn.

will not live.”¹⁹⁸ [These Rabbinic decrees are “not good” for the Jews because there is no additional reward for observing them.]

Eruvin 5:1 (דף ל: -: לא.)

[One may not walk more than two thousand cubits outside a town on the Sabbath.¹⁹⁹ The *Mishnah* states that when one of the houses of a town is located further away from its edge than the others, the boundaries of the town are extended on that entire side.]

[As an example, if the houses at the northwest corner of the town extend one hundred cubits beyond those situated at the northeast corner, the entire northern boundary of the town is viewed as starting from the houses on its northwest corner and citizens who reside at the northeast corner may walk up to two thousand one hundred cubits northward from their homes on the Sabbath.]

[The *Talmud* discusses a grammatical point. According to some opinions, the word which the *Mishnah* uses for “extend” should be spelled with an *Ayin* (מַעְבְּרִין), related to the Hebrew word for “pregnancy” (עֲבוּר), and meaning that the boundary of the town is extended just as a woman’s abdomen protrudes

¹⁹⁸ Ezekiel 20:25.

¹⁹⁹ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 397:1. In modern measurements this works out to between three thousand and four thousand feet, or between nine hundred and twelve hundred meters.

There are some exceptions to this rule — see, for example, *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 406:1. Also, one may extend this boundary by setting up an *Eruv Techumin* (עֲרוֹב תְּחוּמֵינ) before *Shabbath*.

during pregnancy. Others hold that the word should be spelled with an *Alef* (אָאַרִיךְ), in which case it would derive from the Hebrew word for “limb” (אַרְבַּי), and would mean that a “limb” is added to the town’s boundary.]

Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Hoshaya said [that the word the *Mishnah* uses for extending a town’s boundaries is spelled with an *Alef* (א) and implies] adding a limb to it.

Rabbi Hoshaya lifted his eyes and stared at him.

“Why do you stare at me?” asked Rabbi Yochanan. “One who needs you, you may laugh at, but one who does not need you, you should exalt above yourself.”²⁰⁰

Nonetheless, for thirteen years Rabbi Yochanan used to enter before his master [Rabbi Hoshaya] whom he did not need. [One should show respect for a teacher even if one has reached a stage in his learning where he no longer needs his instruction.]

Rabbi Sh’muel said in the name of Rabbi Ze’ira: If he did nothing else, it was sufficient for him that he greeted his master, for whoever greets his master is [considered] as though he greets the Divine Presence.

Rabbi Berachyah and Rabbi Yirmiyah said in the name of Rabbi Chiya bar ’Ba: It is written, “Moses took the tent, and set it up for himself outside the camp at a distance from the

²⁰⁰ *Korban Ha’Eidah*, following the text of the Venice edition which reads: צריך לך צחק. לא צריך לך הפליג עליך. *P’nei Moshe* agrees that this is the correct wording of the text, but understands this sentence to mean, “Are you pleased that I need you [to teach me this]? I do not need you because others who are greater than you [taught the same thing].”

camp, and he called it a tent of meeting; so it was that whoever sought *Hashem* would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp."²⁰¹ ...It is not written here, "so it was that whoever sought Moses," but "so it was that whoever sought *Hashem*." From here we see that whoever greets his master is [considered] as though he greets the Divine Presence.

Rabbi Chelbo and Rabbi Chuna said in the name of Rav: It is written, "Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, 'As *Hashem*, God of Israel, whom I stood before lives...'"²⁰² Was not Elijah a novice among the prophets [since this is the first of his prophecies which the *Tanach* records? If so, how can he speak of having stood before God, implying that he had prior contact with the Divine Presence?] Rather, this teaches that all the standing he did before Ahijah the Shilonite, his master, was considered as though he stood before the Divine Presence.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Exodus 33:7.

²⁰² I Kings 17:1.

²⁰³ This translation follows *P'nei Moshe* who understands the *Talmud's* word "*Tironin*" (טירונין) as Latin for "beginner" or "novice," related to the English "tyro." (In modern Hebrew, טירון can refer to a new army recruit.)

Korban Ha'Eidah, however, interprets "*Tironin*" (טירונין) as indicating rulership. The Latin *Tyrranus*, derived from Greek, means "tyrant". Although this word has acquired the connotation of a cruel, unjust ruler, it originally referred to any monarch. According to this, the text would be asking, "Wasn't Elijah a monarch [among the prophets]?" As a prophet of high status surely he knew that only *Moshe Rabbeinu* may be described as "standing before God." Accordingly, he must have been referring to the time he spent studying before his master.

Rabbi Chelbo said in the name of Ilan of Beth Shiloh: Even when Elijah requested to have water brought before him, Elisha would present it to him. What is the Scriptural source for this? It is not written, “Here is Elisha, son of Shaphat, who learned *Torah* [from Elijah],” but “who poured water on the hands of Elijah.”²⁰⁴ [The theme of this passage that a disciple must revere his teacher as he would the Divine Presence refers not only to a mental attitude. Rather, Elisha served Elijah to such a degree that he gained more of a reputation for performing the task of fetching water for Elijah than for studying under him.]

[Similarly,] it is written, “And the lad Samuel served *Hashem* before Eli.”²⁰⁵ Did he do anything but serve Eli? [Samuel was a Levite.²⁰⁶ As such, he could not serve in the Temple until attaining the age of thirty.²⁰⁷ Since the verse refers to Samuel when he was much younger than that, how can it talk about him “serving *Hashem*?”²⁰⁸] Rather, this teaches that whatever service he performed for Eli, his master, was considered as though he performed it before the Divine Presence.

Etz Yosef understands this passage in a similar manner, but says that “*Tironin*” (טירונין) is Aramaic for “officer,” since *Targum Yonathan* translates the phrase “officers of the Philistines” (סַרְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים) as “*Turnei Pilishtaei*” (טורני פלשתאי) (Joshua 13:3).

²⁰⁴ II Kings 3:11.

²⁰⁵ I Samuel 3:1.

²⁰⁶ J.T. *Berachoth* 4:1.

²⁰⁷ Numbers 4:3.

²⁰⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

Rabbi Yishmael learned: “Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread with the father-in-law of Moses before God.”²⁰⁹ Did they eat before God? Rather, from here one learns that whoever greets his colleague is considered as though he greets the Divine Presence. [*Moshe Rabbeinu’s* father-in-law, Jethro, was merely an associate of Aaron and the elders — he never instructed them. However, it is a great merit to greet even a colleague in learning.²¹⁰]

Eruvin 5:1 (דף ג.ל.ג.א:)

[The *Talmud* continues its discussion of the two thousand cubit Sabbath boundary. If a town has the shape of a square or a rectangle, one simply measures two thousand cubits from each side to determine the boundary’s limit. If the town has a circular shape, however, one views it as though it is inscribed inside an imaginary square and then measures two thousand cubits from each side of that square. One must calculate each side of the imaginary square according to the north, south, east, and west directions of the world, which are determined as follows:²¹¹]

[Although the sun always rises in the east, it does not rise from the same point along the eastern horizon every day. Instead, the sun’s position gradually moves from the southeastern

²⁰⁹ Exodus 18:12.

²¹⁰ See, however, *Torah Temimah* on Exodus 18:12. He states that the word colleague in this text is a scribal error which should be changed to read master. He notes that *Mechilta* on *Parshath Yithro*, *Parashah* 1 at the very end has a version of this text similar to that which he suggests.

²¹¹ *Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chaim* 398:1-3 based on B.T. *Eruvin* 55A and 56A.

horizon at the winter solstice to the northeastern horizon at the summer solstice. To determine where due east lies, one must draw an imaginary line midway between the points on the horizon where the sun rises at the winter solstice and where it rises at the summer solstice. The same is done to reckon the western direction, drawing an imaginary line midway between the points on the horizon where the sun sets at the winter solstice and where it sets at the summer solstice. Once one knows where east and west lie, the locations of north and south become obvious.^{212]}

[The city of Jerusalem and the camp of the Jews in the Sinai desert had square or rectangular shapes. Nonetheless, it was important to establish the four directions so that the Tabernacle and the Temple could be laid out with the Ark in the west.^{213]}

Rabbi Acha in the name of Sh'muel bar Rav Yitzchak said: How the early prophets strove to establish the eastern gate [of the Israelite court in the Temple] so that the sun would focus on it during the first day of the winter season and during the

²¹² Rabbi Yossi in J.T. *Eruvin* 5:1. In B.T. *Eruvin* 56A, Rabbi Yossi describes a different way of making this calculation but with the same results.

²¹³ Among other requirements, some sacrifices had to be slaughtered north of the altar and their blood sprinkled on parts of the altar corresponding to various directions. Also, the boards which formed a given wall of the Tabernacle always had to be positioned the same way — those used for the north always in the north, those used for the south always in the south, and so forth (See above, J.T. *Shabbath* 12:3).

first day of the summer season [thus making it possible to accurately calculate the four directions of the globe.²¹⁴]

It was called by seven names: the turning gate,²¹⁵ the gate of the foundation,²¹⁶ the sunny gate,²¹⁷ the entrance gate,²¹⁸ the middle gate,²¹⁹ the new gate,²²⁰ and the upper gate.²²¹

The “turning gate” because those who were ritually impure turned back [from it, for they were not allowed to go beyond that point]. Thus it is written, “‘Depart impure one!’ they called to him.”²²²

The “gate of foundation” because there [the members of the *Sanhedrin* met and] would found the *Halachah*.

The “sunny gate” because it was aligned according to the shining of the sun, as expressed in the verse, “He speaks to the sun, and it does not shine.”²²³

²¹⁴ An additional reason for designing this gate so that the rising sun would always shine through it was probably to make it easy to determine the time for reciting the morning *Shema* (See B.T. *Yoma* 37B).

²¹⁵ II Kings 11:6.

²¹⁶ II Chronicles 23:5.

²¹⁷ Jeremiah 19:2.

²¹⁸ Ezekiel 40:15. The Hebrew *Iton* (אִיתוֹן) can mean “coming” as in “And He came (הָבִיאוּ) [accompanied by] myriads” (Deuteronomy 33:2) (*Korban Ha’Eidah*).

²¹⁹ Jeremiah 39:3.

²²⁰ Jeremiah 26:10.

²²¹ II Chronicles 23:20.

²²² Lamentations 4:15.

²²³ Job 9:7. The use of the word *Cheres* (חֶרֶס) in this verse to mean “sun” shows that the phrase “*Charsith* gate” (חֶרְסִיתָה) in Jeremiah 19:2 means “sunny gate.”

The “entrance gate” because it serves for entering and exiting.

The “middle gate” because it was set between two other gates.²²⁴

The “new gate” because there the sages instituted new laws.

The “upper gate” because it was above the Israelite camp, the perimeter wall, and the women’s court.²²⁵ This was an

²²⁴ The main entrance to the Temple compound was the gate to the women’s court on the east side. After passing through the women’s court and ascending fifteen steps, one reached the entrance to the Israelite court where the gate the *Talmud* is discussing was located. Beyond this area and past the copper altar, rose another set of steps at the top of which stood a third gate leading to the Sanctuary (היכל), which had the Holy of Holies situated at its western end. The gate to the women’s court, the gate to the Israelite court, and the gate to the Sanctuary were all aligned so that someone entering the Temple could look upward through all three and see the wall of the Holy of Holies. This made the gate of the Israelite court the “middle gate” of the three (*Korban Ha’Eidah*; *Rashi* on Jeremiah 39:3).

²²⁵ This translation follows *Korban Ha’Eidah* who emends the text to read “Israelite *camp*” (מחנה ישראל) instead of “Israelite *court*” (עזרה ישראל). When the Jews traveled through the desert, their encampments were divided into three parts. At the center was the camp of the Divine Presence where the Tabernacle stood. Surrounding it was the Levite camp, and surrounding that, the Israelite camp (מחנה ישראל). The Temple compound and Jerusalem had corresponding areas. The Israelite court (עזרה ישראל), which lay to the west of the gate under discussion, contained the Sanctuary and corresponded to the camp of the Divine Presence. From the beginning of the Temple Mount up to this gate was the Levite camp, while the area between the walls of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount corresponded to the Israelite camp (מחנה ישראל) (B.T. *Zevachim* 116B). Accordingly, this gate stood above

extra advantage in the permanent Temple [over the Tabernacle. The Temple housed the Levite camp as well as the camp of the Divine Presence, whereas the Tabernacle contained only the camp of the Divine Presence.²²⁶]

In the desert, who aligned the directions for them? [Since clouds of glory surrounded the Jews, how could they observe the location of the sun to determine where east, west, north, and south lay.²²⁷]

Rabbi Acha said: The Ark aligned the directions for them. [The Ark rested at the western end of the Tabernacle. Since God Himself directed the journeys of the Jews through the desert, the Jews could figure out all four directions by observing where the side of the Ark furthest from the entrance to the Tabernacle lay.²²⁸] This is what is written [in the *Torah*]. “The Kehathites, bearers of the Sanctuary, traveled”²²⁹ refers to the Ark

the Israelite *camp* as well as the Levite camp, but not above the Israelite *court*.

²²⁶ See the previous footnote.

This gate was the famous Gate of Nikanor mentioned in the *Mishnah* repeatedly. Nikanor was the individual who traveled to Alexandria in Egypt to get the doors for this gate (B.T. *Yoma* 38A). The *Talmud* does not mention the Gate of Nikanor as one of this gate’s names’ however, because it only discusses names which have a source in Scripture.

²²⁷ *P’nei Moshe*. In addition, as the Jews traveled through the desert, they sometimes changed their encampments several times within one year. Thus, even if they could observe the rising and setting of the sun, they sometimes did not remain in one location long enough to see where it rose and set at each solstice.

²²⁸ *Korban Ha’Eidah* and *P’nei Moshe*.

²²⁹ Numbers 10:21.

[which was the main feature of the Sanctuary]; “erected,” [the next word in the verse], refers to members of Merari; “the Tabernacle before they came,” [which appears at the end of the verse] refers to [the Merarites awaiting the arrival of] the members of Kehath by whom the Ark was carried. [The Merarites could not erect the Tabernacle until the arrival of the Ark from which they would then be able to determine the four directions.]

How did Israel journey through the desert? Rabbi Chama bar Chanina and Rabbi Hoshaya [had differing views on the subject]. One said like a box [formation], and the other said like a beam.

The one who says like a box [bases his opinion upon the verse], “Just as they encamped, so they traveled.”²³⁰ [When the Jews made camp, three Tribes were to the north, three to the south, three to the east, and three to the west, with the Tabernacle in the center.²³¹ This verse implies that when they journeyed, they maintained the same square, or box-like, formation.]

The one who says like a beam [bases his opinion upon the verse], “The standard of the camp of the members of Dan journeyed, scavenging for all the camps according to their legions.”²³² [Since the Danites traveled behind all the other Tribes, if someone ahead of them lost something, they would find and

²³⁰ Numbers 2:17.

²³¹ Numbers 2:2 et. seq.

²³² Numbers 10:25.

return it. This suggests that the Tribes proceeded in a row, like a beam.]

How does the one who says like a beam interpret that [verse] which implies like a box? “Just as they encamped, so they traveled”²³³ means just as they encamped by Divine command, so they traveled by Divine command.²³⁴

How does the one who says like a box interpret that [verse] which implies like a beam? “Scavenging for all the camps according to their legions”²³⁵ means that since the Tribe of Dan was large in population, it journeyed last, and whoever had lost something, they would return it to him. [Being large in population, the Danites had the manpower to provide this service even though they traveled no further behind the rest of the nation than Asher and Naphtali with whom they formed the rear of the box-like formation.²³⁶]

²³³ Numbers 2:17.

²³⁴ When the Tribes journeyed in a straight row, they proceeded in the same order as the *Torah* lists them when describing how they made camp (*Korban Ha'Eidah* and *Shayarei Korban*).

²³⁵ Numbers 10:25.

²³⁶ *P'nei Moshe. Korban Ha'Eidah*, states that since Dan had a larger population than Asher and Naphtali with whom it traveled, it would have bulged out behind them. To maintain a box-like formation, the Danites spread themselves in a long row at the very end of the procession.

Pesachim 1:1 (:א הַ Compare *Breishith Rabbah* 31:11)

[Jews must check their homes for leaven on the night before Passover. The reason for conducting the search at night rather than during the day is so that the light of the candle will stand out against the dark surroundings, making it easier to spot any crumbs of leaven.²³⁷]

[The *Talmud* raises the following question: If one needs to examine a dark alley which sunlight does not normally reach, must he nonetheless wait until night or may he perform the search during the day?]

The words of the sages imply that [a candle] does not shine during the daytime as much as it shines during the night [so one must examine even a dark alley at night]. As Rabbi Huna said: When we were escaping [from enemies] in the caverns [near] the great study hall, we would light lamps for ourselves. When they were dim, we knew that it was daytime, and when they were bright, we knew that it was nighttime.

This accords with that which Rabbi Achiya bar Ze'ira said: When he entered the ark, Noah brought with him jewels and pearls. When they were dim, he knew that it was daytime, but when they were bright he knew that it was nighttime.²³⁸

²³⁷ *Pesachim* 1:1. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 431:1. Since people no longer use candles to light their homes, one may use a flashlight so as not to be distracted during the search by concern that wax may spill or that something may catch fire.

²³⁸ This is a well-known optical illusion. If one places white next to black, it appears brighter than when placed next to a light color (*Negaim* 2:1).

Why [did Noah need to know whether it was day or night]? Some beasts eat during the day while others eat others eat at night.

But it is written, “You shall make a skylight for the ark”²³⁹ [so daytime and nighttime should have been obvious]. The foregoing goes according to he who says that the heavenly bodies did not function during the year of the Flood.²⁴⁰

Pesachim 4:9 (: לֵי יָרֵךְ Compare B.T. *Pesachim* 57A)

[The *Torah* requires Jewish farmers to leave the corners of their fields unharvested so that poor people may take that part of the crop.²⁴¹ This rule applies only to fields of grain and to fruit orchards. There is no requirement to leave the corner of a vegetable garden for the poor.²⁴² To the contrary, one should not do so because the rabbis decreed that one must take tithes from vegetables. Since food which a poor person takes from the corner of a field is exempt from tithing, a poor person who takes from the corner of a vegetable garden will assume that no tithe is

²³⁹ Genesis 6:16.

²⁴⁰ *Breishith Rabbah* 25:2 cited in *Rashi* on Genesis 8:22.

This passage goes follows the view of those who translate the Hebrew “*Tzohar*” (צֹהַר) as “skylight.” Since the heavenly bodies did not function in their normal way, the purpose of the skylight would have been for Noah to observe the outside world and send out the raven and the dove at the appropriate time (*HaKothev*).

There are, however, those who interpret “*Tzohar*” (צֹהַר) as referring to a large phosphorescent jewel (see *Rashi* on Genesis 6:16).

²⁴¹ Leviticus 19:9-10 and 23:22.

²⁴² *Pe’ah* 1:4 according to Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura.

required and end up violating the prohibition against eating untithed produce.²⁴³]

There was an incident with a wine importer²⁴⁴ whose son set aside a corner of his vegetable patch for the poor. His father came and found the poor standing at the entrance to the garden [holding what they had taken]. He told them, “Set down what is in your hands.” When they did so, he gave them twice as much from tithed vegetables. It was not that he was stingy, but that he took heed of the words of the sages.

Pesachim 4:9 (∴ √ Compare *Esther Rabbah* 2:3)

One time, the rabbis needed a donation [to support their *Yeshivah*, so they] sent out Rabbi Akiva with another scholar. When they arrived [at the home of the wine merchant mentioned in the last passage] and were about to enter, they heard the voice of a young child inquiring, “What shall we buy for you [to eat] today?”

“Endives, and not from those picked today, but from yesterday’s which are wilted and cheap.”

The rabbis left him and went their way [assuming that such a person could scarcely afford to donate anything]. After the rest of the community contributed, they returned.

²⁴³ *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

²⁴⁴ This translation accords with the text of the Jerusalem *Talmud* (בן מביא (יין), but the parallel text in the Babylonian *Talmud* has *Bohayin* (בוהיין), presumably a person’s proper name. *Esther Rabbah* 2:3 has ברבוהין, possibly a contraction of בי רבוהין, meaning “house of great ones” and indicating one of great wealth or prestige.

“Why didn’t you come to me first as you were always accustomed to do?” he asked them.

“We already came and heard the voice of a child inquiring, ‘What shall we buy for you today?’ and you replied, ‘Endives, and not from those picked today, but from yesterday’s which are wilted and cheap.’”

“What is between me and my child you know, but what is between me and my Creator you do not know. [Although I am thrifty regarding my own needs, I am generous about giving to charity.] Even so, go and tell [my wife], and she will give you a measure full of *Dinarii*.”

When they went and told his wife, she said, “What kind of measure did he tell you? Filled to overflowing or leveled off?”

“He did not elaborate.”

“I will give you an overflowing measure. If he meant overflowing, then I have done as he said. If not, then I will deduct the excess amount from my marriage contract.”²⁴⁵

When her husband heard [that she was so generous], he doubled the amount in her marriage contract.

Pesachim 5:5 (דף לז.)

[The *Halachah* requires Jews to divide into three groups to offer the Passover sacrifice even if they are small enough in number so that they can all enter the Temple at once.²⁴⁶ This rule

²⁴⁵ A marriage contract, or *Kethubah* (כתובה), provides that a husband or his heirs pay a certain sum to his wife if he dies or divorces her.

²⁴⁶ B.T. *Pesachim* 64B.

also applied when the Jews offered the very first Passover sacrifice in Egypt even though they did not bring their sacrifices to a central location.]

Rabbi Yaakov ben Acha said in the name of Rabbi Yassa: Power was given to *Moshe Rabbeinu's* voice, and it traveled throughout the Land of Egypt — a journey of forty days. And what did he say? “From such and such a place until such and such a place is one group, and from such and such a place until such and such a place is another group.”

Do not be astonished [that *Moshe Rabbeinu's* voice could be heard at such a distance]. If concerning dust, which by its nature does not travel, [the *Torah*] says, “It became dust throughout the Land of Egypt,”²⁴⁷ then concerning sound, which by its nature travels, is it not even more so?

Rabbi Levi said: Just as power was given to *Moshe Rabbeinu's* voice, so power was given to Pharaoh's voice, and it traveled throughout the Land of Egypt — a journey of forty days. And what did he say? “Arise and depart from the midst of my people.”²⁴⁸ In the past you were slaves of Pharaoh. From now on you are slaves of *Hashem*.” At that moment, the Jews said, “Praise God! [Sing] praise, servants of *Hashem*,”²⁴⁹ [who are] no longer servants of Pharaoh.

²⁴⁷ Exodus 9:9. During the plague of boils, God commanded *Moshe Rabbeinu* and Aaron to fill their hands with soot which *Moshe Rabbeinu* then cast heavenward. The soot changed into dust which spread throughout Egypt, causing boils to develop upon the Egyptians and their livestock.

²⁴⁸ Exodus 12:31.

²⁴⁹ Psalms 113:1.

Pesachim 5:7 (דף לז:לח.) Compare B.T. *Pesachim* 118A and 65A)

[The *Mishnah* explains that as the Jews offered the Pass-over sacrifice, they would chant *Hallel*. If they finished reciting it, but still needed more time to complete the service, they would repeat it. If they finished the second recitation, yet needed still more time, they would repeat it a third time.²⁵⁰]

[The *Talmud* states that if rain did not fall during the winter, the sages used to declare a series of fasts. If rain fell during a fast prior to midday, the people would break their fast and then gather to recite “the Great *Hallel*” at twilight.]

What is “the Great *Hallel*?”

Rabbi Parnach said in the name of Rabbi Chanina [that it is Psalm 136 which starts off with] “Acknowledge the God of the angels, for His kindness is eternal.”

Rabbi Yochanan said: [This is what was recited] provided that one began from [the previous chapter of Psalms which starts], “[Praise, servants of *Hashem*,] who stand in the House of *Hashem*.”²⁵¹

Why recite these two sections? Rabbi Ze’ira quoted Rabbi Abahu in the name of Rabbi Sh’muel bar Nachman: Because rainfall is included in them.

According to the opinion of Rabbi Yochanan, all is well [with this explanation because] it is written [in Psalm 135], “He

²⁵⁰ *Pesachim* 5:7 קראו את ההלל. אם גמרו שנו, וְאִם שָׁנוּ שֶׁלֹּשׁוּ

²⁵¹ Psalms 135:2.

raises clouds from the end of the Earth; He made lightning for rain."²⁵²

However, according to the view of Rabbi Chanina [who says that the Great *Hallel* consists only of Psalm 136], what [alludes to rainfall]? It is written, "He gives food to all flesh for His kindness is eternal."²⁵³ [This hints at rainfall because the purpose of asking for rain is for crops to grow.]

Rabbi 'Ba and Rabbi Simon both say: This [Great *Hallel*] is the same as ours [meaning, the one we ordinarily recite on holidays and not Psalm 136]. Rabbi Yoshua ben Levi concurred: This is the same as ours. [Likewise,] Bar Kappara said: This is the same as ours.

Bar Kappara follows a consistent opinion, as we learn in the *Mishnah*: **Throughout the history of the third group [which offered the Passover sacrifice], it never reached "I love Hashem because He listens"²⁵⁴ because its membership was small.**²⁵⁵ Bar Kappara recited a teaching [regarding this *Mishnah*]: This [verse is part of the *Hallel* Jews recite on every holiday and is identical to] the Great *Hallel*.

A certain disciple of Abaye²⁵⁶ passed before the ark [to lead the service after it rained on a fast day, and the congregation needed to recite the Great *Hallel*]. He said to those present,

²⁵² Psalms 135:7.

²⁵³ Psalms 136:25.

²⁵⁴ Psalms 116:1.

²⁵⁵ *Pesachim* 5:7.

²⁵⁶ *P'nei Moshe*. *Korban Ha'Eidah*, however, says that Bar Abaye (בר אבייה) was a proper name.

“Repeat after me whatever I say.” This implies that this was not our [*Hallel* which we read on holidays. Otherwise, everyone would be sufficiently versed in it so that they would not have to repeat after a leader.]

Rabbi Manna said: This was ours. It was a great miracle, so he told them, “Repeat after me whatever I say.” [Although everyone was familiar with the wording, the leader wanted the congregation to recite the *Hallel* responsively to show appreciation for the miracle.²⁵⁷ Alternatively, many unlearned people, who would not ordinarily attend services, showed up because of the magnitude of the occasion. These people did not know the *Hallel* recited on holidays, so the leader had them repeat it after him.²⁵⁸]

It is learned [in a *Braitha*: The third shift] was called “a group of slackers.” Said Rabbi Abun: If with something where the requirement is [that there must be three groups, nevertheless the last group] is called a group of slackers because they procrastinate, when a *Mitzvah* is involved [which does not have a similar requirement], how much more so [would those who delay be called slackers].

Pesachim 6:1 (דף לט.א) Compare B.T. *Pesachim* 66A and *Menachoth* 109B)

[The presidency of the *Sanhedrin* ran in the Batheira family for generations. One time, Passover eve coincided with the Sabbath, and the members of the Batheira family forgot whether

²⁵⁷ *P'nei Moshe*.

²⁵⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

it is permitted to slaughter the Passover sacrifice on the Sabbath. They called upon Hillel, who originated from Babylonia and had studied under Shemaya and Avtalyon, to resolve the question.]

Although he sat and expounded for them all day long [that it is permitted to offer the Passover sacrifice on the Sabbath], they did not accept his opinion until he told them, “May [a curse] come upon me, if I did not hear so from Shemaya and Avtalyon!” Once they heard this from him, they arose and appointed him president over them. After they appointed him president, he began scolding them and saying, “What caused you to need this Babylonian? Was it not that you did not serve two of the greatest scholars of all time, Shemaya and Avtalyon, who were dwelling with you?” Once he scolded them, a *Halachah* was hidden from him.²⁵⁹

...Rabbi Abon said: Is it not impossible for two Sabbatical cycles, [i.e., fourteen years], to pass without the fourteenth of *Nissan*, [which is Passover eve], falling on the Sabbath? [Since this is a situation which repeatedly occurs,] why was this rule hidden from the Batheira family? To give greatness to Hillel.

Rabbi Manna said, “I heard from Rabbi Yudan and from all the scholars [as follows]: Why do [great scholars] show respect for a lower court [whose members are not as learned as they are]? So that controversy not increase among Israel.” [If

²⁵⁹ A man of Hillel’s caliber would never have intentionally insulted a fellow Jew. Rather, he meant to admonish his listeners to pay stricter attention to their teachers in the future. Even so, because he sounded arrogant, he forgot a *Halachah* (*Korban Ha’Eidah*).

great rabbis would not show deference to a court composed of lesser scholars, the general public would not respect their decisions, and chaos would result.²⁶⁰]

Three abandoned their crowns in this world and gained life in the world to come. They are Jonathan the son of King Saul, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, and the elders of the Batheira family.

With respect to Jonathan, the son of King Saul, [who deferred to David], Rebbi said: No, [it was not such a great thing because] even the women who sat behind the beams [of the loom] knew that David would reign in the future. [It was widely recognized that David's ability to rule far surpassed that of Jonathan, so Jonathan's willingness to forego his right to rule in his father's stead was not so remarkable.]

[One time, the *Sanhedrin* became dissatisfied with Rabban Gamliel and appointed Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah to replace him as president. When they decided to reinstate Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah stepped down, but that was not a great act of humility because with] Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah there was a stipulation. [The sages stipulated with Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah from the beginning that if they chose to do so, they could remove him. His acquiescence in his removal was therefore not a true sign of humility. Alternatively, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah was much younger than Rabban Gamliel, and the rabbis stipulated that when Rabban Gamliel would die, they would

²⁶⁰ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

reinstate Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah to the presidency, so he did not object. A third possibility is that one of the prerogatives of the presidency was to deliver discourses before the *Sanhedrin*. The stipulation was that although Rabban Gamliel would again be president, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah would retain the right to deliver discourses on a regular basis.²⁶¹]

[In conclusion,] you have nothing to compare to the elders of the Batheira family, who removed themselves from the presidency and appointed [Hillel] president.

The rabbis of Caesaria say: Also Rabbi Chanina of Sephoris, [who was head of the *Yeshivah*, but abandoned his position in favor of] Rabbi Manna.²⁶²

Rabbi Yoshua ben Kabasio said, “All my days I fled from rulership. Now that I gained it, I would take up a kettle against

²⁶¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. *Amudei Yerushalayim* interprets the term “תניין” in the text as “second” rather than as “stipulation,” meaning that Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah when Rabban Gamliel was reinstated, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah became his second in command. Since he retained a high position, it was not a great act of humility to step down from the presidency.

²⁶² Rabbi Manna had a brother named Rabbi Chanina (J.T. *Mo'ed Katan* 3:5). If this is the same Rabbi Chanina mentioned here, then one may wonder what the rabbis of Caesaria found so remarkable. After all, if Rabbi Chanina relinquished his position to his brother, it still remained in the family.

Perhaps one could answer that, to the contrary, a stranger might be willing to recognize a person of superior ability. Siblings, however, are reluctant to make such acknowledgments, a fact of life reflected in the relationship between Joseph and his brothers. That Rabbi Chanina would be willing to acknowledge his brother's greater talent and step down in his favor was an act of supreme humility.

whoever would come and remove me. Just as a kettle scalds and marks one with its soot, so would I fall upon him.”

Rabbi Yossi of the school of Rabbi Bon explained, “God forbid that [Rabbi Yoshua ben Kabasio] wanted it [so badly]. Rather, he reasoned, ‘Who will assure me that someone else will sanctify the Name of Heaven as I do?’”

Pesachim 9:1 (.סד הך Compare B.T. *Berachoth* 10B.²⁶³)

Hezekiah, King of Judah, did six things. With respect to three, [the sages] agreed with him, but with respect to three, they did not agree.

These are the three with which they agreed: He cut up the copper snake [which *Moshe Rabbeinu* had used to cure snake-bite victims in the desert. He did so because some people worshipped it.²⁶⁴] He dragged the bones of his father on a bed of ropes. [King Hezekiah’s father, King Ahaz, committed idolatry. By not giving him an honorable funeral, King Hezekiah sought to atone for his father’s sins and to discourage other wicked people.²⁶⁵] He hid away the table of cures. [Some people no longer turned to God for help when they became ill because there was a list of cures.²⁶⁶ Alternatively, this was a stone inscribed with

²⁶³ Although this material appears as a *Braitha* in B.T. *Pesachim* 56A, it appears as a *Mishnah* in *Pesachim* 4:9, so its correct status is unclear.

²⁶⁴ II Kings 18:4.

²⁶⁵ B.T. *Sanhedrin* 47A according to *Rashi*.

²⁶⁶ *Rashi* on B.T. *Pesachim* 56A sub verba “*VeGam Ganaz*” (רגם גנז).

instructions for serving various idols when one needed a cure. In that case, it certainly had to be destroyed.²⁶⁷]

These are the three with which they did not agree: He cut [off the gold from] the doors of the Inner Sanctuary of the Temple [and sent it to Sennecharib, the king of Assyria, to try to induce him not to attack.²⁶⁸] He stopped up the source of the waters of the Gihon River. [King Hezekiah reasoned that this would prevent approaching enemies from using the water. The sages, however, thought that he should have faith in *Hashem's* protection.²⁶⁹] He added an extra month to the calendar during *Nissan*.

[The Hebrew calendar uses lunar months which start upon the sighting of the new moon. Twelve lunar months consist of roughly three hundred fifty-four days — eleven less than the three hundred sixty-five of the solar year. This means that if Jews used only a lunar calendar, the holidays would fall eleven days earlier each year according to the solar calendar. As an example, if Passover fell on April 25th one year, it would fall on April 14th the following year, on April 3rd the year after that, and so on. As time progressed, Passover would occur during various seasons throughout the year. The *Torah*, however, requires that Passover fall during Spring.²⁷⁰ To ensure that this will

²⁶⁷ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

²⁶⁸ II Kings 18:16 according to *Radak* and *Metzudoth* בעת ההיא קצץ חזקיה את דלתות אֶת דלתות היכל ה' וְאֶת הָאֲמֹנֹת אֲשֶׁר צָפָה חֲזַקְיָה מִלֶּךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּתְּנֵם לְמֶלֶךְ אֲשׁוּר הַיֵּכֶל ה' וְאֶת הָאֲמֹנֹת אֲשֶׁר צָפָה חֲזַקְיָה מִלֶּךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּתְּנֵם לְמֶלֶךְ אֲשׁוּר

²⁶⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

²⁷⁰ Deuteronomy 16:1 שְׁמֹר אֶת חֹדֶשׁ הָאֵבִיב וַעֲשִׂיתָ פֶסַח לַה' אֶל-לֵהֲיֹדֶךָ כִּי בַחֹדֶשׁ הָאֵבִיב הוֹצִיאָךְ ה' אֶל-לֵהֲיֹדֶךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם לַיְלָה

happen, a leap month is added to the Hebrew calendar from time to time.]

[The *Torah* requires that the month of *Nissan* serve as the first month of the year for certain purposes.²⁷¹ Accordingly, once the *Sanhedrin* has already declared the beginning of the month of *Nissan* — and thus the beginning of the year — the rabbis may not convert that month into a leap month and designate the following month instead as *Nissan*. One time, on the last day of *Adar*, the month before *Nissan*, King Hezekiah decreed that the next month would not be *Nissan*, but a leap month instead. Theoretically, the last day of *Adar* could become the first day of *Nissan* if witnesses came before the *Sanhedrin* and testified that the new moon appeared. Even though this did not occur on this occasion, the sages held that this possibility made it too late to decree a leap month.²⁷²]

²⁷¹ Exodus 12:2 הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לְכֶם רִאשׁוֹן הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי הוּא לְכֶם לְחֹדֶשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

²⁷² B.T. *Berachoth* 10B.

Pesachim 9:9 (יט ט: Compare B.T. *Pesachim* 99A)

Bar Kappara recited: Silence is good for the wise. How much more so for the foolish! So King Solomon says, “Also a fool who is silent will be regarded as wise.”²⁷³ Needless to say, a wise person who is silent [will be highly regarded].

Pesachim 10:1 (טס-:חט Compare *Breishith Rabbah* 88:5)

From where [did the sages base their decree of drinking] Four Cups [of wine on the first night of Passover]? Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Banaya said: They correspond to four [expressions of] redemption: “Therefore tell the Children of Israel [that] I am *Hashem*, and *I will take you out* from under the burdens of Egypt, and *I will save* you from their servitude, and *I will redeem* you with an outstretched arm and great judgments. And *I will take* you for Myself as a nation....”²⁷⁴

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: They correspond to the four cups of Pharaoh: [The wine-master imprisoned with Joseph dreamed that,] “I had Pharaoh’s *cup* in my hand, and I took grapes and squeezed them [so that juice flowed] into Pharaoh’s *cup*, and I placed the *cup* in Pharaoh’s hand. And Joseph told him, ‘This is its explanation... in another three days Pharaoh will raise your head and restore you to your position, and you shall place a *cup* in Pharaoh’s hand.”²⁷⁵ [When this dream came true, the wine-master gained his freedom. Later, when Pharaoh had

²⁷³ Proverbs 17:28.

²⁷⁴ Exodus 6:6-7.

²⁷⁵ Genesis 40:11-13.

dreams which he could not understand, the wine-master told him about Joseph's ability to interpret dreams, and Joseph thereby gained his freedom. The Four Cups Jews drink at the Passover *Seder* recall the four cups which led to Joseph's liberation.]

Rabbi Levi said: They correspond to four kingdoms [destined to subjugate Israel. They were Babylonia, Persia/Media, Greece and Rome.²⁷⁶ The present exile, which Rome caused, is the final one, after which the *Mashiach* will permanently redeem the Jewish nation. The Four Cups hint that the final redemption will follow the dominion of these four oppressors.]

The rabbis say they correspond to the four cups of retribution which the Holy One, Blessed be He, will give the nations of the world to drink in the future [as alluded to in the following verses]: "For so says *Hashem*, God of Israel, to me, 'Take this wine *cup* of wrath from My hand and give it as drink to all the nations to which I send you.'"²⁷⁷ "[Like] a golden *cup* was Babylonia in the hand of *Hashem*, intoxicating all the land with its wine; the nations drank, [and] therefore the nations became inebriated."²⁷⁸ "For a *cup* is in the hand of *Hashem* and strong wine, well mixed, fills it; He shall pour from it, but only its lees shall all the wicked of the land suck and drink."²⁷⁹ "Fiery coals and sulphur shall rain upon the wicked; a quaking wind is the

²⁷⁶ Daniel 7:17; *VaYikra Rabbah* 13:5.

²⁷⁷ Jeremiah 25:15.

²⁷⁸ Jeremiah 51:7.

²⁷⁹ Psalms 75:9.

portion of their *cup*.”²⁸⁰ [The Four Cups symbolize redemption because when God saves the righteous, He punishes the wicked.²⁸¹]

What does “the portion of their cup” mean? Rabbi Avin said: Vials of poterium like the vials of poterium [drunk] after a bath. [In *Talmudic* times, the communal baths were extremely hot and steamy. After exposure to such a bath, people used to cool down by drinking wine mixed with an herb called poterium. Rabbi Avin interprets this verse as meaning that God will punish the wicked by heating them with fiery coals and then cooling them with a quaking wind so that they can undergo further punishment.²⁸²]

Corresponding to these [cups of retribution] the Holy One, Blessed be He, will serve Israel four cups of consolation [paralleling the following verses]: “*Hashem* is my allotted portion and *cup*.”²⁸³ “You set my table before my enemies; you bathed my head with oil, my *cup* overflows [with contentment].”²⁸⁴ And the verse, “A *cup* of salvations I shall raise, and

²⁸⁰ Psalms 11:6.

²⁸¹ See *P’nei Moshe*.

²⁸² *P’nei Moshe* understands the Hebrew רפילי as referring to פילי which corresponds to *Phiala* in Latin, meaning “phials” or “vials.” *Korban Ha’Eidah*, however, appears to identify רפילי as the Latin *Duplum*, the source of the modern English words “duplicate” and “double.” According to this, the *Talmud* means that the wicked will receive a double dose of poterium.

²⁸³ Psalms 16:5. The Psalmist employs the term “cup” as a synonym for “share” (*Metzudoth David* ad. loc.).

²⁸⁴ Psalms 23:5.

upon the Name of *Hashem* shall I call”²⁸⁵ counts as two [because “salvations” is plural].

Pesachim 10:4 (ע:רף Compare *Mechilta, Parshath Bo* 18)

Rabbi Chiya learned: Corresponding to four sons the *Torah* spoke: A wise son, a wicked son, a foolish son, and a son who does not know how to ask.

What does the wise son say? “What are the testimonies, laws, and statutes which *Hashem* our God has commanded”²⁸⁶ us?²⁸⁷ You should answer him accordingly, “With a strong hand *Hashem* brought us out of Egypt, the place of enslavement.”²⁸⁸

What does the wicked son say? “What is this service to you?”²⁸⁹ [By which he means], “What is this trouble with which you bother us each year?” Since he excludes himself from the community, you should answer him accordingly, “Because of this which *Hashem* did for me during my departure from Egypt.”²⁹⁰ For me He did it, but for that man [i.e., the wicked son] He did not do it. Had that man been in Egypt, he would never have been fit to be redeemed from there.

²⁸⁵ Psalms 116:13.

²⁸⁶ Deuteronomy 6:20 - כי ישאלך בנך מחר לומר מה העדת והחקים והמשפטים אשר צוה ה' א-להינו איתכם

²⁸⁷ The reason the wise son changes the end of the verse will be discussed in the comments following this passage.

²⁸⁸ Exodus 13:14.

²⁸⁹ Exodus 12:26.

²⁹⁰ Exodus 13:8.

What does the fool say? “What’s this?”²⁹¹ Accordingly, you should teach him the laws of the Passover sacrifice: We do not eat desert after consuming the Passover sacrifice. [Furthermore, one must not] leave one group [of celebrants] and join another group.²⁹²

As for the son who does not know how to ask, you should initiate the discussion for him.

Pesachim 10:5 (: ע ד)

Rav said: At the beginning [of the recitation of the story of the Exodus on Passover night] one should start with, “Since antiquity your ancestors dwelled on the other side of the [Euphrates] river — Terah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor, and they served other gods. I took your ancestor, Abraham, for the other side of the river and walked him through all the Land of Canaan and increased his offspring and gave him Isaac.”²⁹³

[The *Talmud* proceeds to expound on the word] “increased.” Rav Acha said: [This word] is spelled וְאַרְבָּ [in the *Tanach*, which can mean “I quarreled” even though it is pronounced וְאַרְבָּה, which means “I increased.” Therefore, it is as though God said,] “How many quarrels did I make with [Abraham] until I gave him Isaac.”

²⁹¹ Exodus 13:14.

²⁹² The *Halachah* requires that those who will consume the Passover sacrifice be designated prior to its slaughter. Thus, one may only eat from the sacrifice brought by the group to which he is assigned and may not switch to another group.

²⁹³ Joshua 24:2-3.

Another interpretation: “I made myself with respect to him like one who lies in ambush. [An alternative pronunciation for this word is נֶאֱרָב which means “one who lies in ambush.”] If he sins, I will give him [what he deserves], and if he does good, I will give him [what he deserves].

Pesachim 10:5 (דף ע:)

[The *Mishnah* records the following dispute: The Academy of Shammai held that one should recite only the first Psalm of *Hallel* before the *Seder* meal on Passover night, whereas the Academy of Hillel held that one should recite the first two Psalms of *Hallel* before the meal.]

Said the Academy of Shammai to them: Did Israel leave Egypt [so early in the evening] that one should mention the departure from Egypt [described in the second Psalm of *Hallel*?] [According to the Academy of Shammai, the departure took place at midnight. One should therefore eat the meal first and then recite this Psalm close to midnight.]

The Academy of Hillel answered them: [Even] if one would wait until the crowing of the rooster, [the Jews] would not yet have reached half of the redemption. How can we mention the redemption when they were not yet redeemed? Did they not go forth at midday, as it says, “It was in the middle of this day that *Hashem* brought forth the Children of Israel from the Land of Egypt according to their legions?”²⁹⁴ Rather, once

²⁹⁴ Exodus 12:51.

one has commenced a *Mitzvah*, we say to him, “Finish!”

Pesachim 10:6 (.א.א.א.)

It is written, “When Israel exacts vengeance [from its enemies], the nation volunteers to bless *Hashem*.”²⁹⁵ Heads of the nation, volunteer! When the Holy One, Blessed be He, performs miracles for you, you should chant songs. [Whenever Jews prevail over their enemies, their leaders should guide them in praising *Hashem*.]

[The rabbis] posed a difficulty [regarding this principle]: What about the redemption from Egypt? [*Moshe Rabbeinu* did not compose any song upon their departure, but only later at the Reed Sea.] That was different because [the departure] was [only] the beginning of their redemption, [and one need only recite praise at the end].

What about Mordecai and Esther [who did not record any song after escaping from Haman]? That was different because they were outside the Land [of Israel].²⁹⁶ There are those who wish to answer that Mordecai and Esther were redeemed from their enemies but were not redeemed from the [Persian] kingdom. [They did not compose a song of praise or recite *Hallel*

²⁹⁵ Judges 5:2 according to *Metzudoth*.

²⁹⁶ The Babylonian *Talmud* explains that prior to the Jews entering their Land, they could recite *Hallel* for a miracle which happened anywhere in the world. Accordingly, it was appropriate to do so at the Reed Sea. Once the Jews entered the Land of Israel, however, they were no longer permitted to say *Hallel* for miracles which took place elsewhere (B.T. *Megillah* 14A).

because their redemption was incomplete. Although they escaped Haman, they remained exiled in Persia.]

Shekalim 1:1 (דף א:ב.) Compare *Shemoth Rabbah* 51:8 and *Sifrei, Parshath Devarim* 1)

[The Romm Vilna edition of the Babylonian *Talmud* includes Tractate *Shekalim* from the Jerusalem *Talmud*. The same publishing house also printed this tractate, with slight textual variations, in its edition of the Jerusalem *Talmud*. Unless otherwise noted, the text presented here follows the one published with the Jerusalem *Talmud* edition.]

Rabbi Yehudah bar Pazi said in the name of Rabbi [Yehudah HaNassi]: Can these [verses] be read without shuddering? In favor [of Israel, the *Torah* records,] “Everyone [possessed] of a generous heart brought [contributions for the Tabernacle].”²⁹⁷ But to [Israel’s] detriment, [the *Torah* states that,] “All of the nation removed the gold rings in their ears and brought them to Aaron [to make the golden calf].”²⁹⁸ [When it came to performing a *Mitzvah*, only those who were generous contributed, but when it came to participating in the golden calf, the entire nation got involved.]

In favor [of Israel, the *Torah* writes], “Moses conducted the people from the camp toward God, and they stood beneath

²⁹⁷ Exodus 35:22.

²⁹⁸ Exodus 32:3.

the mountain [to receive the *Torah*].”²⁹⁹ But to [Israel’s] detriment, [the *Torah* states], “You all approached me and said, ‘Let us send men before us, and they shall spy out the land.’”³⁰⁰ [When it came to receiving the *Torah*, *Moshe Rabbeinu* had to prod the people along. Later, when they lacked faith in *Hashem*’s promise that they would conquer the Land of Israel, they eagerly demanded that *Moshe Rabbeinu* send out spies.³⁰¹]

In favor [of Israel, the *Torah* records], “Then Moses and the Children of Israel sang this song to *Hashem* [after safely emerging from the Reed Sea].”³⁰² But to [Israel’s] detriment, [the *Torah* relates that], “The entire congregation arose and gave forth their voice, and the nation cried on that night [because the report from the spies caused them to fear the consequences of entering the Land of Israel].”³⁰³ [*Moshe Rabbeinu* had to prompt the Jews to sing praise to *Hashem* for rescuing them at the Reed Sea, but when it came to questioning *Hashem*’s ability to guide them into the Land, they took the initiative.]

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said: [The Prophet Zephaniah also complained], “but they arose early and damaged all.”³⁰⁴ [The

²⁹⁹ Exodus 19:17.

³⁰⁰ Deuteronomy 1:22.

³⁰¹ *Rashi* on Deuteronomy 1:22 comments that the people did not even show the common deference that the younger members of a community ordinarily show for older ones. In their eagerness to send out the spies, youngsters pushed ahead of their elders.

³⁰² Exodus 15:1.

³⁰³ Numbers 14:1.

³⁰⁴ Zephaniah 3:7.

Jews were anxious to do wrong.]

Was all the damage they did done with zealousness? [There are several instances when the Jews sinned, but the *Torah* does not use language which implies eagerness. For example, when the Jews complained about the lack of food prior to receiving the *Manna*, there is no mention of getting up early or hurrying.³⁰⁵ Furthermore, Israel was reluctant to complain about the perceived deficiencies of the *Manna*. The *Torah* reports that they only did so due to the influence of a band of insincere Egyptian converts.³⁰⁶ Moreover, when the Jews realized that they had done wrong by sending the spies, the *Torah* relates that, "They arose early in the morning and ascended the summit of the mountain, saying, 'Here we are! We have ascended to the place which *Hashem* said, for we have sinned.'"³⁰⁷ Thus, even if they were eager to sin, they were equally anxious to repent.³⁰⁸]

Rav Abba bar Acha explained, "You cannot understand the character of this nation. When they were solicited for the golden calf, they gave [willingly], and when they were solicited for the Tabernacle, they gave [willingly]."

³⁰⁵ Exodus 16:2 et. seq.

³⁰⁶ Numbers 11:4.

³⁰⁷ Numbers 14:40.

³⁰⁸ This translation matches the context of the *Talmud. Korban Ha'Eidah*, however, understands the text as making a statement rather than asking a question. Thus, the *Talmud* would be explaining the verse in Zephaniah as meaning that, indeed, all of the damage which the Jews did was done with zealousness.

Rabbi Yossi bar Chanina taught the following *Braitha*: “You shall make a lid of pure gold [for the Ark].”³⁰⁹ Let the gold of the lid come and atone for the gold of the golden calf. [The Hebrew word for “lid” (כַּפֵּרֶת) is similar to the word for “atonement” (כַּפָּרָה). Atonement resembles a lid because it covers over and hides sin. Moreover these words are related to “ransom” (כּוֹפֵר), implying that repentance and atonement redeem a person’s life, just as a ransom saves a captive.³¹⁰]

Shekalim 1:3 (דף ג:ד.)

[The *Torah* requires all adult male Jews to contribute a half-*Shekel* each year for the communal sacrifices offered in the Temple. The money was due by the first day of the month of *Nissan*, so preparations were made during the prior month of *Adar* to collect it.]

***Mishnah*: On the fifteenth of [Adar] moneychangers would set up in the outlying areas** [of Jerusalem so that whoever needed to exchange money for the required half-*Shekel* would be able to do so]. **On the twenty-fifth, they would set up in the Temple** [to make themselves more readily available because only a few days remained until the deadline].³¹¹ **Once they set up in the Temple, [those in authority] began to seize**

³⁰⁹ Exodus 25:17.

³¹⁰ Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra on Exodus 25:17.

³¹¹ This translation follows the view of *Rashi* and Rabbi Ovadiah of *Bartenura*. The *Rambam*, however, interprets the *Mishnah* as meaning that the moneychangers first set themselves up in other areas of the Land of Israel and then in Jerusalem.

collateral [from anyone who failed to give the half-*Shekel*]. **From whom did they seize collateral? Levites, Israelites, converts and freed slaves**, [all of whom had the obligation to contribute]. **However...they did not seize collateral from *Kohanim* because of “the ways of peace.”** [It would be disrespectful to seize collateral from a *Kohen* because that would imply that one did not trust him, and the *Torah* commands Jews to show special deference to *Kohanim*. Alternatively, the *Kohanim* were under the false impression that they were exempt from contributing, as the *Mishnah* will discuss. Rather than getting into a dispute over the issue, those in charge would order the *Kohanim* to contribute, but not seize collateral from them.³¹²]

Rabbi Yehudah said: Ben Buchri testified in Yavneh: Any *Kohen* who contributes a half-*Shekel* does not sin [even though strictly speaking they are exempt. The purpose of making these donations was so that the communal sacrifices would be owned by the public. One would therefore suppose that if someone exempt from giving contributed anyway, the sacrifices would become disqualified. According to Ben Buchri, however, since the *Kohanim* intended to turn their money over to that part of the public which was obligated to contribute, it did not disqualify the sacrifices.]

³¹² See *Korban Ha'Eidah*, Rabbi Ovadiah of *Bartenura*, and Rabbi Yehudah bar Binyamin HaRofeh. The rabbis had the authority to transfer property from one individual to another (הַפְּקֵר בַּיִת דִּין הַפְּקֵר). Accordingly, they designated a share in the communal sacrifices for those *Kohanim* who failed to contribute their half-*Shekel* so that they too fulfilled the *Mitzvah*.

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai said to him: This is not so. Rather, any *Kohen* who does not contribute commits a sin, but the *Kohanim* expound this verse in their favor: “Every flour-offering of a *Kohen* shall be completely burned; it shall not be eaten.”³¹³ [The *Kohanim* reasoned that] if the *Omer* offering, the two breads, and the multi-faced breads belong to us, how can they be eaten? [A barley offering in the quantity of an *Omer* was presented in the Temple on the second day of Passover.³¹⁴ The “two breads” were presented on the holiday of *Shavuoth*, and the *Kohanim* placed fresh multi-faced bread on the multi-level table which stood in the Temple’s inner sanctum (הֵיכָל) on each Sabbath. The *Kohanim* figured that if they contributed a half-*Shekel* like everyone else, then they would own a share in these offerings. Since the *Torah* states that a *Kohen*’s sacrifice cannot be eaten, they would be forbidden to eat those flour and bread offerings which the *Torah* commands them to eat. This logic is faulty, however, because the verse only requires the burning of a *Kohen*’s private offerings, not communal offerings in which they participate.³¹⁵]

Gemara... Rabbi Berachyah said: The reasoning of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai is [hinted at by the verse], “This [half-*Shekel*] they shall give.”³¹⁶ [The numerical value of the word

³¹³ Leviticus 6:16.

³¹⁴ The *Omer* (עֹמֶר) was identical to one-tenth of an *Eiphah* (אֵיפָה) — about two and a half liters.

³¹⁵ Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura.

³¹⁶ Exodus 30:13.

“this” (הַזֶּה) is twelve, so the verse may be read to mean that all twelve tribes shall give, [including *Kohanim* because they are Levites].

Shekalim 1:4 and 2:3 (דף טו. דף טז. *BaMidbar Rabbah* 12:3; *Pesikta Rabbethai* 10)

[The *Ein Yaakov* collection of *Aggadoth* combines the following two selections because they deal with the same topic.]

Rabbi Meir said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, produced a sort of coin fashioned out of fire from beneath His Throne of Glory and displayed it to *Moshe Rabbeinu*. [God] said to him, “This shall they give,”³¹⁷ [meaning] like this [coin that I am showing you] shall they give.

... “This they shall give, all who pass by the census-takers, a half-*Shekel* from the sacred *Shekel* [which consists of] twenty *Gera* per *Shekel*.”³¹⁸

Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nechemyah [each interpreted this verse differently]. One said: Since they sinned at [the time of] half of the day, let them give half a *Shekel*. The other said: Since they sinned at six hours into the day, let them give a half-*Shekel* which yields six *Grammas*.³¹⁹ [When *Moshe Rabbeinu* did

³¹⁷ Exodus 30:13.

³¹⁸ Exodus 30:13.

³¹⁹ A *Gramma* was an ancient measure of weight used by the Greeks and Romans (*Etz Yosef* citing *Mussaf HaAruch*). This is the source of the modern word “gram”, although a modern gram weighs less than the Roman *Gramma*. According to Rabbi Aryeh Carmell, a half-*Shekel* contained about

not descend from Mount Sinai by the middle of the day on which the Jews expected him, they fashioned the golden calf. Both rabbis maintained that contributing the half-*Shekel* atoned for that sin, but had different ways of arriving at this conclusion.]

Rabbi Yehoshua, a disciple of Rabbi Nechemyah, said in the name of Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai: Since they transgressed the Ten Commandments [by worshiping the golden calf],³²⁰ let each one give ten *Geras*. [The term *Shekel* does not denote any particular currency. Rather, it simply means “coin.” The *Torah* therefore had to specify that the coin to be used should contain twenty *Geras* of silver so that a half-*Shekel* would contain ten.³²¹]

Rabbi Berachyah and Rabbi Levi said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish: Since they sold the first-born of Rachel, [i.e., Joseph], for twenty pieces of silver, let each one redeem his first-born son with twenty pieces of silver. [A father redeems his first-born son by paying five *Shekalim* to a *Kohen*. Since each *Shekel* was worth four *Dinarii*, a total of twenty pieces of silver is paid.]

Rabbi Pinchas said in the name of Rabbi Levi: Since they sold the first-born of Rachel for twenty pieces of silver and each one received a *Teva'ah* [coin] from the proceeds, let each one

8.5 grams of silver (“*Aids to Talmud Study*” (1980, Feldheim Publishers, New York), p. 78.), so a *Gramma* weighed just over 1.4 grams.

³²⁰ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

³²¹ *HaKothev*. The word *Shekel* (שֶׁקֶל) literally means “weight,” so it refers to any coin of a given weight.

contribute a *Teva'ah* as his half-*Shekel* donation. [Ten of Jacob's sons participated in Joseph's sale, so each received two silver *Dinarii* — the equivalent of one half-*Shekel*.]

Shekalim 3:2 (דף יב: דף יג: יד:).

***Mishnah*: A donor must not enter** [the Temple wearing clothing that has] **a cuff, or [wearing] ... *Tefillin*, or an amulet. Perhaps he will become poor, and onlookers will say that he grew poor due to the sin of [stealing from] the collection box [and concealing the coins in his clothing], or perhaps he will become wealthy, and onlookers will say that he grew rich from the contributions in the collection box. For a person must appear upright to people in the same way that he must appear upright to the Omnipresent, as it says, "And you shall be guiltless before *Hashem* and before Israel."³²² And it also says, "You shall find favor and abundant success in the eyes of God and man."³²³**

[*Gemara*]: Rabbi Yishmael learned: A long-haired person should not contribute because of suspicion [that he stole coins from the collection box and hid them in his hair]. It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: The treasurers would check through tangled hair

³²² Numbers 32:22.

³²³ Proverbs 3:4. The *Malbim* interprets the phrase שָׂקָל טוב as "Divine guidance." However, the context of this *Mishnah* points to the alternative meaning of "abundant success" with שָׂקָל meaning success (See *Rashi* on I Samuel 18:14.).

[of contributors because such hair could trap coins].³²⁴ It is learned [in another *Braitha*]: They would speak with him from the time he entered until the time he left [to make sure that he did not try to hide coins in his mouth]. [And why did they not] fill his mouth with water [before he entered so that he could not put anything else into it]? Rabbi Tanchuma explained, “Because of the blessing [he had to recite just prior to making the contribution].”

Rabbi Sh’muel bar Nachman said in the name of Rabbi Yonathan: In the *Torah*, the Prophets, and the Writings, we find that a person must satisfy bystanders in the same way as he must satisfy the Omnipresent. From where in the *Torah*? It is written, “And you shall be guiltless before *Hashem* and before Israel.”³²⁵ From where in the Prophets? “The power of all powers is *Hashem*; the power of all powers is *Hashem*. He knows, and Israel will know, if with rebellion or if with falsehood [we acted] against *Hashem*.”³²⁶ [The tribes of Reuben, Simon, and half of Manasseh settled on the east bank of the Jordan River. There they built an altar similar to the one in use in Shiloh where the

³²⁴ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. According to this, a long-haired person need not cut his hair before contributing. However, if his hair was sticky or tangled, he would have to be inspected.

Korban Ha'Eidah offers an alternate explanation that the *Talmud* refers here to woolly garments which the treasurers would examine.

The word קיליקין in the text comes from the Latin *Cilium*, which means “hair”. (Many Latin-derived words which are pronounced with a soft “c” in English were originally pronounced with a hard “c”.)

³²⁵ Numbers 32:22.

³²⁶ Joshua 22:22.

Tabernacle stood. Although they did not sacrifice upon the altar and merely constructed it for show, the rest of the nation accused them of rebelling against God, Who had commanded that the entire nation have just one shared altar. In their response, these two and a half Tribes stated that God, Who knows everything, already knew of their innocence, but that it was important to establish it for onlookers as well.] From where in the Writings? “You shall find favor and abundant success in the eyes of God and man.”³²⁷

Gamliel the Glassblower³²⁸ asked Rabbi Yossi, son of Rabbi ‘Bon, “Which [verse] is the clearest of them all [in making this point]?”

He replied, “And you shall be guiltless before *Hashem* and [before] Israel.”³²⁹ [This verse makes the *Halachah* clear because it is formulated as a command.]

Shekalim 5:1 (דף כא.)

Rabbi Yonah said: It is written, “Therefore shall I apportion [a reward] to him publicly, and with the mighty ones he

³²⁷ Proverbs 3:4.

³²⁸ This scholar (גמליאל זוגא) appears in several places throughout the Jerusalem *Talmud*, but it is unclear how to translate זוגא. Since זוגא means glass it could mean “glassblower”. Alternatively, because זוגא also means “scissors”, it could translate as “barber”. Another possibility is that זוגא refers to Gamliel’s place of origin rather than to his profession. In that case, the translation should be “Gamliel of Zug”. Finally, in J.T. *Ma’aser Sheni* 5:1 (28A) it appears that זוגא may be a proper name because the *Talmud* quotes someone named Zuga (זוגא) as asking a question from Rabbi.

³²⁹ Numbers 32:22.

shall share treasure because he poured forth his soul unto death.”³³⁰ This refers to Rabbi Akiva who fixed the exposition of the *Halachoth* and *Aggadoth*. [Rabbi Akiva organized all of the basic teachings of the sages.³³¹ In addition, the verse speaks of public reward for sacrificing one’s life, and Rabbi Akiva promulgated the teachings of the *Torah* at the cost of his life.³³²] There are those who say that these [*Halachoth* and *Aggadoth*] were fixed by the Men of the Great Assembly.³³³ Rather, what did [Rabbi Akiva] fix? General principles and details. [Rabbi Akiva declared certain broad principles of *Halachah* and popularized many *Halachic* details which were not well-known. As the *Babylonian Talmud* explains, Rabbi Akiva derived piles upon piles of

³³⁰ Isaiah 53:12.

³³¹ According to Rabbi Yochanan, any statement in the *Mishnah* not otherwise attributed to any scholar represents the view of Rabbi Meir. Unattributed statements in the *Tosefta* belong to Rabbi Nechemyah, unattributed statements in *Sifra* belong to Rabbi Yehudah, and unattributed statements in *Sifrei* belong to Rabbi Shimon. All of these accord with the views of Rabbi Akiva (B.T. *Sanhedrin* 86A).

³³² See *Tiklin Chadathin*. The *Talmud* reports that Rabbi Akiva’s disciples numbered in the tens of thousands (B.T. *Yevamoth* 62B and B.T. *Nedarim* 50A). The Romans put Rabbi Akiva to death because he formed public assemblies at which he taught *Torah* (B.T. *Berachoth* 61B).

The author of *Ein Yaakov* suggests that the sages wanted to interpret this verse as referring to Rabbi Akiva to counter the view of Christian theologians, who claim that it refers to the founder of their religion.

Y’feh Mareh strongly disagrees. The sages had no need to refute interpretations of Scripture which loyal Jews would never consider.

³³³ These were one hundred twenty leaders who lived during the transition period between the last prophets and the early *Tannaim*. (Rambam, *Hakdamah LePerush HaMishnayoth*).

Halachoth from the decorative flourishes which scribes are required to add to the letters of the *Torah*.³³⁴]

Rabbi Abahu said: It is written, “And families of scribes, the inhabitants of Jabez...”³³⁵ Why does Scripture call them scribes (סופרים), [a word which literally means counters]? Because they organized the *Torah* numerically. [They stated, for example, that] ...there are thirty-six cases of excision in the *Torah*³³⁶ [and] ...the labors [forbidden on the Sabbath] are forty less one.³³⁷

Rabbi Eliezer said: It is written, “To Ezra, the *Kohen* who counts, who counts of the words of the commandments of *Hashem* and His statutes for Israel.”³³⁸ What does Scripture mean by [repeating the term] “count” (סופר)? Just as he would count the words of the *Torah*, so he would count the words of the sages. [Ezra was instrumental in establishing the correct text of the *Tanach*. He determined where the beginning and end of each verse should be.³³⁹ Moreover, there are words in the *Torah* which are

³³⁴ *Tiklin Chadathin* based on B.T. *Menachoth* 29B. As Rabbi Akiva himself explained, all of the general rules and all of the specifics of each *Mitzvah* were given at Mount Sinai (B.T. *Chagigah* 6B). He simply organized them.

The expression “general and specific” (כלל ופרט) can have a technical meaning. If a verse states a general principle, but then states a limitation, the *Halachah* which the verse teaches only extends to whatever is covered by the limitation. However, this cannot be the meaning here because Rabbi Akiva rejected this style of exposition (B.T. *Shavuoth* 26A).

³³⁵ I Chronicles 2:55.

³³⁶ *Krithoth* 1:1.

³³⁷ *Shabbath* 7:2.

³³⁸ Ezra 7:11.

³³⁹ Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra on Esther 9:27.

sometimes written with a *Vav* (ו) or *Yud* (י) and sometimes without. An example is the name Ephron which is sometimes spelled with a *Vav* (עֶפְרוֹן) and sometimes without (עֶפְרָן).³⁴⁰ Ezra researched and established the correct tradition in this area.³⁴¹ He took similar care when disseminating the teachings of the Oral *Torah*.]

Rabbi Chaggai said in the name of Rabbi Sh'muel bar Nachman: The early scholars plowed and planted, weeded, cleared away [thorns], hoed, harvested, piled [the grain], threshed, winnowed, sifted, ground, [further] sifted, kneaded, cut [the dough], and baked, but we have nothing to eat. [Although their predecessors went to great lengths to organize the material by categorizing and enumerating the *Halachoth*, later scholars still had great difficulty mastering it.³⁴² King Solomon compared *Torah* study with the preparation of bread in the verse, "Come sate yourselves with bread."³⁴³ The rabbis therefore listed the fifteen steps necessary to produce bread to contrast the diligence of earlier scholars with what they considered their own inadequate efforts.³⁴⁴]

Shekalim 5:1 (דף כ"א.-) (Compare B.T. *Menachoth* 64B-65A)

³⁴⁰ Compare Genesis 23:15 and 16 to Genesis 25:9.

³⁴¹ *Ramban* on Genesis 1:1.

³⁴² *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

³⁴³ Proverbs 9:5 לכו לחמו בלחמי ושתו בייין מסקתי

³⁴⁴ *Tiklin Chadathin*.

***Mishnah:* Pethachiyah was in charge of the nests.** [Certain sacrifices required the use of birds, and Pethachiyah supervised their purchase.] **Pethachiyah was [actually] Mordecai, and why was he called by the name Pethachiyah? Because he opened matters and expounded them, and he knew seventy languages.**

[The root of the name *Pethachiyah* (פֶּתַח) means “to open.” *Rashi* holds that the *Mishnah* refers to the same Mordecai found in the Book of Esther. *Tosafoth*, however, states that whoever occupied the position of keeper of the nests was nicknamed Mordecai because he had to possess great wisdom.³⁴⁵]

[As the *Gemara* will explain, every member of the *Sanhedrin* had to understand every major language even if he could not speak it fluently. If so, then there would have been nothing exceptional about Mordecai. The *Mishnah* must mean that Mordecai, or any keeper of the nests, had the additional ability to delve into the nuances of every language.³⁴⁶]

Gemara: Come and see how great the power of that man was! He opened matters and expounded them.

...It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: A *Sanhedrin* which has two members who can speak [all seventy major languages] while the rest are [only] able to understand [those languages] is acceptable as a *Sanhedrin*. Three [members who are completely fluent in all

³⁴⁵ *Tosafoth* on B.T. *Menachoth* 64B sub verba “*Amar Lahu*” (אמר להו).

³⁴⁶ B.T. *Menachoth* 65A. The original Mordecai’s linguistic ability earned him the appellation *Balshan* (בלשן), a contraction for *Bayal Lashon* (בייל לשון) meaning one who “mixes” and interprets linguistic nuances.

seventy languages] is average. Four is a wise one.³⁴⁷ And in Yavneh there were four: Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Ben Chakinai, and Rabbi Eliezer ben Mathia.³⁴⁸

Rabbi Chisda said: One time, the Land of Israel suffered a drought, and they did not know from where to bring [barley for] the *Omer* [offering]. Present there was a certain mute who placed one hand on roofs and the other on huts. They brought him before Pethachiyah [to see if he could decipher what the man meant]. He said to them, “Is there a place called *Gagoth Tzerifin* or *Tzerifin Gagoth*?” [Since the Hebrew for roofs is *Gagoth* (גגות), and the Hebrew for huts is *Tzerifin* (צְרִיפִין), Pethachiyah reasoned that the mute was hinting at a place with a name containing these words.] They went there and found [the grain they needed].

Rabbi Yossah, son of Rabbi Bon, said: One time, the entire world was scorched [by a dry, hot wind which destroyed the crops], and they did not know from where to bring [barley for] the *Omer* [offering]. Present there was a certain mute who placed one hand on his eye and the other on a latch-hole [where the latch of a door lock is inserted]. They brought him before Pethachiyah [to see if he could decipher what the man meant]. He said to them, “Is there a place called *Ein Socher* or *Socher*

³⁴⁷ *Tosefta Sanhedrin* 8:1.

³⁴⁸ During the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Second Temple, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai managed to escape with the *Sanhedrin* to the town of Yavneh (B.T. *Gittin* 56B). The *Talmud* praises the scholars there as being especially erudite (B.T. *Kiddushin* 49B).

Ayin?” [The Hebrew for “eye of” is *Ein* (עין), and the Hebrew for latch hole is *Socher* (סוכר), so Pethachiyah figured that the mute was hinting at a place name containing these words.] They went there and found [the grain they needed].

Three women brought their nests [i.e., sacrificial birds, to the Temple]. One said [that she was bringing a sacrifice] “for my *Ayin*,” one said “for my *Yam*,” and one said, “for my *Zivah*.” As for the one who said “for my *Ayin*,” they figured that she meant that she had been flowing [with impurity] like a spring [because the word *Ayin* (עין) can mean spring]. Pethachiyah said to them, “[Perhaps she means that] her eye was in danger” [because *Ayin* (עין) can also mean eye. An illness involving the eye can be especially dangerous because the eye is closely connected to the heart.³⁴⁹ Those in charge of the Temple questioned the woman further and discovered that she indeed intended to bring a sacrifice to the Temple to show her gratitude for recovering from an illness.³⁵⁰ The manner in which a bird offering was presented after a person became cleansed from ritual impurity differed from the manner in which it was presented when it was a voluntary display of thanks. Had it not been for the alertness and linguistic skill of Pethachiyah, the *Kohanim* might not have performed the sacrifice correctly. This episode and the ones which follow demonstrate the necessity of having someone who

³⁴⁹ B.T. *Avodah Zarah* 28B.

³⁵⁰ See *Yalkut Shimoni* 1067.

understands linguistic nuances in charge of the bird sacrifices.³⁵¹]

As for the one who said “This is for my *Yam*,” they figured that she meant that she was flowing [with impurity] like the sea [because the word *Yam* (יָם) means sea]. Pethachiyah said to them, “[Perhaps she means that] she was in danger at sea.”

As for the one who said, “This is for my *Zivah*,” they figured that she meant that she had been literally flowing [with impurity because the word *Zivah* (זִבַּח) means “flow”]. Pethachiyah said to them, “[Perhaps she means that] a wolf came to seize her child.” [*Zivah* sounds similar to *Zev* (זֶבַע), which means wolf.]

Shekalim 5:1 (דף כ"א:ב) (Compare B.T. *Baba Kama* 50A; B.T. *Yevamoth* 121B ; J.T. *Demai* 1:3; J.T. *Beitzah* 3:8)

[Mishnah:] Nechunia [was appointed] **cistern digger**. [The *Torah* commands adult male Jews to ascend to Jerusalem three times a year for the festivals of *Pesach*, *Shavuoth*, and *Suk-koth*.³⁵² Nechunia had charge of constructing public cisterns so that those making the pilgrimage would have water to drink.]

³⁵¹ Although similar mix-ups could occur with other sacrifices, the laws pertaining to bird offerings were especially complex, so there was a greater need for an outstandingly wise person to deal with them (*Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura* on *Shekalim* 5:1).

Alternatively, because far more people brought birds as sacrifices than brought other animals, there was a greater possibility of one person's sacrifice getting mixed up with someone else's and the laws for dealing with such accidents are highly intricate (*Tifereth Yisrael* on *Shekalim* 5:1).

³⁵² Exodus 23:17, 34:23-24 and Deuteronomy 16:16.

[*Gemara*:] He used to dig cisterns and reservoirs, and he would know which [type of] rock kept water cool, and which [type of] rock retains warmth, and how far the warmth reaches.³⁵³

Rabbi Eliezer said: And yet his son died of thirst.

Rabbi Chanina said: Whoever says that the Merciful One is weak [about punishing sinners], may his intestines be weakened. Rather, He extends his patience, but with respect to him [Nechunia], Rabbi Acha said: It is written, “Those who surround Him are greatly stirred.”³⁵⁴ He holds them to account up to a hair’s breadth. [The verse hints at this because the word “stirred” (נִשְׁעָרָה) is similar to the word for a strand of “hair” (שֵׁעָרָה).]

Rabbi Yossi said: It is not based on this verse, but [understood] from that which is written, “And He is awesome upon all who surround Him.”³⁵⁵ His awe is upon those who are close more than upon those who are distant.

Rabbi Chaggai in the name of Rabbi Sh’muel bar Nachman said: There was an incident with a certain pious person who used to dig pits, cisterns, and reservoirs for passersby [thus providing a convenience for travelers who needed water]. One time, his daughter was traveling to be married when the

³⁵³ *Korban Ha'Eidah. P'nei Moshe*, however, understands שִׁרְרוּבֵי to mean dryness. Nechunia knew how far dry rock extended and, thus, how deep to dig to reach water.

³⁵⁴ Psalms 50:3.

³⁵⁵ Psalms 89:8.

river flooded, [and she appeared to have drowned]. All the people visited him, seeking to console him, but he would not accept their consolation.

Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair entered, wanting to console him, but he would not accept consolation. [The rabbi] said to [the townspeople], “Is this your pious one?” [If he were truly pious and trusted *Hashem*, he would accept consolation.]

They said, “Rabbi, thus and such he used to do, yet thus and such befell him.”

He said, “Is it possible that he used to honor his Creator with water, yet He afflicts him with water?”

At once a clamor arose in the town — “The daughter of that man has come!”

Some say she became tangled on a peg [which saved her from being swept away by the flood]. Others say that an angel descended in the image of Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair and saved her.³⁵⁶

Shekalim 5:1 (דף כב. ב.) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 20B; B.T. *Yoma* 38A-B; J.T. *Yoma* 3:9; *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 3:5)

[Mishnah:] Gevini the herald.

[*Gemara*.:] [He was so called because] he would make announcements in the Temple. What would he say? “Stand

³⁵⁶ When someone is saved in the merit of another, the angel which saves him appears in the image of the person whose merit caused the salvation. (*Ahavath Eithan* on *Ein Yaakov*, *Ta'anith* 24B, sub verba “*Atha Abuha*” (אתא (אבוה)).

Kohanim for your service, Levites for your platform, and Israelites for your assembly.” [The *Kohanim* performed the sacrificial service, while the Levites stood on a platform singing Psalms, and a delegation of Israelites stood by.] King Agrippas heard his voice up to eight parasangs away³⁵⁷ and gave him many gifts.

...[*Mishnah*:] **Ben Bayvei [was appointed] over wick-making.**

[*Gemara*:] He would braid the wicks.

Rabbi Yossi entered [the town of] Kufra, [where] the townsfolk wanted to appoint officials over themselves, but the appointees did not accept [the position] from them. He entered and said before [the appointees], “[The *Mishnah* says that] ‘Ben Bayvei [was appointed] over wick-making.’ If this individual who was appointed over the wicks merited to be numbered among the great ones of the generation, how much more so would you who are appointed over matters of life and death.”

[The type of official in question, known as a *Parnas* (פָּרְנָס), had broad authority, including the right to excommunicate and inflict corporal punishment.³⁵⁸ Because of the danger that someone might abuse this power, no one could become a *Parnas* without the consent of the public.³⁵⁹ Moreover, the appointee had to be absolutely fluent in Jewish law, with the ability to answer questions even about unusual matters.³⁶⁰ The sages further

³⁵⁷ As much as thirty-four kilometers, or twenty-one and a half miles.

³⁵⁸ See *Tosafoth* on *Megillah* 24A sub verba “*VeAino Over*” (ואינו עובר).

³⁵⁹ B.T. *Berachoth* 55A.

³⁶⁰ B.T. *Shabbath* 114A.

ordained that the community should select a *Parnas* whose family background included some embarrassing matters so that if he ever became too haughty, he could be reminded of his humble origins.³⁶¹ Finally, the *Talmud* cautions that any *Parnas* who imposes fear upon the community other than for the sake of Heaven will suffer unbearable punishment in the hereafter.³⁶² Understandably, many qualified individuals were reluctant to assume this responsibility.]

...[*Mishnah*:] **Hugras ben Levi over song.**

[*Gemara*:] Rabbi Acha said: He knew a particularly pleasant way of making sounds, and they said about him — about Hugras ben Levi — that he would sweeten his voice with song so that when he inserted his thumb in his mouth he would produce several types of melody, and his brother *Kohanim* would instantly leap back [in astonishment].

[*Mishnah*:] **The House of Garmu over production of the multi-faced bread.** [The twelve loaves of multi-faced bread (לְחֶם הַפְּנִיּוֹת) were not eaten for at least nine days. They were baked on Friday, placed on a multi-level table on *Shabbath*, and not eaten until the next *Shabbath*, when they were replaced by new loaves.³⁶³ It took special skill to bake the multi-faced bread because it had to have a certain shape and had to remain fresh

³⁶¹ B.T. *Yoma* 22B.

³⁶² B.T. *Rosh HaShanah* 17A.

³⁶³ Occasionally, the multi-faced bread had to stay fresh even longer. If the two days of *Rosh HaShanah* fell on Thursday and Friday, the bread was baked on Wednesday (B.T. *Pesachim* 47A).

during all that time.³⁶⁴ In *Talmudic* times, people baked bread in circular clay ovens which were open at the top and had a fire at their base. The dough used for the multi-faced bread was prepared and baked in iron molds to give it the required shape.³⁶⁵ Removing the multi-faced bread from the oven without breaking it apart was an especially tricky operation.³⁶⁶]

[*Gemara*.:] [The members of] the House of Garmu were experts in the making of the multi-faced bread and its removal [from the oven], but they did not wish to teach [others these skills].

The sages sent to Alexandria and brought in artisans who were expert in the making of the multi-faced bread, but not expert in its removal [from the oven].

The [men of the] House of Garmu would light [the oven] from within, and bake [the bread] from within, and [the bread] would not grow moldy. [The loaves] of these [Alexandrian bakers were prepared when they] would light [the oven] from outside, and bake from outside, and it would grow moldy. [This translation follows the view of the *Vilna Gaon* who alters the wording to match that found in the Babylonian *Talmud*. The members of the House of Garmu knew how to extract the multi-faced bread from inside the oven in a manner whereby it remained whole. The Alexandrians, however, were afraid that the multi-faced bread would break apart, so they baked it on the

³⁶⁴ Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura on *Shekalim* 5:1.

³⁶⁵ B.T. *Menachoth* 94A.

³⁶⁶ *Rashi* on B.T. *Yoma* 38A sub verba “*SheHalelu*” (שהללו).

outside of the oven. Since the temperature on the outside of the oven was lower than on the inside, their loaves retained more moisture and became moldy.³⁶⁷

Once the sages became aware of this matter, they said: Everything that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created, He created for His glory, as it says, “Every action [which a person undertakes] for *Hashem* [should be] for His sake.”³⁶⁸ [One should perform the commandments in the nicest way possible. One should therefore use multi-faced bread which does not become moldy even though moldy bread would fulfill the technical requirements of the *Halachah*.] They sent after [the men of the House of Garmu], but they did not want to come until they doubled their compensation. They used to take twelve hundred [*Dinarii*], and [now] they gave them twenty-four hundred. Rabbi Yehudah says: They used to take twenty-four [hundred], and [now] they gave them forty-eight [hundred].

The sages inquired of them, “Why do you not wish to teach [your skill to others]?”

They responded, “We have a tradition in our hands from our ancestors that this Temple will be destroyed in the future, and [we want that] others should not learn [what we know about bread baking] and do so before their idols.”

For the following matters they mention [the House of Garmu] for praise: Bread made from well-sifted flour was never found in the hands of their children so that people would not

³⁶⁷ This is also the view of *Tiklin Chadathin*.

³⁶⁸ Proverbs 16:4.

say that they ate from the production of the multi-faced bread. [Had they or their family members been seen consuming high quality bread, others might have suspected that they had diverted some of the Temple's flour supply for their own use. They deserved praise for this because, as mentioned above in *Shekalim* 3:2, one must take care not to arouse suspicion of wrongdoing.]

Mishnah: The House of Avtinas over incense production.

[*Gemara:*] The members of the House of Avtinas were experts in the art of compounding incense and [identifying an herb called] smoke-raiser. [Smoke-raiser (מַעֲלֵה עָשָׁן) caused smoke to rise in a straight column, without scattering in different directions], but they did not wish to teach [others].

The sages sent to Alexandria, Egypt and brought artisans who were experts at compounding incense, but they were not experts about smoke-raiser. [The smoke of the incense produced] by the House of Avtinas would rise in a straight column like a stick, then spread [along the ceiling of the Sanctuary (הַיְיָקָל)] and descend.³⁶⁹ [The incense smoke] of these [Alexandrians] dispersed immediately.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. The *Kohanim* used to burn incense twice a day on a golden altar located within the inner sanctuary (הַיְיָקָל).

³⁷⁰ One cannot say that they did not know the identity of smoke-raiser at all because the *Talmud* states that one who omits this herb from the compound incurs death at the hands of Heaven (B.T. *Yoma* 53A). They merely did not know which subspecies had this special quality (Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto and *Ben Yehoyada* on B.T. *Yoma* 38A).

Once the sages became aware of this matter, they said: Everything that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created, He created for His glory, as it says, “Everything which is called in My Name and for My glory, I created it, I formed it, I also made it.”³⁷¹ [The Temple service, which is devoted to God and called by His Name, should be performed in manner reflecting His glory. The incense should include this variety of smoke-raiser which causes the smoke to rise majestically even though the incense offering would be acceptable if a different variety were used.] They sent after [the men of the House of Avtinas], but they did not want to come until they doubled their compensation. They used to take twelve hundred [*Dinariii*], and now they gave them twenty-four hundred. Rabbi Yehuda says: They used to take twenty-four [hundred] and [now] they gave them forty-eight [hundred].

The sages inquired of them, “Why do you not wish to teach [your skill to others]?”

They responded, “We have a tradition in our hands from our ancestors that this Temple will be destroyed in the future, and [we want that] others should not learn [what we know about compounding incense] and do so before their idols.”

For the following matters they mention [the House of Avtinas] for praise: No woman ever departed from one of [their families] perfumed. Not only that, but when any of them would take a wife from another family, he would stipulate with her that it was on condition that she not perfume herself, so that

³⁷¹ Isaiah 43:7.

outsiders would not say that from the art of compounding the incense they perfumed themselves, in fulfillment of what is said [in the verse], “And you shall be guiltless before *Hashem* and [before] Israel.”³⁷² [They did not want others to suspect them of using their special knowledge for their own personal enjoyment or of having pilfered incense from the Temple’s supplies.]

Rabbi Yossi said: One time, I was standing in Jerusalem when I found a certain youngster from the House of Avtinas. I said to him, “My son, from which family are you?”

“From such and such family,” he replied.

“My son,” I told him, “because your ancestors intended to increase their honor and decrease the honor of Heaven, their honor was reduced, and the honor of Heaven increased.”

[The sages did not accept the excuse which the Houses of Garmu and Avtinas gave for refusing to share their knowledge with others. Their demands for exorbitant compensation contradicted their claim that they merely wanted to prevent having their knowledge fall into the wrong hands. Furthermore, if the rabbis did not see any problem with sharing such information, then it was not their place to follow a stricter course of action.]

[The true motive of the Houses of Garmu and Avtinas was to hold fast to their roles in the Temple service for their own honor. The purpose of the Temple, however, was to honor *Hashem*. Once people lost sight of that goal and sought only to

³⁷² Numbers 32:22.

enhance their own prestige, there was no longer any reason to have a Temple, and *Hashem* permitted its destruction. This increased His glory by bringing people back to their senses and forcing them to recognize the Temple's true purpose.]

Rabbi Akiva said: Shimon ben Luga told me: I was gathering herbs together with a certain youngster from the House of Avtinas when I observed that he cried and then laughed. I said to him, "My son, why did you cry?"

"Because of the honor of my father's house that has been reduced," he replied.

"And why did you laugh?"

"Because of the honor prepared for the righteous in the future [when the Temple will be rebuilt]."

"And what did you see [that suddenly made you think of these things]?"

"Smoke-raiser was before me."

"My son," I urged him, "show it to me."

"Rabbi, it is a tradition in my hands from my ancestors not to identify it to anyone."

Rabbi Yochanan ben Nuri said: A certain old man from the House of Avtinas approached me holding a list of spices.

"Rabbi," he told me, "In the past my family was secretive and would pass this scroll [only] from one member to another. Now that my family is no longer trustworthy, here is the scroll, and be careful with it."

When I came and presented these matters before Rabbi Akiva, his eyes ran with tears, and he said, "From now on we

need not mention them derogatorily.” [The sages were highly critical of the Houses of Garmu and Avtinas, even applying to them the verse, “May the name of the wicked rot.”³⁷³ The willingness of this elder to share the family’s knowledge with the sages at this point gave some credence to their claim that they only withheld the information for the sake of Heaven. Accordingly, Rabbi Akiva ruled that it was no longer proper to disparage the family.³⁷⁴]

[Based on these events,] Ben Zoma used to say: From yours they give you, and by your name they call you, and by your praise they seat you. There is no forgetfulness before the Omnipresent, and no man can touch what is prepared for you.

[Although it appears that people earn their livelihood through others, it is really ordained by Heaven — one receives what is already his. Just as a person might be called upon to sit in a particular place at a banquet based upon his social status, whatever he receives in this world is directed by *Hashem*. Moreover, no one can be deprived by anyone else of what God wishes to bestow.³⁷⁵]

[The sages were unsuccessful in their attempts to replace the members of the Houses of Garmu and Avtinas because every person’s role in the universe is guided from above.³⁷⁶]

³⁷³ Proverbs 10:7 cited in *Yoma* 3:11.

³⁷⁴ *Maharsha* on B.T. *Yoma* 38A sub verba “*Assur LeSaper*” (אסור לספר).

³⁷⁵ *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

³⁷⁶ *Y’feh Kol* on *Shir HaShirim* 3:5. The Babylonian *Talmud* adds that the rabbis could not find proper substitutes because these men indeed

Shekalim 5:2 (דף כב:) (Compare B.T. *Nedarim* 38A)

Rabbi Chama, son of Rabbi Chanina, said: *Moshe Rabbeinu* became rich from the remnants of the tablets [of the Ten Commandments, which were made of sapphire. When *Hashem* carved the words of the Ten Commandments into them, He permitted *Moshe Rabbeinu* to keep the chips.] Thus it is written, “Carve for yourself two stone tablets.”³⁷⁷ “Carve for *yourself*” [means] that the remnants shall be yours.

Rabbi Chanin said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, created a quarry of precious stones and jewels inside [*Moshe Rabbeinu*’s] tent, and from that *Moshe Rabbeinu* became wealthy.

Shekalim 6:1 (דף כד.-:) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 52B, 53B-54A; B.T. *Menachoth* 98A-B; B.T. *Kerithoth* 5B; B.T. *Horayoth* 12A; J.T. *Sotah* 8:3)

Mishnah: There were thirteen Shofar-shaped collection boxes, thirteen tables, and thirteen prostrations in the Temple. [The Greeks breached the Temple walls in thirteen places. After the Hasmoneans defeated them and repaired the walls, whoever passed by those thirteen places would prostrate himself in gratitude to *Hashem*.³⁷⁸] **The [members] of the House of Rabban Gamliel and the House of Rabbi Chananyah, superintendent**

guarded their knowledge for the sake of Heaven (B.T. *Yoma* 38A-B according to *Rashi*).

³⁷⁷ Exodus 34:1; Deuteronomy 10:1.

³⁷⁸ *HaKothev*.

of the *Kohanim*,³⁷⁹ would prostrate themselves at fourteen [places]. **Where was the extra one? Opposite the woodshed** [in which the wood used for the fire on the altar was stored], **for so it was a tradition in their hands from their ancestors that there the Ark was hidden.** [According to this tradition, just before the destruction of the first Temple, King Josiah hid the Ark inside a secret passageway which King Solomon had dug beneath the Temple.³⁸⁰ Those who did not prostrate themselves at the woodshed disagreed and maintained that the Ark was carried into exile in Babylonia.³⁸¹]

There was an incident with a certain *Kohen* who was busy [inspecting the wood to make sure that it was acceptable for the altar³⁸²] **when he noticed that** [one piece of] **flooring was different from the rest. He came and told a comrade, but did not manage to finish with the matter before his soul departed.** [Thus] **they deduced for certain that there the Ark was hidden.**

Gemara: It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: These *Shofar*-shaped collection boxes were curved — narrow at the top, but wide at the bottom — because of the cheaters. [This shape prevented

³⁷⁹ The superintendent of the *Kohanim* directed the activities of the *Kohanim* and was also referred to as “the appointed one” (הַיְיָנוּ סֶגֶן הַיְיָנוּ מְמַדְבֵּר) (B.T. *Sanhedrin* 19A). In addition, he was available to substitute for a *Kohen Gadol* who became ritually impure (*Rashi* on Jeremiah 52:24).

³⁸⁰ Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura.

³⁸¹ *Tosafoth Yom Tov*. Alternatively, those who did not prostrate themselves agreed that the Ark was hidden in the Temple compound, but did not have a tradition about where (*Mareh HaPanim*).

³⁸² Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura.

people from sticking their hands into the boxes to steal from the Temple funds].

It was learned in the name of Rabbi Eliezer: The Ark was exiled with [the Jews] to Babylonia. What is the Scriptural basis for this? [The Prophet Isaiah informed King Hezekiah,] “Behold, days are approaching when all which is in your house and all which your forefathers stored away until this day shall be carried off to Babylonia — not a thing shall remain, said *Hashem*.”³⁸³ The word “thing” (דָּבָר) connotes nothing but that which contained the “Ten Commandments” (דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה) inside it [i.e., the Ark].³⁸⁴ Likewise it says, “At the completion of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought [King Jehoiachin] to Babylonia with the choicest vessels of the House of *Hashem*.”³⁸⁵ Which are the “choicest vessels of the House of *Hashem*?” This refers to the Ark. [The Ark was the most precious item in the Temple because it contained the Tablets of the Ten Commandments. Its location inside the Holy of Holies reflected this.]

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish states: The Ark was hidden away in its place [in the Holy of Holies and not carried off]. This is [what is meant by] what is written, “The poles [along the sides of the Ark] extended [so that] the ends of the poles were visible from the Holy [of Holies] along the front of the Holy of Holies,

³⁸³ II Kings 20:17 and Isaiah 39:6.

³⁸⁴ Since the beginning of the verse states that the Babylonians will carry off everything belonging to the king, the phrase “not a thing shall remain” (לֹא יִתֵּר דָּבָר) is superfluous and hints that something else will also be carried off (*Tiklin Chadathin*).

³⁸⁵ II Chronicles 36:10.

but they were not visible outside; and they are there until this day.”³⁸⁶ [A wall separated the Holy of Holies from the room known as the *Heichal* (הַיְיִכָּל), or Sanctuary.³⁸⁷ A curtain covered an opening through this wall.³⁸⁸ Observers could make out where the poles of the Ark pressed against that curtain. Although one could see in this way where they were, they themselves were not visible.³⁸⁹ The phrase “they are there until this day” implies that the Ark never moved from this location.³⁹⁰]

...The rabbis say: The Ark was hidden in the chamber of the woodshed. There was an incident with a certain *Kohen* who had a physical defect [which disqualified him from participating in the sacrificial service, so he was given the job of examining the wood for worms]. He was standing trimming wood in the chamber of the woodshed when he noticed that [one section of] flooring differed from its neighbors. He went and told his comrade, “Come see this flooring which differs from its neighbors.” He did not manage to finish with the matter before his soul

³⁸⁶ I Kings 8:8.

³⁸⁷ The verse calls the Holy of Holies simply Holy (קֹדֶשׁ). It also refers to it by the name *Devir* (דְּבִיר) because from there the Ten Commandments (דִּבְרוֹת) went forth to the world or because from there the speech (דְּבִיר) of *Hashem* went forth to the world (*Breishith Rabbah* 55:7).

³⁸⁸ *Rambam, Perush HaMishnayoth* on *Midoth* 4:7. In the Second Temple, two curtains stood in place of this wall (*Yoma* 5:1).

³⁸⁹ *Rashi* on I Kings 8:8.

³⁹⁰ *Vilna Gaon; Tiklin Chadathin; P'nei Moshe*. In addition, the statement that the poles of the Ark were never visible outside the Holy of Holies also suggests that the Ark never left that location (*Etz Yosef*).

departed. [Thus] they deduced for certain that there the Ark was hidden.³⁹¹

Rabbi Hoshaya learned: He struck [the flooring] with a mallet, and fire emerged and burned him.

We learned: Rabbi Yehudah bar Ilai said: Two Arks traveled with Israel through the desert — one which had the [second set of] tablets [of the Ten Commandments] inside it, and one which had the [original] broken tablets inside it. [The Ark] which had the [second] tablets inside it was set inside the Tent of Meeting (אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד). Thus it is written, “The Ark of the Covenant of *Hashem* and Moses never moved from the midst of the camp.”³⁹² [The Ark] which had the broken tablets inside it went in and out with them and sometimes was seen with them [when they went out to war].

[According to this, both the view that the Ark was hidden inside the Temple and the view that it was carried off to Babylon are correct. The Ark which contained the second set of tablets stood in the Holy of Holies and was eventually hidden away inside the Temple. The Ark which contained the fragments of the first set of tablets was carried forth in battle and eventually went into exile with the Jewish nation.³⁹³]

³⁹¹ The Ark represented the *Torah* because it contained the Tablets of the Ten Commandments. The leaders of the nation chose to hide it under the woodshed (דֵּיר הָעֵצִים) because the *Torah* is called a “tree of life” (עֵץ חַיִּים) (*Ben Yehoyada* on B.T. *Yoma* 52B sub verba “*Aron Galah*” (אֲרוֹן גְּלוּהָ)).

³⁹² Numbers 14:44.

³⁹³ *Mishnath Eliyahu*. Logic also supports this opinion. No one was permitted into the Holy of Holies except the *Kohen Gadol* on the Day of

The rabbis say: There was [only] one Ark which went out one time in the days of Eli and was captured.

A Scriptural verse supports the rabbis. [When the Jews brought the Ark to the battlefront, the Philistines cried out,] “Woe unto us! Who will save us from the hand of this mighty God?”³⁹⁴ [The implication is that this was] something they had never seen before in their lives. [If there had been another Ark which routinely accompanied the Jewish army, then the enemy should not have reacted this way.]

A Scriptural verse supports Rabbi Yehudah bar Ilai. “[King] Saul said to Ahijah, ‘Bring forth the Ark of God!’ for the Ark of God was on that day with the Children of Israel.”³⁹⁵ Was not the Ark in the Village of Forests? [Since I Samuel 7:2 states that the Ark remained in the Village of Forests for twenty years, there must have been two Arks.]

What do the rabbis [who maintain that there was only one Ark] do with this verse? [They interpret King Saul’s command as] “Present the head-plate!” [The term Ark (אָרוֹן) literally means box and does not necessarily refer to the Ark of the Covenant which contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

Atonement, so no one would have been able to remove the Ark to carry it into battle. Moreover, the rabbis state that King Hezekiah was punished for showing the emissaries of the King of Babylon the Ark and its contents (*Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer* chap. 51). Since he could not have entered the Holy of Holies with them, there must have been a second Ark (*Ben Yehoyada* on B.T. *Yoma* 52B sub verba “*Aron Galah*” (אָרוֹן גֹּלָה)).

³⁹⁴ I Samuel 4:8.

³⁹⁵ I Samuel 14:18.

In this case, King Saul wished to consult the *Urim VeTumim*, a parchment kept inside the *Kohen Gadol's* breastplate by means of which one could receive prophetic answers to questions. One could only consult the *Urim VeTumim* when the *Kohen Gadol* donned the special garments of his office, one of which was a gold head-plate (זָיֵץ) which had the words "Holy unto Hashem" inscribed upon it. The *Urim VeTumim* and the *Kohen Gadol's* garments were kept in a special box or Ark (אָרוֹן).³⁹⁶

A Scriptural verse supports Rabbi Yehudah bar Ilai. "Uriah said to David, 'The Ark, and Israel, and Judah dwell in huts.'"³⁹⁷ Was not the Ark in Zion? [The verse implies that the Ark was in a hut at the battlefield. Since the Ark was known to have been inside the Tabernacle in Zion, there must have been two Arks.³⁹⁸]

What do the rabbis, [who maintain that there was only one Ark,] do with this verse? [The Ark was inside a structure covered with] thatch like a roof, for the Temple had not yet been built. [Since the Tabernacle in Zion was only for temporary use until the Temple was built, Uriah referred to it as a thatch-covered hut. He did not mean a hut located at the battlefield.]

³⁹⁶ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

³⁹⁷ II Samuel 11:11.

³⁹⁸ *P'nei Moshe* notes that King David lamented that he lived in a cedar palace while the Ark resided beneath the curtains of the Tabernacle (II Samuel 7:2). He then resolved to build a permanent home for the Ark. Surely he would not have permitted the Ark to rest in a hut at a battlefield unless this refers to a second Ark (*P'nei Moshe* on J.T. *Sotah* 8:3).

Once the Ark was hidden, the jar of Manna,³⁹⁹ the flask of anointing oil,⁴⁰⁰ Aaron's staff with its flowers and almonds,⁴⁰¹ and the chest in which the Philistines sent a guilt-offering to the God of Israel⁴⁰² were hidden with it.

Who hid it? [King] Josiah hid it. Once he saw that it was written, "*Hashem* shall exile you, and your king whom you shall appoint over you, to a nation which you did not know, [neither] you nor your forefathers,"⁴⁰³ he arose and hid it. Thus it is written, "And [Josiah] said to the understanding Levites and to all Israel who were holy unto *Hashem*, 'Place the Holy Ark in the

³⁹⁹ The *Torah* states that, "Moses said to Aaron, 'Take one jar and place there a full *Omer*-measure of Manna and place it before *Hashem* as a memorial for [all] your generations'" (Exodus 16:33).

⁴⁰⁰ *Moshe Rabbeinu* consecrated the first *Kohanim* by sprinkling them with special perfumed oil (Exodus 29:21). He used the same oil to consecrate the utensils to be used in the Tabernacle, but later generations were not required to follow these practices (*Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Klei HaMikdash* 1:12). They did use the same oil to initiate a new *Kohen Gadol*, a *Kohen* who ministered to the army, and, under certain circumstances, a new king (*Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Klei HaMikdash* 1:9 and 1:11 and *Hilchoth Melachim* 7:1).

⁴⁰¹ After Korah and his accomplices challenged Aaron's right to the *Kehunah*, *Hashem* instructed the leaders of each Tribe to place staffs inscribed with their names inside the Tent of Meeting (אֶהָל מוֹעֵד) together with Aaron's staff. The next day, the people discovered that Aaron's staff had blossomed and produced almonds, a sign which confirmed his right to the *Kehunah* (Numbers 17:16-24). God then commanded *Moshe Rabbeinu* to keep Aaron's staff next to the Ark (Numbers 17:25).

⁴⁰² The Philistines suffered a severe plague after they captured the Ark during a battle against the Israelites. They returned the Ark together with a chest containing gifts of gold (I Samuel 6:8).

⁴⁰³ Deuteronomy 28:36 according to Onkelos.

House which Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, built; you should not bear it upon [your] shoulders.”⁴⁰⁴ He proclaimed to them, “If it is exiled with you to Babylonia, you will never return it again to its place.” Rather, “Now serve *Hashem*, your God, and His people Israel”⁴⁰⁵ [by hiding away the Ark].

Shekalim 6:1 (דף כד :-כה.) (Compare B.T. *Horayoth* 11B; B.T. *Kerithoth* 5B; *VaYikra Rabbah* 10:8; J.T. *Sotah* 8:3)

Rabbi Yehudah, son of Rabbi Ilai, learned: The anointing oil which *Moshe Rabbeinu* made in the desert was the subject of miracles from start to finish. To begin with, it contained only twelve *Log*, as it says [when listing its ingredients], “and a *Hin* of olive oil.”⁴⁰⁶ [*Moshe Rabbeinu* boiled the required spices in the olive oil so that it absorbed their fragrance.⁴⁰⁷] Even to smear upon the roots [of the incense] it would not have been enough! How much more so when the [heat of the] fire consumed [part of the oil], the wood [fiber of the incense] absorbed [part of the oil], and the [walls of the] cauldron absorbed [part of the oil]. Yet from this [small quantity of oil] were anointed the Tabernacle and all its vessels, the multi-level table and all its vessels, the candelabrum and all its vessels. [Moreover,] from this [same oil] were anointed Aaron the *Kohen Gadol* and his sons during all

⁴⁰⁴ II Chronicles 35:3 according to *Targum Yonathan*.

⁴⁰⁵ II Chronicles 35:3.

⁴⁰⁶ Exodus 30:24. A *Hin* is slightly more than four liters. There are twelve *Log* in a *Hin*.

⁴⁰⁷ B.T. *Horayoth* 11B.

seven days of the dedication [of the Tabernacle]. Also from it were anointed [subsequent] *Kohanim Gedolim* and kings.

A king at the beginning [of a dynasty] requires anointment, [but] a king who is the son of a king does not require anointment. What is the Scriptural basis for this? [With respect to David, *Hashem* instructed Samuel,] “Arise [and] anoint him, for this is the one.”⁴⁰⁸ [The extra words “for this is the one” imply that only] this one requires anointing, but his son does not require anointing. However, a *Kohen Gadol* who is the son of a *Kohen Gadol*, even after ten generations, requires anointment.

[Although the anointing oil was used so extensively,] it all remains for the future to come [when the Temple will be rebuilt]. Thus it is written, “Holy anointing oil shall this be unto Me throughout your generations.”⁴⁰⁹

They do not anoint kings except next to a spring, as it says, “Mount my son, Solomon, upon a mule which [belongs] to me, and bring him down to [the spring of] Gihon. Let Zadok the *Kohen* and Nathan the Prophet anoint him there as king over Israel.”⁴¹⁰ [The manner in which one initiates something influences its outcome. Anointing a king near a spring expresses the hope that just as spring water gushes forth in a long stream, so the king’s reign will endure for a long time.⁴¹¹]

⁴⁰⁸ I Samuel 16:12.

⁴⁰⁹ Exodus 30:31. The Hebrew for “this” (זֶה) has a numerical value of twelve, hinting that the same twelve *Log* of oil will last forever (*Korban Ha’Eidah; Tiklin Chadathin* citing B.T. *Horayoth* 11B).

⁴¹⁰ I Kings 1:33-34.

⁴¹¹ *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

They do not anoint a king who is the son of a king except in a case of conflict. Why was Solomon anointed? Because of the conflict with Adonijah, [his half-brother, who challenged his right to succeed their father, King David].⁴¹²

Joash [was anointed] because of Athaliah [his grandmother, who usurped the throne. To consolidate her power, Athaliah attempted to kill out all descendants of the royal house, but Joash's aunt rescued him. After hiding for six years, Joash was anointed king, and Athaliah and her followers were defeated].⁴¹³

Jehoahaz [was anointed] because of his brother Jehoia-kim, who was older than him by two years.⁴¹⁴

Jehu [was anointed] because of Joram.

Is it not written, "Arise [and] anoint him, for this is the one"⁴¹⁵ — this one [David] requires anointing, but the kings of Israel do not require anointing? [After King Solomon's death,

⁴¹² The *Torah* cautions that a king must not deviate from the commandments "right or left so that he lengthen the days of his kingship, he and his sons, in the midst of Israel" (Deuteronomy 17:20). The end of the verse implies that a monarch's son may only assume the kingship with the consensus of the people. Since a sizeable part of the population had recognized Adonijah as king (I Kings 1:25), Solomon could not simply inherit King David's position. Instead, it was as if he was starting a new dynasty. He therefore required anointment (*Etz Yosef* on B.T. *Horayoth* 11B).

⁴¹³ II Kings 11:1-16.

⁴¹⁴ The *Tanach* records that Jehoahaz assumed the throne at age twenty-three and ruled for three months. He was replaced by Jehoiakim, who was twenty-five (II Kings 23:31 and 23:36).

⁴¹⁵ I Samuel 16:12.

the nation split into the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel, with Israel being ruled by men who did not descend from King David and, therefore, could not be anointed. One who uses anything devoted to the Temple service for something other than its designated purpose is guilty of violating a *Torah* prohibition (תְּעִילָה). The *Talmud* therefore questions how the anointing oil could be used to initiate Jehu, a king of Israel whose installation did not require anointment.]

[There is another difficulty. In the case of] Jehoahaz because of his brother Jehoiakim, who was older than him by two years, did not Josiah hide it? [Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim were sons of King Josiah. Since the *Talmud* stated earlier that King Josiah hid the anointing oil together with the Ark, how could it have been smeared on his son?⁴¹⁶]

What this means to say is that he was anointed with balsam oil [rather than the special oil *Moshe Rabbeinu* had prepared. This other oil was used on Jehoiakim to simulate the way in which a legitimate king is anointed and thus confirm his right to the kingship. The same was true of King Jehu, who was anointed solely to confirm his right to rule.⁴¹⁷]

They do not anoint kings except from a horn [which has been hollowed out to hold oil. As with anointing near a spring, the purpose is to start the king's reign off on a positive note. Just as an animal raises its horns to show dominance, so may the new

⁴¹⁶ *Tiklin Chadathin*.

⁴¹⁷ The word "balsam" (אֶפְרָיִם) hints at this because the root פָּרַס means "to publicize". The anointment publicized their right to the kingship.

king enjoy success and honor.⁴¹⁸] Saul and Jehu were anointed from a jar, [and] their kingship was temporary. David and Solomon were anointed from a horn, [and] their kingship was lasting.

They do not anoint *Kohanim* to be kings. Rabbi Yuda of Anthundaria said: This is because of the verse, “The staff [of kingship] shall not pass from Judah,”⁴¹⁹ [whereas *Kohanim* descend from Levi]. Rabbi Chiya bar Adda said [that the source of this rule is from the following verse]: “In order that [the king] may lengthen the days of his kingship, he and his sons, in the midst of Israel.”⁴²⁰ What is written [immediately] afterwards? “The Levite *Kohanim*, all the tribe of Levi, shall not have a portion [of the spoils of war] or inheritance [of land] with Israel.”⁴²¹ [The meaning appears to be that although this second verse does not deal with eligibility for kingship, it excludes *Kohanim* from sharing certain benefits with the rest of the nation. Its juxtaposition to the previous verse implies that *Kohanim* are also excluded from becoming kings.⁴²²]

⁴¹⁸ The *Tanach* frequently uses the imagery of an uplifted horn this way. For example, “May He grant strength to His king and raise the horn of His anointed one” (I Samuel 2:10). Yonathan ben Uziel interprets the end of this verse to mean “may he extend the reign of His anointed one.” He translates the phrase “May He lift the horn of His people” (Psalms 148:14) as “May He raise up the honor of his people.”

⁴¹⁹ Genesis 49:10.

⁴²⁰ Deuteronomy 17:20.

⁴²¹ Deuteronomy 18:1.

⁴²² In addition, any land a king conquers belongs to him, and he has the right to distribute it however he sees fit (*Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Melachim*

Rabbi Yochanan said: Johanan and Jehoahaz were identical. But, [asks the *Gemara*], is it not written, “The sons of Josiah were the first-born Johanan, the second Jehoiakim”⁴²³? [The *Talmud* stated earlier that Jehoiakim was older than Jehoahaz by two years. If Jehoahaz was identical to Johanan, however, then according to this verse, he would have been older than Jehoiakim, not younger. The answer is that, as used here, the term “first-born” (בְּכוֹר) means that Johanan/Jehoahaz was] first to assume the kingship [even though he was younger in age than Jehoiakim.⁴²⁴ Johanan/Jehoahaz ruled for three months after which the king of Egypt replaced him with Jehoiakim.⁴²⁵]

Rabbi Yochanan said: Shalum and Zedekiah were identical. But, [asks the *Gemara*], is it not written [regarding King Josiah’s sons], “the third Zedekiah, [and] the fourth Shallum”⁴²⁶ [indicating that they were two different people]? He was third in birth, but fourth to assume the throne. [First Johanan/Jehoahaz assumed the throne and then Jehoiakim. Upon Jehoiakim’s death, his son, Jochaniah, succeeded him.⁴²⁷ However, when King Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Land of Israel, he exiled Jochaniah and installed Zedekiah as king.⁴²⁸ Thus,

4:10). If a *Kohen* cannot share the spoils of war or a distribution of the Land of Israel, it would seem that he cannot fulfill the role of a king.

⁴²³ I Chronicles 3:15.

⁴²⁴ *Korban Ha'Eidah; Tiklin Chadathin*.

⁴²⁵ II Kings 23:30-34.

⁴²⁶ I Chronicles 3:15.

⁴²⁷ II Kings 24:6.

⁴²⁸ II Kings 24:12 and 17.

although Zedekiah was King Josiah's third son, he was the fourth person to gain the throne after King Josiah's death. He was called] Zedekiah because he justified the Attribute of Judgment upon himself, [but he was also called] Shallum because the kingdom of the House of David was perfected during his days. [The Hebrew root of Zedekiah (צִדְקָהוּ) is "justice" (צדק). The root of Shallum (שָׁלוּם) is "perfect" (שָׁלַם).]

[Other scholars disagree with Rabbi Yochanan.] Shallum was not his [real] name, and Zedekiah was not his [real] name, but Mataniah. Thus it is written, "The king of Babylonia crowned Mataniah, [Jochniah's] uncle, in his stead and changed his name to Zedekiah."⁴²⁹ [Since Johanan/Jehoiakim and Zedekiah were brothers, Zedekiah was the uncle of Johanan/Jehoiakim's son, Jochniah. The Babylonian *Talmud* explains that King Nebuchadnezzar changed Mataniah's name to Zedekiah in an attempt to force him to remain a loyal tributary, as if to say, "May God bring you to justice if you rebel against me."⁴³⁰]

Shekalim 6:1 (דף כה. ב.) (Compare *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:14)

How were the Tablets [of the Ten Commandments] written? Rabbi Chanina ben Gamliel says: Five on each tablet. Thus it is written, "He told you His covenant which He commanded you to perform — the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them upon two stone tablets."⁴³¹ [Whenever a word in the *Torah*

⁴²⁹ II Kings 24:17.

⁴³⁰ B.T. *Horayoth* 11B "ז-ה צדק עליו את הדין אם תמרוד בך."

⁴³¹ Deuteronomy 4:13.

appears in plural form, one must infer that it means at least two.⁴³² Since the plural “tablets” therefore already implies two, the word “two” is superfluous and hints that the Ten Commandments were broken up into two sets with] five on each tablet.⁴³³

However, the rabbis say: Ten on each tablet. Thus it is written, “He told you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments, and He wrote them upon two stone tablets.”⁴³⁴ [The wording “Ten Commandments, and He wrote them” suggests that all ten were written together with a set of] ten on each tablet. [Furthermore, if the Ten Commandments were divided into two sets of five, people might not regard the second five as of equal importance with the first five. The second five contain far fewer letters than the first, do not mention God’s Name, and deal with *Mitzvoth* which regulate interpersonal behavior (בֵּין אָדָם לְחֵבֵרִי), whereas the first five deal with the relationship between people and their Creator (בֵּין אָדָם לַמְּקוֹם).⁴³⁵]

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: Twenty on each tablet, as is written, “Two tablets of the testimony were in [*Moshe Rabbeinu*’s] hand; tablets that were inscribed from both sides.”⁴³⁶ [All Ten Commandments were written on each tablet. In addition, *Hashem* carved the tablets all the way through from one side

⁴³² See, for example, *Yalkut Shimoni*, sections 119, 188, and 200.

⁴³³ *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

⁴³⁴ Deuteronomy 4:13.

⁴³⁵ *HaKothev*.

⁴³⁶ Exodus 32:15. The translation follows the view of the *Vilna Gaon* who substitutes this verse here.

to the other in a miraculous way so that the commandments could be read from either side.⁴³⁷ Thus, there were a set of] twenty on each tablet.

Rabbi Simai says: Forty on each tablet, as is written, “Two tablets of the testimony were in [Moshe Rabbeinu’s] hand, tablets that were inscribed from both sides; from this [side] and from this [side] they are inscribed,”⁴³⁸ [meaning] quadrupled.⁴³⁹ [Since the verse already stated that the tablets “were inscribed from both sides,” the phrase “from this [side] and from this [side]” is superfluous and must mean that the Ten Commandments were inscribed not only on the front and back, but also on the sides of each tablet. Thus, four sets of the Ten Commandments were carved into each tablet.⁴⁴⁰]

Chananyah, the nephew of Rabbi Yehoshua, says: Between one commandment and the next were the particulars and letters of the *Torah*, as it is written, “His hands are golden wheels set with beryl.”⁴⁴¹ It is like the great ocean. [The verse uses the expression hands to allude to the tablets of the Ten

⁴³⁷ *Rashi* on Exodus 32:15.

⁴³⁸ Exodus 32:15.

⁴³⁹ The word *Tetra* in Greek means four, as in “tetragon,” a four-sided figure, so טטריוגא refers to an inscription on four sides.

⁴⁴⁰ The tablets were six handbreadths long and three handbreadths wide with a thickness of three handbreadths. Hence, the front, back, right side, and left side of each tablet had identical dimensions (*Korban Ha’Eidah*). *Tosafoth* in B.T. *Menachoth* 99A sub verba “*Melamed*” (מלמד) agrees that these were the dimensions of the tablets, but B.T. *Nedarim* 38A has the width of the tablets as six handbreadths.

⁴⁴¹ Song of Songs 5:14.

Commandments and, so, the *Torah*. Just as a skilled artisan uses his hands to fashion his work, so God created and rules the universe by means of the *Torah*.]

[The Hebrew *Tarshish* (תַּרְשִׁישׁ) refers to a gemstone the identity of which is uncertain today. Some identify it as the semi-precious mineral beryl.⁴⁴² The verse suggests that the tablets of the Ten Commandments bore the details and letters of the rest of the *Torah* like two jewel-encrusted golden wheels. However, the *Talmud* also sometimes refers to a body of water known as the Sea of Tarshish. The word for “wheels” (גְּלִילִי) also suggests “waves” (גְּלִיִּים), so the verse could also be read to mean, “golden waves in [the Sea of] Tarshish,” an analogy which the *Talmud* now explains.⁴⁴³]

Whenever Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish reached this verse [in his studies], he would say: Well did Chananyah, the nephew of Rabbi Yehoshua, teach me. Just as the ocean has small waves between the large waves, so the particulars and letters of the *Torah* were [inscribed] between each commandment.

Shekalim 6:1 (דף כה:) (*Devarim Rabbah* 3:12; *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 5:11:6)

Rabbi Pinchas said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish: The *Torah* which the Holy One, Blessed be He, gave *Moshe Rabbeinu* was given to him with white fire engraved upon black fire — fire mixed with fire, hewn from fire, and given from fire,

⁴⁴² Emerald and aquamarine are varieties of this mineral.

⁴⁴³ See *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

as it is written, “From His right hand, a fiery law [He gave] to them.”⁴⁴⁴

Shekalim 6:2 (דף כה--כו.) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 77B)

It is written, “It shall be on that day [when the Third Temple is built that] spring water shall go forth from Jerusalem....”⁴⁴⁵

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: From the Holy of Holies [itself] to the curtain [which hung at its entrance, the flow of spring water] will be like the antennae of snails;⁴⁴⁶ from the curtain to the golden altar it will be like the antennae of a grasshopper; from golden altar to the courtyards [outside the Sanctuary (הַיְקִל)] it will be like the [thin] stationary thread [of a loom]; from the courtyards to the entranceway of the Temple it will be like the [somewhat thicker] movable thread [of a loom]. From there onward, it will be like the mouth of a jug.

[The Prophet Ezekiel saw a vision of how the spring will flow from the Third Temple in the future.] “Behold, water flows [as wide as the mouth of a jug] from the right side. When the man went forth from the east with a rope in his hand and measured a thousand cubits, he brought me in the water — ankle

⁴⁴⁴ Deuteronomy 33:2.

⁴⁴⁵ Zachariah 14:8.

⁴⁴⁶ The reference is to a small species whose antennae are thinner than the antennae of grasshoppers (*Korban Ha'Eidali*). The *Aruch* relates the words סילי וכילי to the Greek *Kochlias*, which is the source of the modern English word “cochlea,” a spiral-shaped cavity in the inner ear that resembles the spiral shape of a snail.

water,"⁴⁴⁷ [meaning water that rose] until the ankle. "He measured [another] thousand [cubits] and brought me in the water — knee water,"⁴⁴⁸ [meaning water that rose] until the knees. "He measured [another] thousand [cubits] and brought me into hip water,"⁴⁴⁹ [meaning water that rose] until the hips. From this point onward, "He measured [another] thousand [cubits, and it became] a river which I could not pass, for the waters surged [into] unswimmable water, a river which is impassable."⁴⁵⁰ Even a great ship cannot pass through it. What is the Scriptural source for this? "A mighty ship will not pass it."⁴⁵¹ Why? "For the waters surged [into] unswimmable water, a river which is impassable."⁴⁵² What is *מַי שְׁחָרוּ* [translated here as "unswimmable water?" It means] unnavigable. Rav Chuna explains: In some places they call rowing [a boat] "swimming," [so unswimmable can mean unnavigable].

⁴⁴⁷ Ezekiel 47:2-3. The prophet is describing a vision in which an angel — "the man" — guided him through the environs of the Third Temple which will be built in the future.

⁴⁴⁸ Ezekiel 47:4

⁴⁴⁹ Ezekiel 47:4.

⁴⁵⁰ Ezekiel 47:5.

⁴⁵¹ Isaiah 33:21. The text in B.T. *Yoma* 77B has *בורני* instead of *לביירנין*. *Rashi* on B.T. *Rosh HaShanah* 23A states that a *בורני* is a type of ship called a "dromond" in Old French. Dromond is a word also found in English, and it means a fast type of ship from the Greek "*Dromos*", which means "to run", as in "hippodrome", a racetrack for horses.

B.T. *Sanhedrin* 32B refers to *בורני* as the name of a place, so *בורני* or *לביירנין* may refer to a type of ship which was built in that place.

⁴⁵² Ezekiel 47:5.

[The *Talmud* brings the following verse to support its interpretation of *וַיִּשְׂחַף* as swimming.] “[God] will stretch His hands in [Moab’s] midst as a swimmer stretches to swim.”⁴⁵³ What does “to swim” (*לִשְׂחוֹת*) mean? Rabbi Yossi bar Avin says: Water which the world speaks about. [The Hebrew for “to swim” (*לִשְׂחוֹת*) resembles the word for “to converse” (*לִשְׂחוֹת*). Everyone will speak of *Hashem’s* greatness when they observe the defeat of Moab. Likewise, the water which emerges from the Temple will be famous and widely discussed.⁴⁵⁴]

...[The *Talmud* continues to discuss the river which will emerge from the Third Temple by expounding upon the following verse: “He said to me, ‘These waters go forth to the eastern region, and descend to the plain, and come to the sea — to the emerging sea — and the waters are cured.’”⁴⁵⁵]

It is written, “He said to me, ‘These waters go forth to the eastern region’ — this is the Sea of Samchu;⁴⁵⁶ “and descend to the plain” — this is the Sea of Tiberias, [known also as the Sea of Galilee or Lake Kinnereth]; “and come to the sea” — this is the Salt Sea, [i.e., the Dead Sea]; “to the emerging sea” — this is the Great Sea, [i.e., the Mediterranean].

⁴⁵³ Isaiah 25:11. Just as most swimming strokes require one to stretch his arms as far as possible, *Hashem* will go to great lengths to punish Moab.

⁴⁵⁴ See *Korban Ha'Eidah* and *Tiklin Chadathin*.

⁴⁵⁵ Ezekiel 47:8.

⁴⁵⁶ This is located north of the Sea of Galilee. In B.T. *Baba Bathra* 74B it is called the Sea of Sibchi *סִיבְחֵי*.

Why is it called emerging? Corresponding to the two times that it emerged — once during the Generation of Enosh and once during the Generation of the Dispersion.

Rabbi 'Lazar said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: During the first [overflow], it went as far as Calabria,⁴⁵⁷ and during the second, it went as far as the Barbary Coast.⁴⁵⁸

Rabbi Acha said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: During the first [overflow], it went as far as the Barbary Coast, and during the second, it went as far as Acco and as far as Joppa. [God told Job how He commanded the ocean,] “Until here shall you come and not continue” — until Acco shall you come and not continue. “Here you shall place the majesty of your waves” — until Joppa I shall place the majesty of your waves.

Shekalim 6:2 (דף כו.)

It makes sense [that the spring which will emerge from the Temple will flow to] the Great Sea [i.e., the Mediterranean] and the Salt Sea [i.e., the Dead Sea] in order to sweeten them [and make their water drinkable, but why need it flow to] the Sea of Tiberias [i.e., the Sea of Galilee] and the Sea of Samchu [which are freshwater lakes]? To increase their fish [supply], as it is written, “according to its type shall be its fish.”⁴⁵⁹ Its fish

⁴⁵⁷ An area in France (*Korban Ha'Eidah*).

⁴⁵⁸ The term *יַבֵּי* in the text comes from *יָבֵי*, which Onkelos uses in Genesis 22:17 to translate “shore” or “coast”.

⁴⁵⁹ Ezekiel 47:10.

shall be of many species. [The increased water flow will make it possible for larger species of fish to live in these seas.⁴⁶⁰]

It is learned in a *Braitha*: Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: An incident occurred when I was walking to Zidon, and they brought before me more than three hundred types of fish on a single platter.

[At first, Ezekiel prophesied], “And the waters are cured...,”⁴⁶¹ [but a few verses later he prophesied], “Its mudholes and cavities shall not be cured; they are given to salt.”⁴⁶² It is written, “and the waters are cured,” yet you [also] say that the waters “shall not be cured?” It is a place and its name is “shall not be cured.” [Although the water from the river flowing from the Temple will be drinkable and will make the water of the seas into which it flows drinkable, there are some places these waters will not reach. The depressions on the sea floor where mud gathers, cavities next to the sea, and a place called “shall not be cured” (לא ירפא) will remain salty.⁴⁶³]

It is written, “Upon the river on both sides shall rise every food-producing tree [whose] leaves shall not wither and [whose] fruit shall never cease; [the trees] shall yield bi-monthly.”⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶⁰ *Malbim* on Ezekiel 47:10.

⁴⁶¹ Ezekiel 47:8

⁴⁶² Ezekiel 11.

⁴⁶³ *Korban HaEidah*.

⁴⁶⁴ Ezekiel 47:12. Although *Rashi*, *Targum Yonathan*, and others translate לַחֲדָשִׁי as “monthly,” the *Talmud* here understands it as bi-monthly, presumably because it is written in plural form.

It is learned in a *Braitha*: Rabbi Yehudah said: At present, grain matures in six months and trees produce [fruit] in twelve months, but in the future grain will mature in one month and trees will produce [fruit] in two months. What is the Scriptural basis for this? “It shall yield bi-monthly.”⁴⁶⁵

Rabbi Yossi said: At present, grain matures in six months and trees produce [fruit] in twelve months, but in the future grain will mature in fifteen days and trees will produce [fruit] in one month. Thus we find that grain matured in the time of Joel after fifteen days, and they presented the *Omer* from it. What is the Scriptural basis for this? “Children of Zion, be happy and rejoice in *Hashem*, your God, for He has given you rain charitably; rain falls for you, early and late, on the first [of *Nissan*].”⁴⁶⁶ [A measure of barley, called the *Omer*, was offered in the Temple on the second day of Passover — the sixteenth of *Nissan*. The rainy season in the Land of Israel includes early rains in the Fall and late rains in the Spring. During the time of Joel, a drought occurred during which rain did not fall until the first of *Nissan*, allowing only fifteen days for the barley crop to ripen.]

And how does Rabbi Yossi understand [the verse], “It shall yield bi-monthly?”⁴⁶⁷ Each month fruit will ripen. [Rabbi

⁴⁶⁵ Ezekiel 47:12.

⁴⁶⁶ Joel 2:23, according to *Radak*. The expression “rejoice in *Hashem*” implies that the Jews served Him by offering the *Omer* (*Korban Ha'Eidah* and *Tiklin Chadathin*).

⁴⁶⁷ Ezekiel 47:12.

Yossi does not mean that it will take only one month for fruit to ripen. Rather, although the trees will only produce fruit every two months, their production will be staggered so that some ripe fruit will be available each month.]

“For its water issues from the Temple, and its fruit [is good] for food, and its leaf for medication.”⁴⁶⁸ Rabbi Yochanan said: Its fruits peek out from among its leaves, for [the root of the word] “medication” (תרף) means food. [The fruits of these trees will be so abundant that they will be more noticeable than their leaves.⁴⁶⁹]

Rav and Sh’muel [each interpreted the Hebrew for “medication” (תרופה) as an acronym for “to release the orifice” (להתיר פה).] One said “to release the upper orifice.” The other said “to release the lower orifice.” [The medicinal properties of the leaves will either cause mutes to speak or cause barren women to give birth.]

Rabbi Chanina and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi [concurred with these views]. One said “to release the orifice of the barren.” The other said “to release the orifice of the mute.”⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁸ Ezekiel 47:12.

⁴⁶⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*. Alternatively, people will be able to obtain sustenance by sucking the leaves (*Tiklin Chadathin*, understanding מציץ as “suck” rather than “peek”).

⁴⁷⁰ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

Shekalim 6:2 (דף כו. א:) (Compare *Breishith Rabbah* 94:9; *VaYikra Rabbah* 19:6) (The text here follows the expanded version found in the Romm Vilna Edition of *Ein Yaakov*.)

You find that when Nebuchadnezzar went up to destroy Jerusalem, he ascended and settled himself at Daphnean Antioch.⁴⁷¹ The [members of] the Great *Sanhedrin* went down to him. They asked, “Has the time arrived for this House [i.e., the Temple] to be destroyed?”

He replied, “No, but Jehoiakim rebelled against me. Give him to me, and I will go.”

They came and said to Jehoiakim, “Nebuchadnezzar wants you.”

He responded, “Do they do such a thing? Do they cast aside one life for another? Shall you cast aside my life and preserve your own? [Furthermore,] it is written, ‘Do not surrender

⁴⁷¹ The Babylonian *Talmud* identifies Antioch as Riblah, a town in the northeast of the Land of Israel and the site of many atrocities committed by Nebuchadnezzar (B.T. *Sanhedrin* 96B). *Targum Yonathan* on Numbers 34:11 and the *Aruch* identify Riblah with Daphne. It therefore appears that this town had two names and that the correct translation of דפני של אנטוכיא is “Daphnean Antioch.”

The reason for Riblah having two names appears to be that there were several ancient rulers named Antiochus, with more than one town named in their honor. Since *Daphne* (דפני) means “laurel” in Greek, Riblah was called Daphnean Antioch — the Antioch where laurels grow.

In Hebrew, דפן means wall, so an alternative translation of דפני של אנטוכיא could be “walls of Antioch.” This does not appear to be correct, however, because דפן usually refers to a thin wall, such as that of a *Sukkah*. The common term for a city wall is פקל.

a slave to his master from whom he has escaped.”⁴⁷² [King Jehoiakim viewed his status as Nebuchadnezzar’s tributary as comparable to that of a slave towards a master.]

“Did not your forefather do so to Sheba, son of Bichri?” [Sheba ben Bichri, led a rebellion against King David. The King’s general, Joab, pursued Sheba to the city of Abel Beth Maachah. When Joab laid siege to the city, a female resident protested that he should not kill out the entire population. Joab explained that he only sought Sheba ben Bichri. This lady convinced the other residents to deliver Sheba’s head to Joab.⁴⁷³]

[According to some authorities, this woman’s argument was that in a situation where there was no chance of escape and everyone in the entire city would die, it was permissible to turn him over.⁴⁷⁴]

Since [Jehoiakim] refused to listen to them, they arose, took him, and lowered him [over the city wall], whereupon [Nebuchadnezzar] killed him with great cruelty.

After Nebuchadnezzar killed him, he crowned Jehoiakim’s son, Jochniah, in his stead and descended to Babylonia.

All of the Babylonians went forth to acclaim Nebuchadnezzar. They said, “What did you do?”

⁴⁷² Deuteronomy 23:16.

⁴⁷³ II Samuel 20:1-22.

⁴⁷⁴ *Rashi* on II Samuel 20:22. Others claim that the woman explained that whoever rebelled against the rightful king deserved the death penalty. Joab therefore had a right to kill Sheba ben Bichri and anyone who aided him (*Radak* ad. loc.).

“Jehoiakim rebelled against me, so I killed him and crowned his son, Jochniah, in his stead.”

They told him a parable: [If] it is said that you cannot raise a good pup from a bad dog [because it will resemble its forebear], how much more so a bad pup from a bad dog. [The *Tanach* states that Jochniah “did evil in the eyes of *Hashem* just like everything his father did.”⁴⁷⁵]

Immediately, he listened to them, ascended, and settled himself at Daphnean Antioch. The [members of] the Great Sanhedrin went down to him and asked, “Has the time arrived for this House [i.e., the Temple] to be destroyed?”

He replied, “No, but give me the one whom I made king and I will go.”

They went and told Jochniah, “Nebuchadnezzar wants you.”

What did he do? He stood and gathered all the keys of the Temple. He [then] ascended to the top of the roof [of the Sanctuary], and said, “Master of the Universe, [this has happened] because we do not merit to be trustees [of the Temple] for You. Until now, we were [deemed] reliable proprietors [of the Temple]. From now on, behold, Your keys are before You.”

⁴⁷⁵ II Kings 24:9, cited by *Etz Yosef*. King Solomon wrote, “When *Hashem* is pleased with a man’s ways, even his enemies make peace with him” (Proverbs 16:7). The converse also holds true. Although Nebuchadnezzar and his people obviously had no concern about Jochniah’s piety, *Hashem* was displeased with him and caused them to hate him.

Two *Amoraim* [disagree about what happened next]. One said: A sort of fiery hand came down and took them from him. The other said: Since the time when he cast them upward, they have not yet descended. [Either way, this showed *Hashem's* agreement that the people of that generation were no longer worthy of conducting the Temple service.⁴⁷⁶]

What did all the young men of Israel do? They ascended the roofs of their houses, fell down, and died. Thus it is written, “A prophecy from the valley of visions: What, indeed, is with you that you have all ascended to the roofs? Outcries fill the city, uproar a [once] joyous town; your corpses are not corpses [caused by] a sword and not the dead of war.”⁴⁷⁷

What did Nebuchadnezzar do? He took Jochniah and imprisoned him in a dungeon. Whoever was imprisoned in his days never emerged from there, consistent with [the verse], “He never opened the gate for his captives.”⁴⁷⁸

Jochniah went into exile, and the Great *Sanhedrin* went with him. Thus it is written, “Is this despised, shattered form — this man — Jochniah?”⁴⁷⁹ [It is not clear how this verse refers to the Great *Sanhedrin*.⁴⁸⁰ Perhaps the idea is that if the Great

⁴⁷⁶ *Korban Ha'Eidah; Tiklin Chadathin.*

⁴⁷⁷ Isaiah 22:1-2.

⁴⁷⁸ Isaiah 14:17 according to *Targum Yonathan.*

⁴⁷⁹ Jeremiah 22:28. Jochniah's name appears in the *Tanach* with several variants: יְחִיָּהוּ יְחִיָּהוּ יְחִיָּהוּ יְחִיָּהוּ יְחִיָּהוּ

⁴⁸⁰ B.T. *Gittin* 88A and *Sanhedrin* 38A cite a different verse which shows that the Great *Sanhedrin* joined King Jochniah in exile (*Etz Yosef*). “He exiled all Jerusalem, and all the officers, and all the mighty soldiers — ten

Sanhedrin had remained functioning in the Land of Israel, King Jochniah would have had some hope that they might intervene on his behalf through ransom or the like and restore him to his throne. The description of the king as hopelessly broken suggests that this hope had been destroyed because the Great *Sanhedrin* was also exiled.]

Shekalim 6:3 (דף כו :-כז.) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 21A-B and *Menachoth* 29A and 98B)

[The *Mishnah* states that two tables stood inside the Sanctuary (היכל). A marble one was used for holding the multi-faced breads (לחם הפנים) before they were placed upon the multi-level gold table (שולחן). A gold one was used for holding the multi-faced breads after they were removed from that table. When dealing with something holy, one must always show increasing respect and never decreasing respect. Once the *Kohanim* placed the multi-faced breads on the multi-level gold table, it would be inappropriate to place them on a less dignified table, so they could not be placed again on the marble table.]

It is learned in a *Braitha*: On a silver one. [The first table upon which the multi-faced breads were placed was made of silver, rather than marble. This fulfilled the concept of dealing with holy objects in a manner of increasing dignity because gold

thousand were exiled — and all the clever scholars and masters of *Halachah*; none were left except the poor folk of the land” (II Kings 24:14 ויהגלה את כל ירושלים ואת כל השורים ואת כל גבורי החיל עשרה [עשרת קרי] אלפים גולה וכל הקרש והפסגה לא נשאר זולת דלת עם הארץ)

is finer than silver. At the same time, it fulfilled the concept that “there is no poverty in a place of wealth,” meaning that no expense should be spared in conducting the Temple service.⁴⁸¹]

Rabbi Yossi said in the name of Rabbi Sh’muel bar Rav Yitzchak: Rabbi Chananyah reached the following conclusion in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: There was no silver involved because it heats up. [The multi-faced breads had to stay fresh for more than a week. Setting them on a silver table which readily conducts heat might cause them to spoil.]

Is it not learned in a *Braitha*: This was one of the miracles that took place in the Temple. Just as they placed it [upon the multi-level table] warm [and fresh], so they removed it warm [and fresh], as it is stated, “warm bread on the day when it is taken”⁴⁸²?

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi responded: We do not mention miraculous feats. [One should never rely on miracles.⁴⁸³ Although it was a miracle that the multi-faced loaves remained fresh, this did not excuse those in charge of the Temple service from taking ordinary precautions to ensure that the bread would not spoil.]

[The *Torah* commands that the multi-level table upon which the loaves remained from one Sabbath to the next be coated with gold.⁴⁸⁴ In that case, there was no choice but to rely

⁴⁸¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁴⁸² I Samuel 21:7 according to *Rashi*.

⁴⁸³ B.T. *Shabbath* 32A.

⁴⁸⁴ Exodus 25:24.

on a miracle. By contrast, the table where the loaves were placed before being laid upon the multi-level table could be made of any material.]

...King Solomon made ten tables, as it is written, “He made ten tables and placed them in the Sanctuary — five to the right and five to the left.”⁴⁸⁵ If you will say, five in the south and five in the north, is not the multi-level table valid only in the north, as it is stated, “You shall place the table on the north side”⁴⁸⁶? [If some of the tables were in the south, they would be invalid for holding the multi-faced loaves.]

Why, then, does Scripture state “five to the right and five to the left?” Rather, [this means] five to the right of *Moshe Rabbeinu’s* table and five to its left, [but all of them in the north]. Even so, [the *Kohanim*] did not arrange [the multi-faced breads] except upon *Moshe Rabbeinu’s* exclusively, as it states, “Solomon made all of the utensils which were in the House of *Hashem*, and the golden altar, and the golden table upon which were the multi-faced breads.”⁴⁸⁷ [This verse appears to contradict the *Talmud’s* premise rather than to support it. However, since King Solomon made ten tables, and this verse refers to only one (“*the* golden table”), the last phrase should be viewed as an independent clause. The verse would then read, “King Solomon made all of the utensils which were in the House of *Hashem*, and the

⁴⁸⁵ II Chronicles 4:8.

⁴⁸⁶ Exodus 26:35.

⁴⁸⁷ I Kings 7:48.

golden altar; and [*Moshe Rabbeinu's*] table upon which were [placed] the multi-faced breads was golden."⁴⁸⁸]

[Once the *Talmud* states that the multi-faced loaves were placed only upon the table which *Moshe Rabbeinu* made and which stood in the north of the Sanctuary, what is the problem with having some of King Solomon's tables, which were just for show, stand in the south?]

[The sages must have reasoned that the tables should be positioned in a way whereby they could hold the multi-faced loaves, even though, in practice, they never did.]

Rabbi Yossi bar Rabbi Yehudah says: Upon all of them, [the *Kohanim*] arranged [the loaves], as is stated, "Solomon made all the utensils which were in the House of God, and the golden altar, and the tables upon which were the multi-faced loaves."⁴⁸⁹ [Rabbi Yossi bar Yehudah does not read the end of the above verse as an independent clause.]

..."[King Solomon] made ten golden *Menoroth*, according to their requirements, and placed them in the Sanctuary — five to the right and five to the left."⁴⁹⁰ If you will say, five in the north and five in the south, is not the *Menorah* valid only in the south, as it is stated, "You shall place...the *Menorah* opposite the table, on the south side of the Tabernacle"⁴⁹¹?

⁴⁸⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁴⁸⁹ II Chronicles 4:19.

⁴⁹⁰ II Chronicles 4:7.

⁴⁹¹ Exodus 26:35.

Why, then, does Scripture state “five to the right and five to the left?” Rather, [this means] five to the right of *Moshe Rabbeinu’s Menorah* and five to its left, [but all of them in the south]. Even so, [the *Kohanim*] did not light [any *Menorah*] except *Moshe Rabbeinu’s* exclusively, as it states, “and the golden *Menorah* and its oil-cups to burn every evening.”⁴⁹² [The specification of “*the golden Menorah*” suggests that the *Kohanim* lit only the one produced by *Moshe Rabbeinu*.]

Rabbi Yossah bar Rabbi Yehudah⁴⁹³ says: He lit all of them, as is stated, “[King Solomon made] the *Menoroth* and their oil-cups to light them according to law before the Sanctuary [from] fine gold.”⁴⁹⁴

[Since the *Talmud* quotes this verse, it goes on to comment on the verse which follows it.] “And the flower [design], and the oil-cups, and the tongs [used to handle the wicks were all] golden, entirely from gold.”⁴⁹⁵ [This means that] they finished up Solomon’s gold! [*Targum Yonathan* translates מְּלֹת זָהָב as “entirely from gold” since מְּלֹת derives from כָּל — “all”. The *Talmud*, however, understands this word as deriving from כְּלָה — “destruction”, or “finishing off”. As the *Talmud* will explain, to obtain gold suitable for use in the Temple required so much

⁴⁹² II Chronicles 13:11.

⁴⁹³ Rabbi Yossah bar Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Yossi bar Rabbi Yehudah are one and the same. Both Yossi and Yossah are nicknames for Yosef.

⁴⁹⁴ II Chronicles 4:20.

⁴⁹⁵ II Chronicles 4:21.

refining that huge quantities of otherwise suitable gold were smelted down to almost nothing.]

Rabbi Yehudah learned in the name of Asi: Solomon took a thousand talents of gold, placed them in a furnace, and did not remove them until they were reduced to one [talent] to fulfill that which is written, “[With] a pure talent of gold he shall make it with all its accessories.”⁴⁹⁶

It is learned in a *Braitha*: Rabbi Yossi bar Rabbi Yehudah said: An incident occurred with the golden *Menorah* that *Moshe Rabbeinu* made in the desert where it had an extra *Dinar* of gold. They placed it in a furnace eighty times [to try to smelt away the excess], but it did not lose anything.

Does this make sense? [How can this be, when it is known that whenever gold is placed in a furnace, a small amount of dross always melts away?] Until it is fully purified, it loses a great deal. Once it is fully purified, it loses nothing. [A talent of gold consists of six thousand *Dinarii*. The proportion of excess discovered in *Moshe Rabbeinu's Menorah* was, therefore, infinitesimal. Nevertheless, the gold used to produce it was so highly refined that no impurities could be burned away.]

Yoma 1:1 (ב. דף ג.) (Compare B.T. *Rosh HaShannah* 3A; J.T. *Sotah* 1:10; *BaMidbar Rabbah* 19:20)

[The *Torah* mentions the death of Aaron's sons just before describing the sacrificial service for *Yom Kippur*.⁴⁹⁷ This seems

⁴⁹⁶ Exodus 25:39.

⁴⁹⁷ Leviticus 16:1, et. seq. וַיִּדְבֹר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אֲחֵרֵי מוֹת שְׁנֵי בְנֵי אַהֲרֹן בְּקָרְבָּתָם לִפְנֵי ה' וַיִּמָּתוּ.

out of place because Aaron's sons died on the first of *Nissan* during the dedication of the Tabernacle, not in *Tishrei* when *Yom Kippur* falls.]

Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba⁴⁹⁸ explains: Aaron's sons died on the first of *Nissan*. And why does [the *Torah*] mention their death [during its description of] *Yom Kippur*? To teach you that just as *Yom Kippur* atones for Israel, so the death of the righteous atones for Israel.

Rabbi 'Ba bar Bina said: Why does Scripture place the death of Miriam next to the [*Torah*] portion of the [red] heifer? To teach you that just as the ashes of the red heifer atone for Israel, so the death of the righteous atones for Israel.

Rabbi Yudan, son of Rabbi Shalom, said: Why does Scripture place the death of Aaron next to the breaking of the Tablets [of the Ten Commandments]? To teach you that the death of the righteous is as severe to the Holy One, Blessed be He, as the breaking of the Tablets.

It is written, "The Children of Israel traveled from B'nei Yaakan Springs to Moserah; there Aaron died."⁴⁹⁹ Did Aaron die in Moserah? Did he not die at the two-tiered mountain?⁵⁰⁰ [Indeed,] thus it is written, "Aaron ascended the two-tiered mountain as instructed by *Hashem*, and he died there."⁵⁰¹ Rather, once

⁴⁹⁸ "Ba" (בא) in the text is a shortened form of "Abba" (אבא).

⁴⁹⁹ Deuteronomy 10:6.

⁵⁰⁰ *Hor HaHar* (הר הָהָר) is shaped like a small apple on top of a large apple (*Rashi* on Numbers 20:22).

⁵⁰¹ Numbers 33:38.

Aaron died, the clouds of glory departed, and the Canaanites sought to provoke [a war]. Thus it is written, “The Canaanite heard, the king of Arad who dwelled in the south, that Israel came by the route of the vanguards, and he attacked Israel.”⁵⁰²

What is [the significance of mentioning] “the route of the vanguards (דְּרֹךְ הַצְּמָרִים)”? Because the great vanguard [Aaron], who had shown them the way, died, and [the Cannanites] came and provoked [a war]. Israel sought to return to Egypt and retreated eight stages. [The *Torah* identifies eight locations through which the Jews traveled from Moserah to the two-tiered mountain where Aaron died. Prior to his death, the other nations did not know Israel’s whereabouts because the nation was hidden by the clouds of glory. After he died and the clouds departed, the Canaanites located the Jews and attacked them. Fearful of this enemy, most of the nation retraced the journey back to Moserah.]

The Tribe of Levi chased after [the rest of the nation] and killed out [most of] eight families. [The rest of the nation] in turn killed from [the Tribe of Levi] four [families]: “The Amramite, Izharite, Hebronite, [and] Uzzielite.”⁵⁰³ When did [these families] return [to their former prominence]? In the days of David. Thus it is written, “The days of the righteous shall flourish, and [he shall enjoy] great peace until the moon is no more,” [an expression connoting “forever”].⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰² Numbers 21:1.

⁵⁰³ I Chronicles 26:23.

⁵⁰⁴ Psalms 72:7 according to *Metzudoth David* and *Malbim* ad. loc.

[The Jews] pondered, “What caused us this bloodshed?” They answered, “We did not perform kindness with that righteous man.” [They had failed to properly eulogize Aaron.] They sat, composed his eulogy, and bestowed kindness to that righteous one. The Omnipresent considered it as though [Aaron] died there, was buried there, and they performed kindness for that righteous one [in the place where he died].

Yoma 1:1 (ג-ב הך) (Compare *VaYikra Rabbah* 11:6)

[During the eight day dedication of the Tabernacle, *Moshe Rabbeinu* served as *Kohen Gadol*.] Rabbi 'Lazar, son of Rabbi Yossi, said: It is straightforward to us that *Moshe Rabbeinu* served as *Kohen Gadol* in a white robe [rather than in the eight-piece uniform of the *Kohen Gadol*].

Rabbi Tanchum bar Yudan said, and it is also learned in a *Braitha*: All seven days of the dedication [of the Tabernacle] *Moshe Rabbeinu* was serving as *Kohen Gadol*, but the Divine Presence did not dwell [there] through him. Once Aaron donned the garments of the *Kohen Gadol* and [began] serving, the Divine Presence dwelled [there] through him. What is the Scriptural basis for this? “For today *Hashem* will appear to you.”⁵⁰⁵ [On the eighth and final day of the dedication of the Tabernacle, *Moshe Rabbeinu* instructed Aaron to perform certain sacrifices and then stated that “today *Hashem* will appear to you,” implying that *Hashem* did not appear on prior days. Furthermore, the *Braitha*

⁵⁰⁵ Leviticus 9:4.

does not simply state that once Aaron began to function as *Kohen Gadol*, the Divine Presence manifested itself. Rather, it emphasizes that he donned the garments of the *Kohen Gadol*, implying that *Moshe Rabbeinu* had not done so and that it was the garments which caused the revelation of the Divine Presence.⁵⁰⁶]

Yoma 1:1 (דף ג' ע"א) (*VaYikra Rabbah* 21:9; B.T. *Yoma* 8B-9B)

Mishnah: [Seven days prior to *Yom Kippur*, the *Kohen Gadol* used to prepare himself by leaving his home and living] in the *Palhedrin* chamber [which the *Gemara* will discuss].

Gemara: Abba Shaul used to call it the chamber of councillors.⁵⁰⁷

In the First [Temple], they called it the chamber of councillors, but now they call it the chamber of rotating courtiers, [a term borrowed from Greek, meaning] officials who are subject to frequent replacement. [The *Palhedrin* were courtiers who served entirely at the discretion of the king and were routinely replaced.⁵⁰⁸ The *Talmud* will go on to explain why this term was used to describe the *Kohanim Gedolim*.]

⁵⁰⁶ *Korban Ha'eidah* and *P'nei Moshe*.

⁵⁰⁷ The *Talmud* uses *bullvati* (בולוטי) in B.T. *Yoma* 8B to mean "officials" (see *Rashi* ad. loc.). The term "bulli" means "tycoon" or "dignitary" (B.T. *Gittin* 37A, and see *Torah From Jerusalem*, Vol. II on *Pe'ah* 1:1, p.30, note 66). The modern English "veto" means "I forbid" in Latin and was used by Roman tribunes when opposing council measures. *Bullavatin* (בולוטין) therefore may refer to dignitaries who held veto rights in the city council.

⁵⁰⁸ *Korban Ha'eidah*. The word *Palhedrin* appears as *Parhedrin* or *Parahedrin* in the Romm Vilna edition of the Babylonian *Talmud*. *Para* in Greek means "around" or "beside," and *Hedra* means "seat," suggesting courtiers who

In the First [Temple era], when [a *Kohen Gadol*], his son, and his grandson would serve [one after another, only] eighteen *Kohanim* served. [The position of *Kohen Gadol* was hereditary provided that one of the *Kohen Gadol*'s sons was fit to serve.⁵⁰⁹ As a result, only eighteen *Kohanim Gedolim* served throughout the entire four hundred ten year era of the First Temple.] In the Second [Temple], however, since they took [the position] with money [by paying the king to appoint them], or, according to some, they were killing one another with witchcraft, eighty *Kohanim* served [as *Kohen Gadol*]. And some say eighty-one, some eighty-two, some eighty-three, some eighty-four, and some eighty-five. Among these, Shimon HaTzaddik served for forty years. [This emphasizes how short the terms of the others were. The Second Temple era lasted four hundred twenty years. If one deducts the forty years of Shimon HaTzaddik, only three hundred eighty years remain during which eighty to eighty-five *Kohanim Gedolim* served — an average of four years or less per person.⁵¹⁰]

Rabbi Acha said: It is written, “Fear of *Hashem* adds days”⁵¹¹ — these are the *Kohanim Gedolim* who served in the First Temple. “And the years of the wicked are cut short”⁵¹² — these are those who served in the Second Temple.

sat around king's throne. The word פראידותן in the text is probably a variant of this.

⁵⁰⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah* based on Leviticus 16:32.

⁵¹⁰ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁵¹¹ Proverbs 10:27.

⁵¹² *Ibid*.

There was an incident with someone who sent two silver containers full of silver [coins, together] with their overflow of silver by way of his son [to purchase the position of *Kohen Gadol*. The person who sent the bribe wanted to pile up the coins above the rims of the containers. However, since those extra coins might spill, he sent the overflow separately.⁵¹³] Another came and sent two gold containers full of gold [coins] with their overflow of gold through his son.⁵¹⁴ [Onlookers] said, “The young donkey has overturned the candelabrum.” [This was an expression people used when someone’s plans were suddenly frustrated. Just when the first person was set to receive the appointment, the second person upset matters by presenting a better bribe.⁵¹⁵]

We find that the First Temple was not destroyed except because they were idolaters, degenerates, and shedders of blood. And so it was in the Second.

⁵¹³ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁵¹⁴ The commentators do not explain why these men sent their bribes through their sons. Perhaps they wished to maintain an outward appearance of propriety. Rather than sending the money directly, it arrived as if it were a gift from another family member, with the recipient understanding the true intent.

⁵¹⁵ This idiom comes from an episode during which Rabban Gamliel and his sister, Imma Shalom, exposed the hypocrisy of a certain philosopher. When Imma Shalom consulted the philosopher about sharing an inheritance with her brother, she gave him a golden *Menorah*, so he ruled in her favor. Afterwards, Rabban Gamliel gave him a more valuable Lybian donkey, and he reversed his opinion. The *Talmud* concludes that “a donkey came and kicked over a candelabrum” (B.T. *Shabbath* 116B).

Rabbi Yochanan ben Toratha⁵¹⁶ said: We find that Shiloh was not destroyed except because they used to scorn the holidays and defile the sacred sacrifices. [Fourteen years after entering the Land of Israel, the Jews built a roofless stone structure in Shiloh for the Tabernacle.⁵¹⁷ This lasted for three hundred sixty-nine years until the Philistines captured the Ark in the days of Eli and Samuel.⁵¹⁸ The Philistines decided to return the Ark after *Hashem* visited illness upon them.⁵¹⁹ The Ark never returned to Shiloh,⁵²⁰ however, which had been destroyed during the fighting.⁵²¹ Instead, the Tabernacle was relocated to Nob. After Nob, too, was destroyed, it was moved to Gibeon.⁵²²]

[The *Torah* requires adult Jewish males to make a pilgrimage to the Tabernacle or Temple each year on *Pesach*,

⁵¹⁶ *Toratha* (תורתא) means “cow” in Aramaic. The *Ritva* comments that Rabbi Yochanan ben Toratha got his name from an incident when he sold a cow to a non-Jew. The animal refused to work on the Sabbath until the rabbi whispered into its ear that because of the change in ownership, it was permitted to work (*Ritva* on B.T. *Yoma* 9A).

Alternatively, *Toratha* (תורתא) appears as a place name in B.T. *Sanhedrin* 64A, so it may indicate the rabbi’s hometown.

⁵¹⁷ Joshua 18:1, according to *Radak* and B.T. *Zevachim* 112B. Some, however, say the structure was made of wood (Rabbi Ze’ira in *Midrash Tehillim* 78).

⁵¹⁸ B.T. *Zevachim* 118B and I Samuel 4:4-11.

⁵¹⁹ I Samuel 5-6.

⁵²⁰ Psalms 78:60.

⁵²¹ *Radak* on Jeremiah 26:6.

⁵²² B.T. *Zevachim* 118B.

Shavuoth, and *Sukkoth*. The Jews scorned the holidays, however, by neglecting this *Mitzvah* when the Tabernacle stood in Shiloh.⁵²³]

[The *Torah* awards certain parts of the peace offerings (שלמים) to the *Kohanim*. The *Kohanim*, however, used to steal additional meat.⁵²⁴ Furthermore, the *Torah* requires that certain parts of the peace offerings be burned on the altar before *Kohanim* may take possession of their share.⁵²⁵ The *Kohanim*, however, seized their share before this was done.⁵²⁶ These actions were considered a defilement of the sacrifices.⁵²⁷]

We find that the First Temple was not destroyed except because they were idolaters, degenerates, and shedders of blood. In the Second Temple, however, we know that they toiled in *Torah*, were meticulous with *Mitzvoth* and tithes, and possessed of every good habit. Instead, [the reason for the destruction was] that they loved money and hated one another with disproportionate hatred. [The sin of] disproportionate hatred is [indeed] severe because it is as serious as idolatry, degeneracy, and bloodshed.⁵²⁸

⁵²³ *Korban Ha'eidah*.

⁵²⁴ I Samuel 2:13-14.

⁵²⁵ *Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Ma'aseh HaKorbanoth* 9:11.

⁵²⁶ I Samuel 2:15.

⁵²⁷ *Korban Ha'eidah*.

⁵²⁸ Accordingly, it may also be said that these sins caused the destruction of the Second Temple, as the *Talmud* stated above — “And so it was with the Second.”

It happened that Rabbi Ze'ira, Rabbi Yaakov bar Acha, and Rabbi Abuna were sitting together. They said: [Disproportionate hatred] is worse [than the three cardinal sins], for the First [Temple] was rebuilt, but the Second [Temple] has not [yet] been rebuilt.

Rabbi Ze'ira said: The earlier ones repented, whereas the later ones did not repent.

Rabbi Elazar said: The sin of the first ones was openly revealed, so their final redemption was openly revealed. The sin of the second ones was not openly revealed, so their final redemption was not openly revealed.⁵²⁹

They asked Rabbi Eliezer: Were the later generations more fit than the earlier ones?

He responded: Your witnesses are the Chosen Place [i.e., the Temple]⁵³⁰ which will prove [that the earlier generations were better because it has not been rebuilt since its second destruction]. Our ancestors removed the roof, [as Scripture states], "The roof of Judah was uncovered."⁵³¹ [The Temple was located

⁵²⁹ The Prophet Jeremiah described the shortcomings of the people living during the First Temple era in detail. He therefore also predicted that they would return to the Land of Israel after seventy years of exile (Jeremiah 29:10).

This version of the text follows the *Korban Ha'Eidah*. The Romm Vilna edition omits the word "not" (אֵל). To have this make sense, *P'nei Moshe* reads it as a question: Was the sin of the second ones revealed by Scripture? Since it was not, their final redemption was also not revealed.

⁵³⁰ The rabbis sometimes refer to the Temple as "the Chosen Place" because the *Torah* states that *Hashem* will choose its location (Deuteronomy 12:5).

⁵³¹ Isaiah 22:8.

in the territory of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the roof, but left the foundations intact.⁵³² We, however, have spread destruction to the walls, [as Scripture states], “Remember, *Hashem*, the people of Edom; on the day of [the destruction of] Jerusalem, they said, ‘Demolish it! Demolish it until its foundations!’”⁵³³ [When the Babylonians attacked Jerusalem, the Romans — also called Edomites — urged them to utterly destroy it.⁵³⁴ They did not listen, however, and left the foundation intact. When the Romans later attacked the Second Temple, they fulfilled their dream of complete destruction.]

They said: Each generation during which [the Temple] is not rebuilt is counted as if it destroyed it.

Yoma 1:1 (הַ הַ) (J.T. *Megillah* 1:10; J.T. *Horayoth* 3:2; compare B.T. *Yoma* 47A)

[Mishnah:] They arranged another *Kohen* in his stead lest a disqualification occur to him. [Only a *Kohen Gadol* could perform the *Yom Kippur* service, so a substitute was prepared in case he became ritually impure or otherwise disqualified.⁵³⁵]

Gemara: Did they seclude him with [his substitute]? [The *Kohen Gadol* had to be isolated seven days in advance of

⁵³² *Korban Ha'Eidah; P'nei Moshe.*

⁵³³ Psalms 137:7.

⁵³⁴ *Metzudoth David* on Psalms 137:7.

⁵³⁵ Rabbi Ovadia of Bartenura on *Yoma* 1:1.

Yom Kippur. Was the substitute isolated with him?⁵³⁶] Rabbi Chaggai from [Babylonia] said that they do not seclude them together because he would kill him. [There was such great rivalry to gain the position of *Kohen Gadol* during the Second Temple era that the substitute might kill him. Moreover, the *Torah* commands that,] “The *Kohen* that they anointed him shall atone.”⁵³⁷ They anoint one, but they do not anoint two. [The word “him” is superfluous and therefore indicates that only one *Kohen Gadol* may be anointed at a time.⁵³⁸ The understudy was trained for the position of *Kohen Gadol*, but not anointed, and he did not assume any of the *Kohen Gadol*’s functions unless the latter became disqualified.]

Rabbi Yochanan explained: Because of resentment [they do not have two people invested as *Kohen Gadol* at the same time.]

If the [first] one passed [from the position due to a temporary disqualification] and the [second] one served [as *Kohen Gadol*], the first one [retains] unto himself all the holiness of the *Kehunah Gedolah*. The second is not fit either as a *Kohen Gadol* or

⁵³⁶ *P’nei Moshe*.

⁵³⁷ Leviticus 16:32 וְכִפֵּר הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ וְאֲשֶׁר יִמְלֵא אֹת יָדָיו לְכַהֵן תַּחַת אָבִיו וְלִבְשׁ אֶת בְּגָדֵי הַכֹּהֵן בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ

⁵³⁸ The text quotes only the word “him” (אֹתוֹ) from the verse. It appears to refer to this verse, which deals with the topic of the *Yom Kippur* service. *Korban Ha’Eidah*, however, holds that the *Talmud* refers to the verse, “This is the sacrifice of Aaron and his sons which they shall offer to *Hashem* on the day of his anointing him” (Leviticus 6:13 וְהָקָרְבָן אֲהַרֹן וּבָנָיו אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיבוּ לֵה’ בְּיוֹם הַמִּשְׁחָה). There too, the word “him” (אֹתוֹ) is extra.

as an ordinary *Kohen*. [After the first *Kohen Gadol* returns to his position, his substitute cannot also serve because of the enmity that would result from having two men entitled to fill the position at the same time. On the other hand, the substitute cannot return to being an ordinary *Kohen* because once a person rises in holiness, he never returns to his former status.]

...There was an incident with Ben Ilem of Sepphoris where a temporary disqualification befell the *Kohen Gadol* on *Yom Kippur*, and Ben Ilem entered [the Temple] and functioned in his stead as *Kohen Gadol*. When he emerged, he said to the king, "My lord king, are the bull and ram of *Yom Kippur* brought from my [livestock] or from the *Kohen Gadol's* [livestock]? [The *Kohen Gadol* used to provide these offerings from his personal herds. The implication of this question was whether the king, who at this stage in history appointed the *Kohanim Gedolim*, would permit Ben Ilem to assume the position permanently. If Ben Ilem offered these animals from livestock belonging to the man whom he had replaced, it would mean that he was only temporarily filling in for him.]

The king understood what he was asking and told him, "Ben Ilem, is it not enough for you that you served one hour before the One Who spoke and the world came into existence?"

Ben Ilem understood [from this] that he was [to be] removed from the *Kehunah Gedolah*.

An incident happened with Shimon ben Kimchith, who emerged [from his seclusion] to speak with the king on *Yom Kippur* eve, and a fleck of spittle flew from [the king's] mouth onto

his clothing, rendering him ritually impure. His brother, Yehudah, entered and served as *Kohen Gadol* in his place. [Thus,] their mother saw two of her sons serve as *Kohanim Gedolim* on the same day.

Kimchith had seven sons, and all of them served in the *Kehunah Gedolah*. The sages sent [a message] and inquired of her, “What good deeds do you possess?”

“May it come upon me [a curse],” she replied, “if the beams of my house ever saw the hairs of my head or the hem of my gown!” [She was especially modest, taking care not to expose herself even in the privacy of her home. *Hashem* rewarded Kimchith measure for measure. Since she took care to maintain a high level of modesty even within the inner recesses of her home, she merited to have sons who served in the Holy of Holies — the innermost part of the Temple.]

They exclaimed, “All flour is flour, but the flour of Kimchith is fine flour!” [This is a play on Kimchith’s name because *Kemach* (כֶּמֶחַ) means “flour.”] They applied to her the verse, “All glory of the king’s daughter is inside; her garment is of gold settings [for gems to be inserted].”⁵³⁹ [This alludes to the *Kohen Gadol* whose vestments had gold settings inlaid with gems.⁵⁴⁰]

Yoma 1:3 (:י הַיּוֹם) (B.T. *Yoma* 18A)

***Mishnah:* They provide him with elders from the elders of the Court, who read before him the order of the day.**

⁵³⁹ Psalms 45:14.

⁵⁴⁰ Exodus 28:11; 28:13-14; 39:6.

[During his seven days of seclusion, the elders of the *Sanhedrin* reviewed the details of the *Yom Kippur* service with the *Kohen Gadol*.] They would say to him, “My lord *Kohen Gadol*, you read [the verses which describe the service] with your own mouth. Perhaps you forgot or perhaps you never learned.”

Gemara: Is it not learned [in a *Tosefta*]: “and the *Kohen* who is greater than his brothers”⁵⁴¹ [means] that his greatness should be from his brothers,⁵⁴² “that the anointing oil was poured upon his head”⁵⁴³ — Rebbi states: in beauty, strength, wealth, wisdom, and appearance. [The letters of “the anointing” (הַשְּׂמֶנֶת) may be rearranged to mean “the five” (הַחֲמִשָּׁה), hinting that the *Kohen Gadol* must be superior to his fellows in five ways.⁵⁴⁴]

[How, then, could a *Kohen Gadol* have been unlearned, as the *Mishnah* suggests?]

Rabbi Yossi, son of Rabbi 'Bon, explains: This was in the First [Temple], whereas this was in the Second [Temple]. [During the era of the First Temple, only qualified individuals served as *Kohanim Gedolim*. During the time of the Second Temple, people who lacked proper qualifications bought the position.⁵⁴⁵]

Yoma 1:5 (:-.: ףד) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 19B)

⁵⁴¹ Leviticus 21:10.

⁵⁴² If the *Kohen Gadol* was poor, his fellow *Kohanim* would contribute to make him rich (B.T. *Yoma* 18A).

⁵⁴³ Leviticus 21:10.

⁵⁴⁴ *P'nei Moshe*.

⁵⁴⁵ See above and see B.T. *Yoma* 18A.

Mishnah: The elders of the Court handed over [the *Kohen Gadol*] to the elders of the *Kehunah*, who brought him up to the top floor of the Chamber of Avtinas, had him swear [that he would perform the *Yom Kippur* service faithfully], and then departed and went their way.

[As stated above, the elders of the *Sanhredin* reviewed the *Yom Kippur* routine with the *Kohen Gadol*. Afterwards, the elders of the *Kehunah* taught him how to scoop the incense with three fingers, a tricky part of the service.⁵⁴⁶ This training was done in the Chamber of Avtinas, the family of *Kohanim* who compounded the incense.]

[The Sadducees were a deviant sect which rejected the interpretation of Scripture passed down from generation to generation through the sages.]

[The *Torah* requires the *Kohen Gadol* to present a special incense offering inside the Holy of Holies on *Yom Kippur*. *Hashem* states that, “in a cloud shall I appear upon the lid of the Ark.”⁵⁴⁷ According to the *Halachah*, the *Kohen Gadol* must enter the Holy of Holies with the incense and a pan of hot coals. Once inside, he places the incense on the coals to produce a cloud of smoke. The Sadducees, however, decided that the verse required the *Kohen Gadol* to ignite the coals outside the Holy of Holies and then bring them in.]

⁵⁴⁶ Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura.

⁵⁴⁷ Leviticus 16:2.

[After teaching the *Kohen Gadol* how to scoop up the incense, the elders asked him to swear that he would follow the correct procedure and not do as the Sadducees taught.⁵⁴⁸]

They would say to him, “My lord *Kohen Gadol*, we are agents of the Court, and you are our agent as well as an agent of the Court. We impose an oath upon you by the One Who caused His Name to dwell in this House that you shall not alter anything from all that we have told you.”

He would turn aside and weep [at the thought that he was suspected of doing otherwise], and they would turn aside and weep [at the need to impose this oath].

Gemara: “He would turn aside and weep” because he was suspected, “and they would turn aside and weep” because they needed to do so.

Why did they force him to swear? Because of the Boethusians [a sect related to the Sadducees] who used to say that [the *Kohen Gadol*] should ignite [the incense] outside [the Holy of Holies] and bring it inside.⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴⁸ Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura.

⁵⁴⁹ Tzaddok and Boethus were disciples of Antigonus of Socho. One of Antigonus’s chief teachings was that Jews should serve *Hashem* altruistically, and not merely in the hope of receiving a reward (*Pirkei Avoth* 1:3). Antigonus had two disciples, Zadok and Boethus, who repeated this teaching to their disciples, and those disciples repeated it to still others. Eventually, some of those who heard it misinterpreted it to mean that God does not reward the righteous or punish the wicked. They then formed the deviant sects known as Sadducees and Boethusians (*Avoth D’Rabbi Nathan* 3:2). Although this passage attributes the dispute about the incense to the Boethusians, the Babylonian *Talmud* attributes it to the Sadducees.

There was an incident with someone who ignited the incense outside and brought it inside. When he emerged, he told his father, “Although you [Sadducees] explained [that it should be done this way] all your days, you did not [actually] do so until I arose and did it.”

Answered his father, “Although we [Sadducees] have interpreted [the *Torah* according to this view], all our days we followed the will of the sages [who made us swear to do so]. I would be surprised if you last long in the world.”⁵⁵⁰

They say that not many days passed before he died. Some say that a torrent of worms emerged from his nose and that a sort of calf’s hoofprint formed on his forehead.⁵⁵¹

There are those who wish to say that the same *Kohen* was involved with the red heifer, *Sukkoth*, and *Yom Kippur*.

[The Sadducees held that a *Kohen* who is ritually impure must immerse himself in a *Mikveh* and wait until evening to be qualified to handle the red heifer offering. This is contrary to the *Halachah*, which requires immersion but no waiting period. To make certain that this *Halachah* would be known by the public, the sages instituted a practice of deliberately contaminating the

⁵⁵⁰ It appears that this *Kohen Gadol*’s father agreed with the Sadducees, but balked at violating a solemn oath to follow the tradition passed down through the sages. The version of this story in B.T. *Yoma* 19B, however, quotes the father as approving of his son’s actions.

⁵⁵¹ Such a hoofprint would indicate that he was stricken by an angel because they are described in Exekiel 1:7 as having feet similar to calves (B.T. *Yoma* 19B).

Kohen who was to handle the red heifer. He would then perform the ceremony after undergoing immersion only.^{552]}

[One time, a Sadducee slaughtered the red heifer late in the day, knowing that there was not enough time left to finish the service before dark. This way, night would intervene before he completed the ceremony. Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai realized what this person was up to, so he touched him, thereby rendering him ritually impure.]

[The Sadducee injured Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai's ear and swore revenge. Three days later, the Sadducee died.^{553]}

[There is a *Halachah* that water libations must be poured on the altar during *Sukkoth*. This is not mentioned in the *Torah*, but known by way of oral tradition. The Sadducees, however, rejected this tradition. One time, a Sadducee took the water and, instead of pouring it on the altar, poured it on his feet. Those who witnessed this were so outraged that they pelted him with their *Ethrogim*, and he died.^{554]}

[Here, the *Talmud* teaches that, according to some, all three of these incidents involved the same *Kohen*.]

Rabbi Simon did not say so. Rather, either [the *Kohen*] of the red heifer and of *Sukkoth* was one [person], and [the *Kohen*] of *Yom Kippur* was another, or [the *Kohen*] of the red heifer and of *Yom Kippur* was [one person], and [the *Kohen*] of *Sukkoth* was another.

⁵⁵² *Parah* 3:8.

⁵⁵³ *Tosefta Parah* 3:5, cited by *P'nei Moshe*.

⁵⁵⁴ B.T. *Sukkah* 48B.

The one who says that not many days passed until he died [must hold that the same person] did all three. [The *Kohen Gadol* who performed the incense offering incorrectly on *Yom Kippur* also poured the water libation on his feet during *Sukkoth* a few days later. In between, he attempted to follow the Sadduceean practice with the red heifer.⁵⁵⁵]

The one who says that a torrent of worms emerged from his nose and that a sort of calf's hoofprint formed on his forehead [must hold] like [Rabbi Simon] who says that either [the *Kohen* of the red heifer and of *Sukkoth* were one [person], and [the *Kohen Gadol*] of *Yom Kippur* was another, or [the *Kohen*] of the red heifer and of *Yom Kippur* were [one person], and [the *Kohen*] of *Sukkoth* was another. [The *Mishnah* records that the *Kohen* who poured the libation water on his feet was pelted to death by angry onlookers.⁵⁵⁶ The description of the *Kohen Gadol's* death here, however, implies that he died immediately after emerging from the Holy of Holies.⁵⁵⁷ If so, then two different people must have been involved.]

The Temple courtyard cried out [so to speak] concerning them, "Go out from here sons of Eli! You have defiled the House of our God!"

⁵⁵⁵ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁵⁵⁶ *Sukkah* 4:9.

⁵⁵⁷ The version of this opinion cited in the Babylonian *Talmud* states explicitly that the *Kohen Gadol* was stricken as he left the Holy of Holies (B.T. *Yoma* 19B).

[Eli was the *Kohen Gadol* during the time of the Prophet Samuel. The *Tanach* tells how his sons wrongly seized meat from private sacrifices other Jews brought to the Tabernacle. This caused the people to despise the sacrificial service.⁵⁵⁸]

[In addition, the *Torah* requires women to bring certain sacrifices after giving birth.⁵⁵⁹ Eli's sons did not present these sacrifices promptly. This caused many women to delay returning home while waiting for their sacrifices to be offered.⁵⁶⁰]

[Just as, metaphorically, the Tabernacle cried out over these outrages, it cried out over the desecrations committed by the Sadducees.⁵⁶¹]

...They placed a question before Rabbi Abahu: Is it not written, "No person shall be [present] in the Tent of Meeting when he comes to atone in the holy [place] until he leaves"?⁵⁶² [No one else was permitted to be present when the *Kohen Gadol* performed the incense ceremony in the Holy of Holies on *Yom Kippur*.] Even those [creatures] about whom it is written, "The image of their faces [resembles the] face of man."⁵⁶³ [Even angels were not allowed to be present, so how could an angel have known what the *Kohen Gadol* did and then punish him?]

⁵⁵⁸ I Samuel 2:12-17.

⁵⁵⁹ Leviticus 12:6-8.

⁵⁶⁰ B.T. *Yoma* 9A-B, explaining I Samuel 2:22.

⁵⁶¹ *P'nei Moshe*.

⁵⁶² Leviticus 16:17.

⁵⁶³ Ezekiel 1:10.

He answered: [This only applies] at a time when he enters properly. [Since the service was not performed correctly, the angel had permission to enter.]

Yoma 2:1 (י' ה'ג) (B.T. *Yoma* 23A-B; *Tosefta Yoma* 1:10; *Tosefta Shavuoth* 1:3)

[There was competition among the *Kohanim* about who would have the privilege of cleaning off the altar and performing other parts of the Temple service each morning. To resolve this conflict, the *Kohanim* would race up the ramp to the altar. Whoever reached within four cubits of the top first won the right to clean off the altar.⁵⁶⁴]

There was an incident with someone who got ahead of his comrade to within four cubits of the altar, so his comrade took a knife and stabbed him in the heart.

Rabbi Tzaddok stood on the steps of the chamber [leading to the inner sanctuary]. He told [those assembled], “Listen to me, my brothers, the House of Israel! It is written, ‘If a corpse will found in the land which *Hashem*, your God, gives you to inherit, fallen in the field [and apparently murdered, but] it is not known who struck him down, your elders and your judges shall go forth and measure to the towns which surround the corpse.’⁵⁶⁵ [The elders of the nearest town then performed the ceremony of the calf whose neck is broken (עֲגֵלָה עֲרוּפָה) to absolve

⁵⁶⁴ *Yoma* 2:1-2. As a result of the tragic incident described below in this passage, the sages replaced this practice with a lottery.

⁵⁶⁵ Deuteronomy 21:1-2.

their community from culpability for the murder.] As for us, from where should we measure? From the Inner Sanctuary? From the courtyards?" [The law of the calf whose neck is broken did not apply both because the murderer was known and because this law does not apply to Jerusalem. Rabbi Tzaddok merely wished to impress those present with the severity of what had happened.⁵⁶⁶ If a community could perform the ceremony, it atoned for the bloodshed. In this case, where the ceremony could not be performed, how would the nation achieve atonement?⁵⁶⁷]

All the people [present] started to weep. While they were occupied with weeping, the father of the youngster [who had been stabbed] entered [the Temple].⁵⁶⁸ He said to them, "I am your atonement! [Do not worry about any responsibility for this. Everything is fine.] The child is still fluttering [between life and death], and the knife has not become ritually impure." [Since the young *Kohen* did not immediately expire, the knife used to kill him did not come into contact with a corpse and therefore did not require purification.]

This shows that they considered [the laws of] ritual impurity more serious than bloodshed — what a disgrace!⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁶ B.T. *Yoma* 23A-B.

⁵⁶⁷ *Maharsha* on B.T. *Yoma* 23A-B.

⁵⁶⁸ Presumably, the *Talmud* refers to this *Kohen* as a youngster (תינוק) because only young *Kohanim*, who were physically fit for running, participated in the race.

⁵⁶⁹ *Tosefta Shavuoth* 1:3 has a slightly different version of this story. There it states that the *Kohanim* who were racing were brothers and that Rabbi

Yoma 3:6 (:י ףד) (B.T. *Yoma* 35B)

[A *Kohen* who performs the public sacrificial service must wear special vestments paid for by the public. Those in charge of the Temple service provided a certain amount of public funds for that purpose, but a *Kohen Gadol* who wished to do so could add to that amount and use even finer garments.⁵⁷⁰]

There was an incident with Rabbi Yishmael ben Piavi where he donned garments worth ten thousand dinarii,⁵⁷¹ ascended, and offered sacrifices on the altar.

There was an incident with Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom where he donned garments worth twenty thousand [dinarii], ascended, and offered sacrifices on the altar. His brother *Kohanim* brought him down because he appeared unclothed within them. [His body showed through the material.] What did he do? He filled it with water and circled the altar seven times. [The fire on the altar would have quickly dried out light clothing. Since this garment remained wet, Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom thereby demonstrated that it was very thick. Only because the material was so fine did the outline of his body show through it.⁵⁷²]

Yoma 3:7 (:יח ףד) (*Kohleth Rabbah* on Ecclesiastes 3:11; compare B.T. *Kiddushin* 71A)

Tzaddok stood on the steps of another chamber on the Temple Mount, not the one leading to the inner sanctuary.

⁵⁷⁰ *Yoma* 3:6.

⁵⁷¹ Literally “one hundred *Maneh*.” A *Maneh* equaled one hundred dinarii.

⁵⁷² *P’nei Moshe*.

The *Kohen Gadol* pronounced the Name [of *Hashem* as it is written] ten times on *Yom Kippur*. Six [during the confessions associated] with the bull [sacrifice], three [during the confession associated with] the goat [which was sent to the desert], and once during the lottery [when he selected the goat to be sacrificed in the Temple].⁵⁷³

Those near [the *Kohen Gadol*] prostrated themselves, [while] those further away would say, “Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom forever and ever.” Both of these [groups] would not move from there until [this Name] was hidden from them. [As the *Talmud* will explain, *Hashem’s* Name, when pronounced correctly, is extremely powerful, and very few people are worthy of knowing it. Accordingly, those who heard it tarried until they felt unsure of the proper pronunciation.⁵⁷⁴ This is consistent with the verse,] “This is My Name forever (עַדְעֵד),”⁵⁷⁵ [which may be interpreted as], “This is My Name to be concealed (סֵתֵר).”

At first, [the *Kohen Gadol*] would say it in a loud voice. After impious people [who might misuse it] increased, he would say it in a low voice.

Rabbi Tarfon said: I was standing in a row among my brother *Kohanim*. I inclined my ear toward the *Kohen Gadol*, and

⁵⁷³ When the *Kohen Gadol* lifted up the lot for the sacrificial goat, he declared, “A sin-offering for *Hashem*” (לַיהוָה חַטָּאת) (Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Avodath Yom HaKippurim 2:6).

⁵⁷⁴ *Korban Ha’Eidah; P’nei Moshe*.

⁵⁷⁵ Exodus 3:15.

I heard him blend in [the Name] with the melodious response of the [other] *Kohanim*, [who were reciting, “Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom forever and ever.” In other words, the *Kohen Gadol* drew out uttering the Name so that it overlapped with this response.⁵⁷⁶]

At first, [the Name] was handed over to every person. After the impious increased, it was only given to those who were [known to be] fit.

As Sh’muel was passing, he heard a Persian cursing his son with [*Hashem’s* Name],⁵⁷⁷ and [the son] died. Sh’muel remarked, “[This person suffered two losses.] A man went [to his death], and whoever overheard [the Name] overheard it.”

Rabbi Inyoni bar Susai went up to [visit] Rabbi Chanina in Sepphoris.

[Rabbi Inyoni] said, “Come, and I will hand over [the correct pronunciation of *Hashem’s* Name] to you.”

[Rabbi Chanina’s] son hid under the bed [to hear it also]. [The son] sneezed and [Rabbi Inyoni] heard the sound. [Rabbi Inyoni] said, “Do you conduct yourselves with deceit? [The

⁵⁷⁶ *Korban Ha’Eidah*. In the alternative, some of the *Kohanim*, including the *Kohen Gadol*, knew a twelve-letter Name which they used during the *Kohanic* blessings throughout the year. They would pronounce this Name while the other *Kohanim* sang the four-letter Name. That way, listeners could not make out the twelve-letter Name (Ibid., and see B.T. *Kiddushin* 71A, according to *Rashi*).

⁵⁷⁷ The term *בִּיה* in the text either means “with it,” referring to the Name, or “with *Yud Hay* (יה-י),” an abbreviation for the full Name.

opportunity to hear the Name] has passed both for you and for him!"

A certain physician in Sepphoris told Rabbi Pinchas bar Chama, "Come, and I will hand over [the Name] to you."

"I cannot," [responded Rabbi Pinchas bar Chama].

"Why?"

"Because I consume tithes, and one who is accustomed to [using *Hashem's* Name] cannot consume anything from another person."

[One who collected tithes of grain might quarrel with the donors, and Rabbi Pinchas bar Chama feared that if he grew angry, he might forget himself and curse someone with *Hashem's* Name.]

[Alternatively, one who knows the Name must maintain a high level of spiritual purity which he or she can only attain by refusing to benefit from others.]⁵⁷⁸

Yoma 3:8 (י"ט.ט. י"ג) (B.T. *Yoma* 38A; *Tosefta Yoma* 2:4)

[Nikanor imported copper doors from Egypt for the eastern gate of the Temple courtyard.]

Mishnah: [With respect to] Nikanor, miracles were done for his doors, and they mention him with admiration.

Gemara: It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: There was an incident when they were coming in a ship [with the doors], and a

⁵⁷⁸ *Korban Ha'Eidah; P'nei Moshe*, and see *Kohelleth Rabbah* on Ecclesiastes 3:11. One who wishes to rise spiritually must shun the physical, something that is difficult for one who relies upon gifts from others.

huge storm rose against them at sea. [The crewmen were afraid the ship might sink, so] they took one [of the doors] and dropped it into the sea [to lighten the ship]. They wanted to cast off the other also, but [Nikanor] stood and embraced it.

“If you cast it into the sea,” he said, “cast me with it.” [The sailors relented, and he thus saved one of the doors.] He was weeping and grieving [because of the other door] until he reached the port of Joppa.⁵⁷⁹

Once they reached the port of Joppa, [the door which had been cast off] started to bob up from beneath the ship, consistent with that which we learn [in a *Mishnah* in Tractate *Midoth*]:

All the gates that were [in the Temple] were changed to gold [after the Jews acquired sufficient wealth to refurbish the Temple], except for the Gates of Nikanor because a miracle was done with them. And there are those who say [that they retained these doors] because their copper gleamed [like gold].⁵⁸⁰

It is learned in the name of Rabbi 'Lieber: Their copper used to gleam and was more beautiful than gold.

⁵⁷⁹ The word *למנה* in the text probably comes from the Latin *Limen*, meaning “threshold” or “entrance” and, thus, a port. (Compare the English “subliminal”, which means “below the threshold” of consciousness.) Alternatively, this word derives from the Greek *Limne*, meaning a lake or marsh, and, so, a body of water forming a port. In English, “limnology” refers to the study of fresh-water lakes and ponds.

⁵⁸⁰ *Midoth* 2:3.

Yoma 4:1 (.ג ףג) (Compare B.T. *Baba Bathra* 122A and B.T. *Sotah* 47A)

With two lottery boxes the Land of Israel was divided [among the Tribes] — one had the lots placed inside it [upon which boundaries were written] and one had the names of the Tribes inside it. Two young *Kohanim* stood [there]. Whatever this one raised [from the box with the boundaries] and this one raised [from the box with the Tribes] determined [who got which share of land].

By three methods was the Land of Israel distributed: By lottery, by the *Urim VeTumim*, and by money. Thus, it is written, “Joshua cast the lot in Shiloh before *Hashem*, and there Joshua divided the Land for the Children of Israel according to their divisions.”⁵⁸¹ “the lot” — this is the lottery; “before *Hashem*” — these are the *Urim VeTumim*; “between many and few”⁵⁸² — this is the money.

[The *Urim VeTumim* was a parchment kept inside the *Kohen Gadol*'s breastplate by means of which he could obtain prophetic answers to questions.⁵⁸³ Elazar, the *Kohen Gadol* at the time, used the *Urim VeTumim* to determine which land belonged to which Tribe.⁵⁸⁴ No one could accuse Elazar of misinterpreting

⁵⁸¹ Joshua 18:10.

⁵⁸² Numbers 26:56.

⁵⁸³ *Rashi* on Exodus 28:30.

⁵⁸⁴ B.T. *Baba Bathra* 122A.

or altering the message of the *Urim VeTumim* because the lottery confirmed whatever he said.⁵⁸⁵]

[The division also involved money because Tribes which received land closer to Jerusalem paid compensation to those which received land further away.⁵⁸⁶]

Rabbi Avin said: Had the Holy One, Blessed be He, not given fondness for each place in the eyes of its inhabitants, the Land of Israel would never have been divided. [The Tribes would not have accepted the lands allotted them by the lottery and the *Urim VeTumim* had *Hashem* not caused those lands to find favor in the eyes of those to whom they were given.]

Similarly, it is learned [in a *Braitha*]: There are three favors: the favor of a wife in the eyes of her husband; the favor of a place in the eyes of its inhabitants; and the favor of a purchase in the eyes of its purchaser. [Every human being has some flaws, but since husbands and wives find favor in each other's eyes, they overlook them. Otherwise, no marriage could ever succeed. Likewise, if purchases did not find favor in the eyes of their buyers, every sale would be cancelled, and trade would come to a standstill.⁵⁸⁷]

⁵⁸⁵ See *Rashbam* sub verba "*VeHayah Mikaven*" (והיה מכיין) on B.T. *Baba Bathra* 122A.

⁵⁸⁶ *Baba Bathra* 122A, according to *Rashi*, who explains that being closer to Jerusalem was valuable because it meant a shorter trip to the Temple. In addition, those near a foreign border had to worry about enemy encroachments.

⁵⁸⁷ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

Rabbi Abba, son of Rabbi Poppi, and Rabbi Yehoshua of Sichnin said in the name of Levi: Also in the future, the Holy One, Blessed be He, shall do so [i.e., cause people to favor their own belongings]. Thus it is written, “I shall give you a new heart, and a new spirit I shall place in your innards; I shall remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh.”⁵⁸⁸ [The Hebrew for “flesh” (בשר) resembles the word for “contemptible” (בטר).⁵⁸⁹] [Each person] shall find the portion of his neighbor contemptible, [and favor only his own possessions. No one will desire what belongs to another.]

Yoma 4:4 (דף כב-:נג.) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 44B-45A; *Shemoth Rabbah* 35:1; *BaMidbar Rabbah* 12:4; B.T. *Yoma* 21B and 39B)

There are seven types of gold: good gold, pure gold, closed gold, sparkling gold, refined gold, malleable gold, and *Parva'im* gold.

“Good gold” [means] as it sounds [in the verse], “And the gold of that land is good.”⁵⁹⁰ Rabbi Yitzchak says: It is good when it is in his home and good when it accompanies him [on a journey]. [This type of gold is light in weight, so it is easy to take along when one travels. Furthermore, its value is universally accepted, so one may trade with it anywhere.⁵⁹¹]

⁵⁸⁸ Ezekiel 36:26.

⁵⁸⁹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁵⁹⁰ Genesis 2:12.

⁵⁹¹ *Rashi* on *Breishith Rabbah* 16:2. This paragraph embodies a Rabbinic dispute found in the *Midrash*. The first sentence expresses an anonymous view that “good gold” has an obvious meaning and requires no homiletic

“Pure gold” [means] that they can put it into fire and it will lose nothing. [It is so highly refined that no further impurities can be burned away from it.]

This accords with that which is learned [in a *Braitha*]: An incident occurred with the golden *Menorah* that *Moshe Rabbeinu* made in the desert where it had an extra *Dinar* [‘s weight] of gold. They placed it in a furnace eighty times [to try to smelt away the excess], but it did not lose anything.

Does this make sense? [How can this be true, when it is known that whenever gold is placed in a smelter, a small amount is always lost?] Until it is fully purified, it loses a great deal. Once it is fully purified, it loses nothing.⁵⁹²

“Closed gold” [means] that it used to shame all the other types of gold. [It is called “closed gold” because those merchants who had it would shut away their other gold, which no one wanted when this type was available.⁵⁹³ Alternatively, other gold merchants could not compete and had to close shop when one of them offered this type of gold for sale.⁵⁹⁴]

Rabbi Sh’muel bar Yitzchak states: It is written, “seven thousand talents of pure silver to coat the walls of the buildings

interpretation. Rabbi Yitzchak disagrees. (See *Breishith Rabbah* 16:2.)

⁵⁹² This part of the passage, dealing with the *Menorah* fashioned by *Moshe Rabbeinu*, also appears in J.T. *Sekalim* 6:3. See *Torah From Jerusalem*, Vol. III for further discussion.

⁵⁹³ *P’nei Moshe*.

⁵⁹⁴ *Korban Ha’Eidah*, but *Rashi* on I Kings 6:20 states that *Targum Yonathan* understood “closed gold” to mean that one who owns it keeps it closed up for himself, not wishing to share it.

[of the Temple compound],”⁵⁹⁵ yet [it is also written], “The entire House he coated with gold.”⁵⁹⁶ And you say thus? [Was the Temple covered with silver or covered with gold?] Rather, it shamed all of the gold that was there. [The Hebrew for “silver” (כסף) can also mean “shame”. Both verses mean that gold was used to coat the Temple walls, but the expression “pure silver” in the first should be read “pure shame” because it put all other gold to shame.]⁵⁹⁷

“Sparkling gold” — Rabbi Patroki, brother of Rabbi Drosa, said in the name of Rabbi ‘Ba bar Binah: It resembles [in color] the fire which is lit from sulphur.

Rabbi Avin said: It is called by the name of its place — “gold from Upazz.”⁵⁹⁸ [The Hebrew מופזו may be read as “from Upazz” (מאופזו).]

“Refined gold” [means] that they would cut it up like [the size of] olives and press it into dough which they fed to ostriches, who would filter it. Others say that they would store it in manure for seven years [to refine it].

⁵⁹⁵ I Chronicles 29:4.

⁵⁹⁶ I Kings 6:22.

⁵⁹⁷ “Closed gold” is mentioned in I Kings 6:20-21, where *Metzudoth Tzion* states that it is closed up in the smelter for a long time to ensure that all impurities are burned away. Although that is its plain meaning, this *Talmudic* passage adds a homiletic interpretation.

⁵⁹⁸ Jeremiah 10:9 refers to gold from this location. *Targum Yonathan* on that verse identifies Upazz with Ophir (אופיר), the place from which King Hiram sent gold and wood to King Solomon for the Temple (I Kings 10:11). In I Kings 10:18, however, he interprets זָהָב מוֹפְזוֹ as “good gold.”

“Malleable gold” is drawn [as finely] as wax.⁵⁹⁹ [The Roman emperor] Hadrian owned an egg’s weight [of this gold]. Diocletian owned a Gordian dinar’s weight [of this gold].⁶⁰⁰

“*Parva'im* gold” — Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: It was red, resembling the blood of an ox. [This gold came from a place called *Parva'im* (פְּרָוִיִּים), a word which resembles “ox” (פָּר).⁶⁰¹]

Others say it was gold that yields fruits. [*Parva'im* (פְּרָוִיִּים) also resembles the Hebrew for “fruits” (פְּרִיּוֹת).] This is like that which we learn there [in a *Mishnah*]: **A golden vine used to stand at the entrance to the Sanctuary.**⁶⁰² [People who wished to contribute to the beautification of the Temple would donate golden shaped like leaves, grapes, or clusters to this decorative vine. It was a symbol of blessing for the Jewish people, who are compared to a grapevine.⁶⁰³]

Rabbi Acha bar Yitzchak said: When King Solomon built the Temple, he engraved all types of trees inside it [in gold]. When the [ordinary trees] which were outside produced fruits, those [golden ones] which were inside [miraculously] produced fruit. Thus, it is written, “[The Land of Israel] shall surely blossom and shall surely rejoice and sing; the glory of the Lebanon

⁵⁹⁹ It was customary to laminate the pages of a ledger with an extremely thin layer of wax (*Shemoth Rabbah* 35:1). This gold is mentioned in I Kings 10:16-17.

⁶⁰⁰ A Gordian dinar was thinner than other *Dinarii* and got its name from the place where it was coined (*Korban Ha'Eidah* on J.T. *Chagigah* 3:8 (23A)).

⁶⁰¹ *Rashi* on II Chronicles 3:6.

⁶⁰² *Midoth* 3:8.

⁶⁰³ *Rambam, Perush HaMishnayoth* ad. loc.

shall be given [her], the majesty of the Carmel and the Sharon; [the Children of Israel] shall see the glory of *Hashem*, the majesty of our God.”⁶⁰⁴ [The Lebanon refers to the Temple,⁶⁰⁵ so the wording of this verse alludes to this miracle.]

When did they wither? Rabbi Yitzchak said in the name of Rabbi Chinana bar Yitzchak: When Menasseh erected an idol in the Sanctuary, they withered, as it is written, “And the blossom of Lebanon is cut down.”⁶⁰⁶ [The *Talmud* seems to imply that the golden grapevine mentioned in the *Mishnah* to which the people contributed was a memorial for these supernatural golden trees.⁶⁰⁷]

Yoma 5:2 (נד ףד) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 53B; B.T. *Ta’anith* 24B; *VaYikra Rabbah* 21:12)

[*Gemara*]: Thus went the prayer of the *Kohen Gadol* on *Yom Kippur* upon his safe departure from the Sanctuary:

May it be pleasing before You, *Hashem*, our God, and God of our ancestors, that there not go forth against us [a decree of] exile on this day or during this year, but if [a decree] of exile goes forth against us on this day or during this year, may our exile be to a place of *Torah*.

May it be pleasing before You, *Hashem*, our God, and God of our ancestors, that there not go forth against us [a decree

⁶⁰⁴ Isaiah 35:2, according to *Radak*.

⁶⁰⁵ B.T. *Yoma* 39B.

⁶⁰⁶ Nahum 1:4.

⁶⁰⁷ See *Korban Ha’Eidah*.

of financial] loss on this day or during this year, but if [a decree of financial] loss goes forth against us on this day or during this year, may our loss be a loss related to *Mitzvoth*. [Matters should fall out so that the money destined to be loss should be spent instead on charity or other good deeds.]

May it be pleasing before You, *Hashem*, our God, and God of our ancestors, that this year be a year of cheap prices, a year of plenty, a year of [prosperous] trade, a year of plentiful rain, sunshine, and shade [which are beneficial for crops],⁶⁰⁸ during which Your people Israel need not [depend upon] one another. And do not listen to the prayer of those setting forth on a journey, [who pray that it not rain. In as much as there are always people traveling, if God would heed their prayers, it would never rain.]

The rabbis of Caesaria say [that the *Kohen Gadol* adds]: And upon Your people Israel that they not impose dominion upon one another. [It is harmful for people to exercise authority over one another even when they are justified in doing so.⁶⁰⁹]

And upon the people of the Sharon, he used to say: May it be pleasing before You, *Hashem*, our God, and God of our

⁶⁰⁸ The Babylonian *Talmud* notes that the word שׁוֹרֵה implies excessive heat, meaning too much sunshine. Accordingly, the wording of the prayer should be that *if* the year is excessively hot and sunny, then it should be tempered by plentiful rain (B.T. *Yoma* 53B).

⁶⁰⁹ Although Joseph was younger than most of his brothers, he died before they did because he ruled over them (B.T. *Brachoth* 55A). This occurred even though Joseph was a righteous person and even though he was only fulfilling the prophecy foretold in his dreams.

ancestors, that their homes not become their graves. [The Sharon lay in an area subject to frequent mudslides.]

And he would not extend [his prayers too much] so as not to frighten Israel. [The Holy of Holies was so sacred that only the *Kohen Gadol* could enter and even then, only on *Yom Kippur*. If he delayed in returning, people might fear that he had somehow violated its sanctity and died.]

There was an incident with one who extended [his prayers], and they decided to go in after him [to make sure he was all right]. They say that this was Shimon HaTzaddik.

They said to him, "Why did you lengthen [your prayers]?"

He replied, "I was praying concerning the Temple of your God that it not be destroyed."

"Nevertheless, you should not have lengthened [your prayers] so much."

For forty years Shimon HaTzaddik served Israel as *Kohen Gadol*. During the last year, he told them, "This year I will die."

They asked him, "How do you know?"

"Each year, when I would enter the Holy of Holies, there was an old man dressed in white and wrapped in white who entered and departed with me. This year, he entered with me, but did not depart with me."

They asked Rabbi Abahu [concerning this story]: But it is written, "And no man shall be in the Tent of Meeting upon his

coming to atone in the holy [of holies] until his departure.”⁶¹⁰ [This means that] even those concerning whom it is written [that], “the image of their faces [resembles] the face of man”⁶¹¹ [i.e., angels] shall not be in the Tent of Meeting. [So how could an angel have accompanied Shimon HaTzaddik?]

He answered: Who says that it was [an angel who resembled] a person? I say that it was the Holy One, Blessed be He. [An image of the Divine Presence accompanied Shimon HaTzaddik.⁶¹²]

Yoma 6:3 (יָדָה לְגַלְגַּל) (B.T. *Yoma* 39A-B; B.T. *Menachoth* 109B)

During all the days that Shimon HaTzadik lived, [the scapegoat] did not reach halfway down the mountain before it was torn asunder. After Shimon HaTzadik died, it fled to the desert where nomads [caught and] consumed it.⁶¹³ [Since the scapegoat carried away the sins of the nation, its immediate destruction hinted that the nation’s atonement was accepted. Its

⁶¹⁰ Leviticus 16:17.

⁶¹¹ Ezekiel 1:10.

⁶¹² When God judges the world, as He does on *Yom Kippur*, He is compared to a wise elder, as the verse says, “Until the Ancient of Days arrives and gives judgment” (Daniel 7:22) (*Shayarei HaKorban*). The Divine Presence is not God Himself, but merely a spiritual manifestation of Him.

⁶¹³ According to the *Aruch*, אַרְכָּיִם means “Saracen”, a Latin word derived from Greek and referring to Arabs and other nomadic peoples.

It is possible, however, that this word is Hebrew or Aramaic because אַרְכָּיִם means “barren” and, therefore, might apply to nomads, who wander through barren deserts.

escape into the desert implied that God was not pleased with His people.]

During all the days that Shimon HaTzadik lived, the lot [for the goat to be sacrificed on *Yom Kippur* for] *Hashem* came up in [the *Kohen Gadol's*] right hand. [This was considered a favorable sign because the right side represents kindness.] After Shimon HaTzadik died, sometimes [it came up] in the right and sometimes in the left.

During all the days that Shimon HaTzadik lived, the western lamp [of the *Menorah* remained] lit [after the other lamps of the *Menorah* had burned out even though it had no more oil than the others and even though it was lit every evening before the others. This showed that the Divine Presence resided in the Temple.⁶¹⁴] After Shimon HaTzadik died, sometimes it burned out and sometimes it [remained] lit.

[When the scapegoat was brought to the cliff from which it was to be thrown, the agent who brought it divided a scarlet tuft of wool and tied half to the goat and half to a boulder at the top of the cliff.⁶¹⁵ A scarlet tuft of wool was also tied to the entrance to the *Heichal* inside the Temple.⁶¹⁶] During all the days that Shimon HaTzadik lived, the scarlet tuft [of wool] turned white. After Shimon HaTzadik died, sometimes it turned white and sometimes it remained red. [The whitening of the woolen tuft was a sign from Heaven that Israel's sins had been cleansed.]

⁶¹⁴ *Korban He'Eidah.*

⁶¹⁵ *Yoma* 6:6.

⁶¹⁶ *Yoma* 6:8.

During all the days that Shimon HaTzadik lived, the flame of the pyre [on the altar] gained strength and increased as soon as they placed two logs upon it in the morning, and they did not [need to] put [any additional wood] throughout the day. After Shimon HaTzadik died, the vigor of the pyre diminished, and [the *Kohanim*] did not stop placing wood [on it] all day long.

During all the days that Shimon HaTzadik lived, a blessing was invested into the two breads [offered on *Shavuoth*] and the multi-faced breads [which the *Kohanim* consumed each Sabbath]. It fell to each [*Kohen's* share] only an olive size [of bread, yet] there were those who ate and were satisfied, and there were those who ate and had leftovers [because the bread had a miraculous ability to expand and to satisfy one's appetite]. After Shimon HaTzadik died, the blessing was taken from the two breads and the multi-faced bread, so that it fell to each one of them only the size of a pea. The modest ones withdrew their hands [from taking such a small piece of bread]. The gluttons stretched forth their hands [to seize the bread].

An incident occurred with a *Kohen* from Sepphoris⁶¹⁷ who took his share and his comrade's share. He was called "the pea man" ever after, as [King] David said, "My God, save me from the hand of the wicked, from the palm of the swindler and

⁶¹⁷ Although the text has *בציפורין*, which usually translates as "in Sepphoris," since it was forbidden to consume the multi-faced breads outside the Temple, the text evidently means that this *Kohen* was from Sepphoris and not that he consumed the multi-faced bread there.

the robber.”⁶¹⁸ [This *Kohen* did not steal his friend’s bread. Rather, his comrade was among the modest *Kohanim* who found it unseemly to take a small piece of bread. Even so, this was a disgraceful act.]

[In the verse cited here, the terms swindler (מְצַוֵּל) and robber (רוֹמֵם) are more or less synonymous, both referring to types of thieves. This superfluous repetition implies that even when nothing is stolen, it is a bad trait to grab something from someone else.⁶¹⁹]

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: During the forty years before the Temple was destroyed, the western lamp [of the *Menorah*] went out [before the others], the scarlet tuft remained red, the lot [which the *Kohen Gadol* selected for the sacrificial goat] came up in [his] left [hand],⁶²⁰ and they would lock the doors of the Sanctuary (הַיְיָ) at night, but arise to find them open.

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai addressed [the Temple homiletically]: Sanctuary, why do you dismay us? We know that your destiny is to be destroyed, as it says, “Open your doors, Temple, and let fire consume your cedars.”⁶²¹

For forty years Shimon HaTzadik served Israel as *Kohen Gadol*. During the last year, he told them, “This year I will die.”

“Who should we appoint after you?” they asked.

⁶¹⁸ Psalms 71:4.

⁶¹⁹ *P’nei Moshe*.

⁶²⁰ Two identical goats were placed before the *Kohen Gadol* on *Yom Kippur*. He drew lots to determine which would be sacrificed in the Temple and which would be sent off to the desert as the scapegoat.

⁶²¹ Zachariah 11:1.

“Behold, Nechunyon, my son, is before you.”

They went and appointed Nechunyon, but his brother, Shimon, envied him. [Shimon] went and dressed him in a lady’s leather garment and girded him with a lady’s belt. He then said to [the leaders of the nation], “See what [Nechunyon] swore to his mistress! He told her, ‘When I serve as *Kohen Gadol*, I will wear your gown and gird myself with your belt.’”⁶²²

They investigated these matters, but they could not find [Nechunyon because he fled].

They say [that] from there [Nechunyon] fled to the king’s mountain. [Then] from there he escaped to Alexandria and built an altar. To it he applied this verse, “On that day, there will be an altar to *Hashem* inside the Land of Egypt.”⁶²³

Take heed of how matters might be even more severe! This [Nechunyon] fled from a high position [having never actually served as *Kohen Gadol*], and look what turned out with him

⁶²² *Korban Ha’Eidah* and *P’nei Moshe* identify אַוִּיקָלָה as a leather garment. Rabbi Binyamin Musafia states that אַוִּיקָלָה is a Greek word which refers to the upper part of the arm and, thus, to a robe with sleeves. According to Rabbeinu Chananel on B.T. *Mo’ed Katan* 24A, however, it was a type of headdress similar to that worn by the *Kohen Gadol*.

The version of this story in the Babylonian *Talmud* has אַוִּיקָלִי, which means “hook,” from the Greek *Ankylos*, so perhaps an אַוִּיקָלָה or אַוִּיקָלִי was a garment one fastened with hooks.

Ben Yehoyada on B.T. *Yoma* 39B states that an אַוִּיקָלָה was not a garment specific to women but, in this case, had a color not usually worn by men.

The text here uses נִקְלָה as an abbreviated form of אַוִּיקָלָה. This may also be a play on words because נִקְלָה in Hebrew means “disgrace.”

⁶²³ Isaiah 19:19.

in the end. [He attempted to establish his authority by erecting a forbidden altar in Egypt.] How much more so one who assumed [the position of *Kohen Gadol*] and left it [would try to reassert his authority].

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: These are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehudah says: No, rather, they appointed Shimon, and his brother Nechunyon envied him. [The roles of the two brothers in the story should be reversed.]

Yoma 6:4 (.דל דל) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 67A)

[On *Yom Kippur*, the *Kohen Gadol* sent out a scapegoat to be cast off a cliff in the desert. The distance from Jerusalem to the cliff was twelve *Talmudic* miles⁶²⁴ — roughly thirteen kilometers, or eight statute miles. Ten stations, or rest stops, stood along the way.⁶²⁵]

[Mishnah] At each station, [those present] would say to him, “Here is food, and here is water.”

[*Gemara*: They did so] to strengthen his resolve. Why? Because the evil inclination does not desire anything but what is forbidden it, as with Rabbi Manna when he went up [on *Yom Kippur*] to visit Rabbi Chaggai, who was feeling weak.

“I’m thirsty,” said Rabbi Chaggai.

“Drink!” insisted Rabbi Manna. He left him and went away. After an hour, he went up to him [again]. “What did you end up doing about your thirst?” he inquired.

⁶²⁴ *Yoma* 6:4, according to Rambam, *Perush HaMishnayoth*.

⁶²⁵ *Yoma* 6:4-5.

“When you permitted it to me, [my thirst] went away.”

[On the other hand,] Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba used to tell the following incident [about someone who encouraged a child under the proper age to fast]:

A certain man was walking in the marketplace [on *Yom Kippur*] and his daughter was with him.

“I’m thirsty father,” said the daughter.

“Wait a little,” urged her father.

“I’m thirsty father,” she complained again.

“Wait a little,” he insisted.

[After this,] she died.

Rabbi Acha, when he completed the *Mussaf* prayer [on *Yom Kippur*], would announce before [the congregation]: “My brothers, whoever has a child should go home [to make sure he or she eats and drinks].”

Yoma 7:2 (:זי ףד) and **Yoma 7:3** (.חל ףד)

Why [must the *Kohen Gadol* serve] in white garments?

Rabbi Chiya bar 'Ba says: Just like the service above [is performed by those wearing white garments], so is the service below. Just as [concerning the service] above [the Prophet Ezekiel refers to], “one man among them dressed in [white] linen,”⁶²⁶ so [concerning the service] below, [the *Torah* instructs that], “a holy robe of [white] linen shall he wear.”⁶²⁷

⁶²⁶ Ezekiel 9:2.

⁶²⁷ Leviticus 16:4.

...Why does the *Kohen Gadol* serve with eight garments [except when entering the Holy of Holies on *Yom Kippur*]?

Rabbi Chananyah, colleague of the rabbis, said: Corresponding to [the covenant of] circumcision which occurs eight days [after a baby is born], reminiscent of [the verse], “My covenant was with him.”⁶²⁸

Why does he not serve with the golden garments [when he enters the Holy of Holies on *Yom Kippur* even though the eight garments he wears outside the Holy of Holies contain gold threads]?

Due to pride. Rabbi Simon says: [This is] reminiscent of the verse, “Do not honor yourself before a king.”⁶²⁹ [The *Kohen Gadol*’s golden garments marked him as superior to the other *Kohanim*, who wore uniforms of plain white linen. Requiring the *Kohen Gadol* to don the same uniform they did reminded him of his origins.]

Rabbi Levi says: An accuser cannot become a defender. Yesterday it is written concerning [the Jews], “They made for themselves gods of gold,”⁶³⁰ yet now he stands and serves in gold garments!?!

Yoma 8:7 (: **מב**) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 87A)

Sh’muel says: One who sins against his friend must say to him, “I have offended you,” and if he accepts this, fine. If not,

⁶²⁸ Malachi 2:5.

⁶²⁹ Proverbs 25:6.

⁶³⁰ Exodus 32:31.

[then] let him bring other people, and let him appease [the offended party] before them. Thus it is written, “Let him gaze upon people” — Let him form a row of people. [The word “יִשַׁר,” meaning “Let him gaze,” resembles “שׂוּרָה,” meaning “a row”. The verse continues,] “and say, ‘I have sinned, [and] the straight I have twisted, but it was not worthwhile for me.’”⁶³¹

If he did so, [then] concerning him Scripture declares [in the next verse], “He redeemed his soul from passing through the pit of destruction, and his life-force shall see light.”⁶³²

[If the aggrieved party] died, [then the penitent] should appease him at his gravesite, and say, “I have offended you.”

Yoma 8:7 (דף מב:)

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: Sins one confessed on a prior *Yom Kippur* should not be confessed again on a future *Yom Kippur*. If one does so, Scripture states concerning him, “As a dog [that] returns to its vomit, so is a fool who repeats his folly.”⁶³³

It is learned [in a different *Braitha*]: Rabbi ‘Lieber says: Behold, this one is diligent and he is rewarded [for recalling his former sin]. What is the Scriptural basis for Rabbi ‘Lieber’s

⁶³¹ Job 33:27.

⁶³² Job 33:28. The term שְׂוּרָה can mean both “pit” (*Metzudoth Tzion* on Psalms 35:7) and “destruction” (Deuteronomy 32:5). In the context of this verse, it means that the penitent’s soul will be saved from undergoing a purification process in *Gehinnom*.

⁶³³ Proverbs 26:11.

position? “For I know my iniquity, and my sin is constantly before me.”⁶³⁴

How does Rabbi Eliezer interpret the verse which the rabbis cite as proof [for their opinion, namely,] “As a dog [that] returns to its vomit, so is a fool who repeats his folly”⁶³⁵? [He maintains that this] refers to one who repeats the very same transgression.

How do the rabbis interpret the verse which Rabbi Eliezer cites as proof [for his opinion, namely,] “For I know my iniquity, and my sin is constantly before me”⁶³⁶? [This] means that [the sins] should not be [considered] in his eyes as if he never did them, but as if he did them and they were forgiven.

...It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: One must specify his deeds [when confessing, and it is not sufficient to make a general admission that one has transgressed]. This is the view of Rabbi Yehudah ben Batheira. Rabbi Akiva, however, states: One need not specify his misdeeds.

What is the Scriptural basis for Rabbi Yehuda [ben Batheira’s position]? [When *Moshe Rabbeinu* pleaded on behalf of the nation, he said,] “I beseech [You], this nation has committed a great sin, and they made for themselves a god of gold.”⁶³⁷ [Rather than stopping with a general admission of wrongdoing, *Moshe Rabbeinu* went on to specify what it was.]

⁶³⁴ Psalms 51:5.

⁶³⁵ Proverbs 26:11.

⁶³⁶ Psalms 51:5.

⁶³⁷ Exodus 32:31.

What does Rabbi Akiva do with this [proof]? [*Moshe Rabbeinu* was specific because the fact that the sin involved gold served as a basis for excusing it. God acknowledged that, in a manner of speaking, He Himself had caused the Jews to stumble.] “Who caused them [to err]? I did, for I increased their silver and gold? Why [did this cause them to sin]? A donkey does not bray except when it has a basket of carobs.” [Just as a donkey becomes rowdy when fed with higher quality food than what it needs, Israel’s excessive wealth made the nation haughty and predisposed to misbehave.]

It is written, “The hope of Israel is *Hashem*, etc.”⁶³⁸ [The Hebrew for “hope” (תקוה) is a homonym for “ritual bath”.] Just as a ritual bath purifies those who are contaminated, so the Holy One, blessed be He, purifies Israel. And so it states, “I shall cast upon you purifying waters, and you shall be purified from all of your impurities, and from all of your corruption I shall purify you.”⁶³⁹

⁶³⁸ Jeremiah 17:13.

⁶³⁹ Ezekiel 36:25.

Yoma 7:3 (B.T. Erchin 16A and Zevachim 88B) (דף לה.)

אמר רבי סימון: כשם שהקרבנות מכפרין, כך הבגדים מכפרין –
 בכתונת ומכנסיים מצנפת ואבנט.
 כתונת היתה מכפרת לובשי כלאים. אית דבעי מימר על שופכי דמים
 כמה דאת אמר, "[ו]יקחו את כתנת יוסף וישחטו שעיר עזים [ויטבילו את הכתנת
 בדם] (בראשית לז:לא).
 מכנסיים היה מכפר על גילוי עריות כמה דאת אמר, "[ועשה להם
 מקנסי בך לכסות בשר ערוה] (שמות כח:מב)
 מצנפת היתה מכפרת על גסי הרוח כמה דאת אמר, "[שמט המצנפת
 על ראשו] (שמות כט:ו).
 אבנט היה מכפר על הגנבים ואית דבעי מימר על העוקמנים. אמר רבי
 לוי: ל"ב אמה היה בו והיה מעקמו לכאן ולכאן.
 חושן היה מכפר על מטי הדין כמה דאת אמר, "[ועשית חשן משפט]
 (שמות כח:טו).
 אפוד היה מכפר על עבודה זרה כמה דאת אמר, "[כי ימים רבים ישבו
 בני ישראל]...[ואין אפוד ותרפים] (הושע ג:ד).
 מעיל, רבי סימון בשם רבי יונתן דבית גוברין: שני דברים לא היתה
 בהן כפרה וקבעה להן התורה כפרה. ואלו הן: האומר לשון הרע וההורג נפש
 בשגגה.
 האומר לשון הרע לא היתה לו כפרה וקבעה לו התורה כפרה זוגי
 המעיל, "[היה על אהרן לשרת ונשמע קולו [בבאו אל הקדש לפני ה']" (שמות
 כח:לה). יבא קול ויכפר על קול.
 ההורג נפש לא היתה לו כפרה וקבעה לו התורה כפרה מיתת כהן
 גדול, "[וישב בה עד מות הפהן הגדל] (במדבר לה:כה).
 ...ציץ, אית דבעי מימר על הגודפנים אית דבעי מימר על עזי פנים.
 מאן דאמר על הגודפנין ניחא דכתיב, "[וישלח דוד את ידו אל הפלי
 ויקח משם אבן ויקלע ויהי את הפלשתי אל מצחו] [ותטבע האבן במצחו] [ויפל
 על פניו ארצה]" (שמואל א יז:מט). וכתיב, "[היה על מצחו תמיד [לרצון להם
 לפני ה']" (שמות כח:לח).
 מאן דאמר על עזי פנים, "[ומצח אשה זונה היה לה [מאנת הפלם]"
 (ירמיה ג:ג).

Rabbi Simon said: Just as the sacrifices atone, so the garments atone — the robe, the trousers, the headdress, and the belt.

The robe used to atone for those who wore forbidden mixtures [of wool and linen]. There are those who wish to say that [the robe atoned] for bloodshed, as you would say [based upon the verse concerning Joseph's brothers], "They took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goatling, and dipped the robe in the blood."⁶⁴⁰ [Joseph's brothers did not murder him, and they did not dip his robe in blood as atonement. To the contrary, they believed that they had treated him fairly by selling him into slavery. Nevertheless, the sages teach that whatever the ancestors of the Jewish people did is a sign for their descendants. This action foreshadowed the function of the *Kohen Gadol's* robe in atoning for bloodshed.⁶⁴¹]

The trousers used to atone for immorality, as you would say [from the verse], "Make for [the *Kohanim*] linen trousers to cover [their] privates."⁶⁴²

The headdress used to atone for the haughty-minded, as you would say [from the verse], "You shall place the headdress upon his head."⁶⁴³ [Those who are haughty think that nothing is superior to them. The *Kohen Gadol* would have been especially susceptible to such thinking because only a *Kohen* who excelled

⁶⁴⁰ Genesis 37:31.

⁶⁴¹ Based on *Rashi* on B.T. *Zevachim* 88B sub verba "VaYitbelu" (ויטבלו).

⁶⁴² Exodus 28:42.

⁶⁴³ Exodus 29:6.

over his fellows was selected for that position, and he enjoyed special prerogatives. The *Kohen Gadol* therefore wore a special headdress, or miter (מִצְנֶפֶת), which served as a constant reminder that of the One Who was superior to him.]

The belt used to atone for thieves, and there are those who wish to say for deceivers. Rabbi Levi explained: It had thirty-two cubits [of length], and he would twist it here and there. [Thirty-two is the numerical value of “heart” (לֵב), implying that the belt atoned for those who “steal the hearts of others” through deception. Moreover, the *Kohen* would wrap, or twist, the belt around his waist, reminiscent of those who twist facts to deceive others.]

The breastplate used to atone for those [judges] who tilted the law [in favor of one party or the other], as you would say [from the verse], “You shall make a breastplate of judgment.”⁶⁴⁴ [Rashi states that the term “judgment” (מִשְׁפָּט) in this verse means clarification. The *Kohen Gadol* used to consult the *Urim VeTumim*, a parchment containing *Hashem’s* Names within the folds of the breastplate, which caused the letters inscribed in its gemstones to light up to clarify matters of national importance. Calling it the “breastplate of judgment” suggests that it had the power to atone for errors in judgment.⁶⁴⁵]

The apron⁶⁴⁶ used to atone for idolatry as you would say [from the verse], “For many days the Children of Israel shall

⁶⁴⁴ Exodus 28:15.

⁶⁴⁵ Rashi on Exodus 28:15.

⁶⁴⁶ Rashi on Exodus 28:4 states that he is uncertain how the ephod (אֶפֶוד) shall

dwelt...and there will be neither apron nor idols.”⁶⁴⁷ [The prophet warned that although the Jews would not be able to use the garments of the *Kohen Gadol* to predict the future while in exile, they must not turn to idols.⁶⁴⁸]

[As for the *Kohen Gadol*'s] jacket, Rabbi Simon stated in the name of Rabbi Yonathan of Beth Guvrin: There are two things for which there was no atonement [provided by the sacrificial service], but the *Torah* provided atonement for them [in a different way].⁶⁴⁹ They are one who utters evil speech and one who kills a person unwittingly.

One who utters evil speech did not have an atonement [through the sacrificial service], but the *Torah* provided atonement for him [by means of the] bells on the [*Kohen Gadol*'s] jacket, [as the verse states,] “[The jacket] shall be upon Aaron to serve, and its sound shall be heard when he comes to the Sanctuary before *Hashem*.”⁶⁵⁰ Let a sound come and atone for a sound [of evil speech].

One who kills a person [unwittingly] did not have atonement [through the sacrificial service], but the *Torah* provided atonement for him [through the] death of the *Kohen Gadol*. [One

was designed, but that he was inclined to believe that it resembled a type of apron.

⁶⁴⁷ Hosea 3:4.

⁶⁴⁸ *Metzudoth David* on Hosea 3:4.

⁶⁴⁹ B.T. *Erchin* 16A.

⁶⁵⁰ Exodus 28:35.

who murders unwittingly must flee to a city of refuge], “and he shall dwell in it until the death of the *Kohen Gadol*.”⁶⁵¹

...[As for the gold] plate [which the *Kohen Gadol* wore on his forehead], there are those who wish to say [that it atoned] for blasphemers, and there are those who wish to say [that it atoned] for the insolent.

For the one who says that [the gold plate atoned] for blasphemers, it is well, for it is written [concerning David’s battle against Goliath, “David sent forth his hand to the container, and took from there a stone, and shot [it], and struck the Philistine upon his forehead], and the stone sunk into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the ground.”⁶⁵² [Goliath challenged the Jews, saying, “Select for yourselves a man, and let him come down to me [to do battle].”⁶⁵³ The term “man” (אִישׁ), as used here, referred to God Himself,⁶⁵⁴ and Goliath blasphemed by suggesting that he could overpower God.⁶⁵⁵] And it is written [concerning the gold plate], “And it shall be upon his forehead constantly to find favor for them before *Hashem*.”⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵¹ Numbers 35:25.

⁶⁵² I Samuel 17:49.

⁶⁵³ I Samuel 17:8.

⁶⁵⁴ B.T. *Sotah* 42B.

⁶⁵⁵ This is also suggested by David’s statement, “You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, and I come to you with the Name of *Hashem* of Multitudes, the God of the brigades of Israel, whom you have scorned” (I Samuel 17:45). Although the context of this verse implies that the phrase “whom you have scorned” should be read as referring to Israel, it may also be understood as referring to God Himself.

⁶⁵⁶ Exodus 28:38.

[As for] the one who says that [the gold plate atoned] for the insolent, [he bases his position upon Jeremiah's rebuke to the nation that], "You have the forehead [i.e., insolence] of a wayward woman and refuse to be embarrassed."⁶⁵⁷

The Talmud states that the Kohen Gadol's breastplate atoned for judges who misapplied the law. There is a rule, however, that there cannot be atonement for a sin involving a fellow human being without an apology.⁶⁵⁸ How can the breastplate rectify a miscarriage of justice if the judges did not correct their decision or even apologize to the individual they wronged?

The Talmud may be speaking of judges who accidentally deviated from the Halachah and never caught their mistake. Since they were unaware that anything wrong had happened, they did not know that they needed to correct their decision or apologize. In that case, the breastplate provided atonement.

In practice, most judicial determinations are vulnerable to criticism because only God Himself can render a completely fair decision. Human judges can never know every pertinent fact and are influenced in their decisions by their own experiences and personalities even though they try to be impartial.

The Urim VeTumim were Names of Hashem which alluded to the Divine Attributes of Kindness and Judgment.⁶⁵⁹ These Attributes

⁶⁵⁷ Jeremiah 3:3.

⁶⁵⁸ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 606:1.

⁶⁵⁹ The term *Urim* (אֲרִיִּים) refers to kindness as hinted by the verse, "To the One Who makes great lights (אֲרִיִּים), for His kindness is eternal" (Psalms

represent two opposite ways of interpreting human behavior — leniently or strictly. True fairness would require a perfect equilibrium between the two. Since human judges cannot achieve this equilibrium, the breastplate, which bears Names representing both traits, atones for their decisions.

This explains why Aaron, and the Kohanim Gedolim who followed him, merited wearing the breastplate. The Torah instructs that the breastplate “shall be on Aaron’s heart.”⁶⁶⁰ Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai explains that the heart of Aaron, which was happy when Moshe Rabbeinu rose to greatness, deserved to wear the Urim VeTumim.⁶⁶¹

Aaron was Moshe Rabbeinu’s older brother and might have felt disappointed that God selected Moshe Rabbeinu to lead Israel instead of him. He might also have reasoned that he was more qualified than Moshe Rabbeinu because Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty speaking.⁶⁶²

The Torah states that when Moshe Rabbeinu was born, his mother “saw that he was good.”⁶⁶³ This expression means that when Moshe Rabbeinu was born, the house filled with light or that Moshe Rabbeinu was born circumcised.⁶⁶⁴ When Aaron recalled that Moshe

136:7). See also *Zohar* II:21A that light (אור) symbolizes kindness.

The *Talmud* states that the word *Tumim* (תמים) implies that the Names “completed their words” (B.T. *Yoma* 73B). This means that a decree of the *Urim VeTumim* was never rescinded (*Rashi* ad. loc.). The *Tumim* (תמים) thus represented strictly enforced justice.

⁶⁶⁰ Exodus 28:30.

⁶⁶¹ *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on Song of Songs 1:10; *Zohar* III:243A.

⁶⁶² Exodus 4:10.

⁶⁶³ Exodus 2:2.

⁶⁶⁴ B.T. *Sotah* 12A.

Rabbeinu possessed these two traits, he happily agreed that Moshe Rabbeinu was more suitable to lead the nation than he was.

The Urim VeTumim allude to this. Urim (אורים) refers to light. Tumim (תמים) refers to circumcision because Abraham was not called “complete” (תמים) until after he was circumcised.⁶⁶⁵ Aaron’s recollection that Moshe Rabbeinu’s birth had been accompanied by these special signs caused him to defer to his younger brother.⁶⁶⁶

Aaron’s impartial assessment of this situation, despite his personal involvement in it, reflected the concept of the Urim VeTumim — unbiased and perfectly balanced decisionmaking. For this reason, he merited wearing the Urim VeTumim.



What is the connection between the death of the Kohen Gadol and the release of a person who commits manslaughter, two matters which appear to be unrelated?

Manslaughter results from some degree of carelessness. A classic example is the case of a person chopping wood who failed to make sure that the handle of his axe was properly secured. If the axhead flies off, there are two possibilities. It might land harmlessly, or it might strike and injure or kill a bystander. In the latter case, the woodchopper is deemed to have committed manslaughter.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁵ Also, God introduced the commandment of circumcision to Abraham with the expression, “walk before Me and be complete (תמים)” (Genesis 17:1).

⁶⁶⁶ *Shelah HaKadosh, Vavei Ha’Amudim* 11.

⁶⁶⁷ Deuteronomy 19:5; *Makoth* 2:1; *Yad HaChazakah, Hilchoth Rotzeach* 6:15.

The Talmud explains that if the Kohen Gadol had prayed for his generation properly, then such tragic accidents would not have occurred — the axhead would have landed harmlessly.⁶⁶⁸ Since the Kohen Gadol bears some indirect responsibility for the murder, his death atones for it.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁸ B.T. *Makoth* 11A.

⁶⁶⁹ *HaKothev*, citing *Rashi*.

Yoma 7:3 (דף לה:) (Compare B.T. Yoma 73A-B)

ולמה נקרא שמם אורים? שהן מאירין לישראל. ותומים שהן מתימין לפניהם את הדרך. שְׁבַעַת שהיו ישראל תמימין היו מכוונין להן את הדרך. שכן מצאנו שְׁבִידוֹ להן בְּגָבַע בנימין. אמר רבי יהודה: חס ושלום! לא בִּידוֹ להם בְּגָבַע בנימין. שבראשונה אמר, "עָלוּ [אֲלֵינוּ]" (שופטים כ:כג) ולא אמר, "אֲתַנְנוּ [בְּיָדְךָ]" (שופטים כ:כח). ובשנייה אמר, "עָלוּ" ואמר, "אֲתַנְנוּ בְּיָדְךָ". ואין נשאלין שתי שאלות כאחת. אם נשאלו, אית תניי תני משיבו על הראשונה ואין משיבו על השנייה. ואית תניי תני משיבו על השנייה ואינו משיבו על הראשונה. ואית תניי תני אינו משיבו לא על הראשונה ולא על השנייה.

מאן דאמר משיבו על הראשונה ואינו משיבו על השנייה מן הדא: "וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל [שָׁמַעַ שְׁמַעַ עֲבָדְךָ פִּי מִבְּקֶשׁ שְׂאוֹל לְבֹא אֶל קַעֲלָה לְשַׁחַח לְעִיר בְּעַבּוּרֵי]. הִיִּסְגַּרְנִי בְּעַלִּי קַעֲלָה בְּיַד הַיָּרֵד שְׂאוֹל [פְּאֶשֶׁר שָׁמַעַ עֲבָדְךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִגִּד נָא לְעַבְדְּךָ וַיֹּאמֶר ה' יֵרֵד] (שמואל א כג:י-יא). דוד לא שאל כהוגן. לא צורכא, "הַיָּרֵד שְׂאוֹל" ואם ירד, "הִיִּסְגַּרְנִי בְּעַלִּי קַעֲלָה בְּיַדְךָ?"

מאן דאמר משיבו על השנייה ואינו משיבו על הראשונה מן הדא, "וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד... הִיִּסְגַּרְנִי בְּעַלִּי קַעֲלָה בְּיַדְךָ וְגוֹמֵר?" מאן דאמר אינו משיבו לא על הראשונה ולא על האחרונה: "וַיִּשְׁאַל דָּוִד בַּה' לֵאמֹר אֶרְדֹּף אַחֲרֵי הַגִּדּוֹד הַזֶּה הַאֲשַׁנְנוּ?" (שמואל א ל:ח) דוד ביקש עליה רחמים, "ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִגִּד נָא לְעַבְדְּךָ" (שמואל א כג:יא). תדע לך שהרי שתיים שאל והשיבו שלש. "וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ דָּוִד פִּי הִשָּׁג תִּשָּׁג וְהַצֵּל תִּצִּיל" (שמואל א ל:ח).

אית תניי תני הקול היה שומע. אית תניי תני הכתב בולט. מאן דאמר הקול היה שומע ניחא דכתיב, "[וַיִּבְכֹּא מֹשֶׁה אֶל אֱהָל מוֹעֵד לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ] וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹל [מִדְּבַר אֲלֵינוּ]" (במדבר ז:פט). מאן דאמר הכתב היה בולט והא לית חי"ת בשבטים ולא צד"י ולא קו"ף בשבטים. אברהם יצחק יעקב כתוב עליהן. והא לית טי"ת בשבטים. "כָּל אֵלֶּה שְׁבֻטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" (בראשית מט:כח) היה חקוק עליהן.

[The *Talmud* now discusses the *Urim VeTumim* (אורים ותמים), parchments with *Hashem's* Names which were inserted inside the *Kohen Gadol's* breastplate enabling it to respond to questions of national importance.⁶⁷⁰]

Why are they called *Urim*? Because they illuminate [matters] for Israel [by answering the nation's questions.⁶⁷¹ *Urim* (אורים) means "lights"]. And *Tumim* (תמים) because they simplified the way before them. [*Tam* (תם) means "simple."] For whenever Israel was simple [that is, whenever they had pure faith in *Hashem*], it guided them rightly. For so we find [that the *Urim VeTumim* were reliable only when Israel behaved meritoriously], for they misled them at the hill of Benjamin.

Said Rabbi Yehudah: God forbid! They did not mislead them at the hill of Benjamin. At first, [the *Urim VeTumim*] said "Go up to him [to do battle],"⁶⁷² but did not say, "I will give him into your hand." The second time [the question was posed, the *Urim VeTumim*] said "Go up [to do battle]," and also said, "I will give him into your hand."⁶⁷³

[Some members of the Tribe of Benjamin attacked and murdered a concubine.⁶⁷⁴ The rest of the nation formed an army which marched against Benjamin and demanded that the Tribe

⁶⁷⁰ *Rashi* on Exodus 28:30. Others, however, state that the *Urim VeTumim* were Divine Names which descended into the breastplate (*Kehillath Yaakov, Erech Urim* (אורים)).

⁶⁷¹ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁶⁷² Judges 20:23.

⁶⁷³ Judges 20:28.

⁶⁷⁴ Judges 19:25-28.

surrender the perpetrators.⁶⁷⁵ When the Benjaminites refused, war broke out. After the rest of the nation suffered severe losses, they asked the *Urim VeTumim* whether to continue fighting Benjamin, and the answer was “Go up to him.”⁶⁷⁶ Although they sustained further losses, all the *Urim VeTumim* had advised was that they continue fighting, so this was not misleading. The next time they consulted the *Urim VeTumim*, the message was, “Go up, for tomorrow I will give him into your hand,”⁶⁷⁷ and they indeed won the war after that.]

Two questions are never asked [of the *Urim VeTumim*] at once.

If [two questions] were asked, there are *Tannaim* who learn that [the *Urim VeTumim*] answer the first, but do not answer the second. There are [other] *Tannaim* who learn that [the *Urim VeTumim*] answer the second, but do not answer the first. There are [still other] *Tannaim* who learn that [the *Urim VeTumim*] answer neither the first [question] nor the second.

The one who says that they answer the first, but not the second, [derives it] from here: “David said to *Hashem*, God of Israel, ‘Your servant has heard that Saul seeks to come to Ke’ilah to destroy the city because of me. Will the townspeople of Ke’ilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul descend as Your servant has heard? *Hashem*, God of Israel, please tell Your

⁶⁷⁵ Judges 20:13.

⁶⁷⁶ Judges 20:23.

⁶⁷⁷ Judges 20:28.

servant.' And *Hashem* said, 'He shall descend.'"⁶⁷⁸ David did not ask properly [i.e., in the correct logical order]. He should not [have asked but as follows:] "Will Saul descend, and if he descends, will the townspeople of Ke'ilah surrender me into his hand?" [If King Saul never approached the city in the first place, then its inhabitants would have no reason to consider surrendering David. Although David did not order his questions correctly, the *Urim VeTumim* answered only the one which should have come first.⁶⁷⁹]

The one who says [that the *Urim VeTumim*] answer him on the second [question], but do not answer him on the first [derive it] from [the same passage]: "David said to *Hashem*...Will the inhabitants of Ke'ilah surrender me into his hand, etc.?" [Rather than suggesting that the *Urim VeTumim* rearranged David's questions to make logical sense, this *Tanna* holds that the *Urim VeTumim* followed the actual order in which they were posed. Accordingly, it is the second question which is answered.]

The one who says [that the *Urim VeTumim*] answer him neither on the first nor on the last [derives his opinion from here]: [On another occasion, when David was pursuing Amalekites,] "David inquired of *Hashem*, saying, 'Shall I chase after this battalion? Shall I overtake it?'"⁶⁸⁰ [Although one may not ask two questions at once, and the *Urim VeTumim* did not ordinarily respond to such multiple inquiries,] David sought mercy

⁶⁷⁸ I Samuel 23:10-11.

⁶⁷⁹ B.T. *Yoma* 73A-B דוד שאל שלא יקסדר והתחזירו לו קסדר

⁶⁸⁰ I Samuel 30:8.

[and gained a special privilege to be able to ask multiple questions. This explains why earlier he added the additional plea,] “*Hashem*, God of Israel, please tell Your servant.”⁶⁸¹

You may know for certain [that this last view is correct] because [David] asked two questions [in the case where he was pursuing the Amalekites], but they answered [with] three [responses because of his earlier prayer].⁶⁸² “David asked of *Hashem*, ‘Shall I chase after this battalion? Shall I overtake it?’ And He said to him, ‘Chase [it], for you shall surely overtake [it], and you shall surely save [the captives taken by Amalek].’”⁶⁸³

[The *Talmud* proceeds to discuss how the *Urim VeTumim* communicated their messages.] There are *Tannaim* who learn [that the *Kohen Gadol*] would hear a voice [in response]. There are [other] *Tannaim* who learn that the writing [on the gems of the *Kohen Gadol*’s breastplate] popped up, [and the *Kohen Gadol* would then interpret the message.]

It is well according to the one who says that he heard a voice because it is written, “And when Moses would come to the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him, he heard a voice speaking to him.”⁶⁸⁴ [So there is a precedent for saying that *Hashem* creates an audible response.]

⁶⁸¹ I Samuel 23:11.

⁶⁸² *P’nei Moshe*.

⁶⁸³ I Samuel 30:8. B.T. *Yoma* 73B gives a different answer. Since King David was asking on an emergency basis, it was permitted to ask more than one question at once, and the *Urim VeTumim* responded accordingly.

⁶⁸⁴ Numbers 7:89.

According to the one who says that the writing popped up, however, there was no [letter] *Cheth* (ח) among the [names of] the Tribes, nor was there a *Tzadi* (צ), nor was there a *Koof* (ק) among [the names of] the Tribes. [How could messages be conveyed by means of the letters when some were missing from the gemstones on the breastplate?]

[The *Talmud* answers that] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were [also] inscribed upon them, [and Isaac's name (קְטָצִי) includes the letters *Tzadi* (צ) and *Koof* (ק)].

But there is [still] no [letter] *Teth* (ט) among [the names of] the Tribes [or the Patriarchs]. [The phrase], "All these are the Tribes of Israel"⁶⁸⁵ was [also] inscribed upon them, [and the word "Tribes" (שְׁבִטִים) contains the letter *Teth* (ט).]

Rabbi Yehudah explains that the Urim VeTumim did not mislead the Jews at the hill of Benjamin, but a question remains: Why did the Urim VeTumim instruct them to go to battle, but not warn them about the consequences?

*The Babylonian Talmud clarifies that the Jews did not use the Urim VeTumim correctly. Only the Kohen Gadol should use the Urim VeTumim to answer questions, but the Jews consulted a different Kohen.*⁶⁸⁶



⁶⁸⁵ Genesis 49:28.

⁶⁸⁶ B.T. *Yoma* 73B, according to *Maharsha*.

Why is there a restriction against asking more than one question at a time from the Urim VeTumim?

Although the Urim VeTumim operated in a miraculous fashion, they did not represent a very high level of communication with Hashem. Rabbeinu Bachya identifies four levels of Divine communication from lowest to highest: (1) a Heavenly voice (בַּת קוֹל); (2) Urim VeTumim; (3) spirit of holiness (רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ); and (4) prophecy.⁶⁸⁷ Since the Urim VeTumim were a weak form of Divine communication, the inquirer was limited to asking only one question at a time.

To clarify further, all creation may be viewed as a continuum between the physical world and God, with the spiritual realms stretching between them. At one extreme is the physical universe for which Hashem created laws of nature so that matter and energy operate in predictable ways. At the other extreme is God Himself, Who is completely unlimited and not subject to any restrictions whatsoever. Spiritual realms which are closer to Hashem are subject to fewer limitations than those farther from Him.

The Urim VeTumim provided a form of Divine communication which derived from spiritual realms farther away from God and closer to physicality than a spirit of holiness or prophecy. As such, they were more subject to limitation and restriction, and the people could only make a single inquiry of them at a time.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁷ Rabbeinu Bachya on Deuteronomy 33:8.

⁶⁸⁸ The Urim VeTumim derived from the spiritual worlds of Victory (נִצְחָה) and Majesty (הוֹד), whereas a spirit of holiness (רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ) derives from the higher realm of Foundation (יְסוּד). Prophecy derives from Glory (תְּפִאָּרָה), an even higher realm. (See *Kithvei Ha'Arizal*, *HaLikutim*, *Sefer Shoftim* 19; *Leshem Shevo VeAchlamah*, *Hakdamoth VeShe'arim*, *Sha'ar HaPoneh Kadim* 42;

Yoma 8:4 (דף מא.) (Compare B.T. *Yoma* 82B-83A)

שתי עוברות באו לפני רבי טרפון. שלח לגבון תרין תלמידים. אמר לון, "אזלון ואמרון לון צומא רבה הוא." אמרין לקדמיא ושדך. וקרין עלוי, "מִבְּטֵן אִמִּי אֵלֵי אֶתְהָ" (תהלים כב:יא). אמרין לתינינא ולא שדך. וקרין עלוי, "זרוי רְשָׁעִים מִרְחָם תְּעוּ מִבְּטֵן דְּכָרֵי כָּזָב" (תהלים נח:ד).

[Anyone whose life may be endangered by fasting is permitted to eat on *Yom Kippur*. If a pregnant woman is overcome by the smell of food, and her discomfort can be discerned on her face, then one should remind her that it is *Yom Kippur*. If this reminder does not help, then she should be fed.⁶⁸⁹]

Two pregnant women came before Rabbi Tarfon [on *Yom Kippur* seeking permission to eat]. He sent two disciples to them, saying, "Go and tell them that it is the Great Fast." [They should

Shelah HaKadosh, Haga'oth LeSefer BaMidbar Devarim, Parashath Balak, Rabeinu Alav HaShalom.)

⁶⁸⁹ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 617:1-2. The *Mishnah Berurah* states that she should first be given a few drops of sauce to taste. If this does not help, then she should be given less than 1.5 fluid ounces of sauce to drink, wait nine minutes, and drink again. If even this does not help, she should be given no more than one fluid ounce from the food itself to eat, wait nine minutes, and eat again.

This all applies to an otherwise healthy individual who has been overcome by an aroma. One who is experiencing complications with her pregnancy should eat as her physician instructs. Moreover, the foregoing only describes how others should respond. Even an otherwise healthy individual may eat as much as she feels she needs if she thinks that her situation is life-threatening.

only break the fast if absolutely necessary. Rabbi Tarfon reasoned that when the fetuses heard this, they would calm down, and the women would be able to complete the fast.⁶⁹⁰

They told the first [mother], and [the fetus] settled down. They applied to [this fetus the verse], “From the womb of my mother You are my God.”⁶⁹¹

They told the second [mother], but [the fetus] did not settle down. They applied to [this fetus the verse], “The wicked are cast away [from God] from the womb; those who speak falsehood stray [from God] from the belly.”⁶⁹²

*The Babylonian Talmud relates a similar story involving Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi. The fetus which calmed down grew up to be Rabbi Yochanan, whereas the fetus which refused to calm down grew up to be Shabbethai, the fruit hoarder, who stockpiled produce to force up prices in violation of a Rabbinic decree.*⁶⁹³

An obvious question is: What awareness does an unborn child have of the significance of fasting on Yom Kippur?

The rabbis teach that babies learn the entire Torah in the womb. At the moment of birth, an angel strikes the baby on the mouth, and he or she forgets everything. Furthermore, while in the womb, a lamp stays lit above the baby’s head, and he sees from one end of the world to the other, a figurative expression which means that he experiences a

⁶⁹⁰ *Korban Ha’Eidah.*

⁶⁹¹ Psalms 22:11.

⁶⁹² Psalms 58:4.

⁶⁹³ *Rashi on B.T. Yoma 83A, sub verba “Otzer Perei” (אצר פירי).*

prophetic vision.⁶⁹⁴ Accordingly, fetuses are fully aware of the Hala-
chah and of what transpires in the world.

This leaves a question open, however. Children under Bar Mitzvah or Bath Mitzvah have no obligation to observe Mitzvoth except for training purposes. Surely even a fetus who knows the entire contents of the Torah has no such obligation. Why, then, did the sages criticize the fetus who failed to observe Yom Kippur and praise the fetus who observed it, and why did the fetus who refused to fast end up a scoundrel?

A story is told about two Jews who were imprisoned in Siberia during the time of the Soviet Union. After years of grueling hardship, the Communist authorities agreed to release these men, but only if they would sign the necessary paperwork on a particular day. If they failed to do so, then they would remain imprisoned indefinitely. Unfortunately, the day the authorities chose for completing the paperwork was Shabbath.

One of the Jews was a learned rabbi. When confronted with signing the papers, he adamantly refused.

"You realize," explained the warden of the prison camp, "that your refusal means that you will remain here indefinitely."

"I have carefully observed the Sabbath all my life," answered the rabbi, "and I will continue to do so now regardless of the consequences."

Observing the rabbi's determination, the other Jew, a frail elderly man, also refused to sign.

⁶⁹⁴ B.T. Niddah 30B.

“Wait a moment,” said the rabbi. “I will sign the papers for my comrade.”

“What do you mean?” asked the astonished warden. “Just a moment ago you insisted that you could not sign!”

“For myself, I am prepared to endure the harsh privation of this prison camp rather than desecrate the Sabbath. However, the Torah permits us to violate the Sabbath for the sake of saving a life. Since this man may not be able to survive further imprisonment, I am permitted to sign the papers for him.”

Throughout Jewish history, Tzaddikim have willingly accepted upon themselves great difficulties for the sake of serving Hashem. However, these same people never imposed hardships on others. The welfare of their fellow human beings was their paramount concern.

It is true that a fetus has no duty to fast on Yom Kippur, but if it resides inside a healthy mother, it will survive without any problem. Like every loyal Jew, the fetus’s mother wished to join the rest of the nation fasting on the holy day. A fetus who disregards the feelings of his mother and considers only the fact that he is exempt from fasting displays a high level of selfishness. Although he forgot the Torah he learned in the womb, his selfish personality remained.

Yoma 8:7 (-: דף מב.) (B.T. Yoma 85B; J.T. Shavuoth 1:6 (7A))

[מתניתין]: האומר, "אֶחָטָא וְאֶשׁוּב, אֶחָטָא וְאֶשׁוּב", אין מספיקין בְּיָדוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה. "אֶחָטָא וְיוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים מְכַפֵּר", אין יום הכפורים מכפר. עֲבֵרוֹת שֶׁבִּין אָדָם לְמָקוֹם, יום הכפורים מכפר. עֲבֵרוֹת שֶׁבִּין אָדָם לְחֵבְרוֹ, אין יום הכפורים מכפר עד שִׁירָצָה אֶת חֵבְרוֹ.

אֵת זוֹ דָּרַשׁ רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה: [כִּי בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם] מִכָּל חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי ה' תְּטַהֲרוּ" (ויקרא טז:ל). עֲבֵרוֹת שֶׁבִּין אָדָם לְמָקוֹם, יום הכפורים מכפר. עֲבֵרוֹת שֶׁבִּין אָדָם לְחֵבְרוֹ, אין יום הכפורים מכפר עד שִׁירָצָה אֶת חֵבְרוֹ.

אָמַר רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא: אֲשֶׁרֵיכֶם יִשְׂרָאֵל! לְפָנַי מִי אֶתֶם מְטַהְרִין, וּמִי מְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם? אָבִיכֶם שֶׁבִּשְׂמַיִם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, "וְזָרַקְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם מִיַּם טְהוֹרִים וּטְהַרְתֶּם" (יחזקאל לו:כה). וְאֹמֵר, "מִקְנֹה יִשְׂרָאֵל ה'" (ירמיה יז:ג). מִה מְקַנֶּה מְטַהֵר אֶת הַטְּמְאִים, אֵף הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְטַהֵר אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל.

...[גמרא]: האומר, "אין עולה מכפרת," "אין עולה מכפרת עלי," "מכפרת היא. אי איפשי שתכפר לי," אינה מכפרת לו על כרחו. "אין יום הכיפורים מכפר," "מכפרת היא. אי איפשי שיכפר לי," מכפר הוא לו על כורחו.

אמר רבי חנניה בריה דרבי הלל: לא כולא. מן הדין בר נשא מימור למלכא, "לית את מלך."

והעולה מכפרת על הרהור הלב. מאי טעמא? "וְהָעֹלָה עַל רוּחְכֶם הִיּוּ לֹא תִהְיֶה [אֲשֶׁר אֶתֶם אֹמְרִים נִהְיֶה כְּגוֹיִם כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲרָצוֹת לְשֵׁרֵת עֵץ וְאֶבֶן]" (יחזקאל כ:לב). וכן איוב אומר, "וְהָשָׁפִים בְּבִקְרָה וְהָעֹלָה עֲלוֹת מִסְפֵּר כָּלֵם [כִּי אָמַר אִיּוֹב אוֹלֵי חֲטָאוֹ בָּנִי וּבָרְכוּ אֶל־לֵהִים בְּלִבְכֶם]" (איוב א:ה). הדא אומר שהעולה מכפרת על הרהור הלב.

רבי אומר: על כל עבירות שבתורה יום הכיפורים מכפר חוץ מן הפורק עול והמיפר ברית והמגלה פנים בתורה. אם עשה תשובה מתכפר לו ואם לאו אינו מתכפר לו.

רבי זבידא אמר רבי יסא מקשי: מיסבור סבר רבי שיום הכיפורים מכפר בלא תשובה?

רבי אשיין רב יונה רבי בא רבי חייה בשם רבי יוחנן: מודה רבי שאין יום הכיפורים מכפר אלא בתשובה. הא מיתה מכפרת בלא תשובה.

תני: יום מיתה כיום תשובה. מאן תניננה? רבי. הווי הדא היא דתנינן: מיתה יום הנפירים מכפרין עם התשובה. דלא כרבי. שאל רבי מתי בן חרש את רבי אלעזר בן עזריה בישיבה, אמר לו, "שמעת ארבעה חלוקי כפרה שהיה רבי ישמעאל דורש?" אמר לו, "שלושה הם חוץ מן התשובה."
 כתוב אחד אומר, "שובו בנים שובבים [אָרְפָּה מְשׁוּבְתֵיכֶם]" (ירמיה ג:כב), וכתוב אחר אומר, "כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם [לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִפֶּלַח חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי ה' תְּטַהְרוּ]" (ויקרא טז:ל), וכתוב אחר אומר, "ופקדתי בשבט פשעם [וּבְנִגְעֵי עֲוֹנָם]" (תהלים פט:לג), וכתוב אחר אומר, "אם יכפר העון הזה לכם עד תמתי" (ישעיה כב:יד).
 הא כיצד?

עבר על מצות עשה ושב מיד אינו זז ממקומו עד שימחול לו. עליו הכתוב אומר, "שובו בנים שובבים [אָרְפָּה מְשׁוּבְתֵיכֶם]" (ירמיה ג:כב). העובר על מצוה בלא תעשה ושב מיד התשובה תולה ויום הכיפורים מכפר. עליו הכתוב אומר, "כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם [לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם מִפֶּלַח חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לְפָנַי ה' תְּטַהְרוּ]" (ויקרא טז:ל).
 העובר על כריתות ומיתות בית דין במזיד התשובה ויום הכיפורים מכפרין מחצה והייסורין בשאר ימות השנה מכפרין מחצה. עליו הכתוב אומר, "ופקדתי בשבט פשעם [וּבְנִגְעֵי עֲוֹנָם]" (תהלים פט:לג).
 אבל מי שנתחללו בו שם שמים אין כח לא בתשובה לתלות ולא ביום הכיפורים לכפר ולא בייסורין למרק אלא תשובה ויום הכיפורים מכפרין שליש והייסורין מכפרין שליש והמיתה ממרקת בייסורין. עליו הכתוב אומר, "אם יכפר העון הזה לכם עד תמתי" (ישעיה כב:יד). הא למדנו שהמיתה ממרקת. אמר רבי יוחנן: זו דברי רבי לעזר בן עזריה ורבי ישמעאל ורבי עקיבא, אבל דברי חכמים שעיר המשתלח מכפר. אם אין שער היום מכפר.

[Mishnah]: [As for] one who says, "I will sin, and I will repent. I will sin, and I will repent," they do not provide him [with the chance] to repent.⁶⁹⁵ [As for one who says,] "I will

⁶⁹⁵ Although such people can still repent, Hashem will not assist them in doing so (Rabbi Ovadiah of Bartenura).

sin, and *Yom Kippur* will atone [for me],” *Yom Kippur* does not atone.

Yom Kippur atones for sins between a person and God. [As for] sins between a person and his fellow, *Yom Kippur* does not atone until one appeases his fellow.

Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah expounded this [idea based upon the following verse]: “For on this day, [God] shall atone for you to purify you from all your sins; before *Hashem* you shall be purified.”⁶⁹⁶ [The end of the verse implies that] *Yom Kippur* atones [only] for sins between a person and *Hashem*. [As for] sins between a person and his fellow, *Yom Kippur* does not atone until one appeases his fellow.

Rabbi Akiva said: Fortunate are you Israel! Before whom are you purified, and who purifies you? Your Father who is in Heaven, as it says, “I shall cast upon you purifying water, and you shall be purified.”⁶⁹⁷ And it [also] says, “The hope of Israel is *Hashem*.”⁶⁹⁸ [The Hebrew for “hope” (מִקְוָה) is a homonym for “ritual bath.”⁶⁹⁹] Just as a ritual bath purifies those who are contaminated, so the Holy One, blessed be He, purifies Israel.

⁶⁹⁶ Leviticus 16:30.

⁶⁹⁷ Ezekiel 36:25.

⁶⁹⁸ Jeremiah 17:13.

⁶⁹⁹ In addition, the end of the verse refers to *Hashem* metaphorically as “the Source of living waters” (מְקוֹר מַיִם חַיִּים), an expression which refers to spring water. The *Mishnah* lists six types of purifying waters, of which spring water is the most efficacious (*Mikvaoth* 1:1).

[*Gemara:*] If one says, “A fire-offering does not atone [at all],” or “It does not atone for me,” or “It indeed atones, but I do not want it to atone for me,” then it does not atone for him against his will.

[If one says,] “*Yom Kippur* does not atone,” or “It indeed atones, but I do not want it to atone for me,” it atones for him against his will. [*Yom Kippur* is more powerful than a fire-offering, so it eliminates sins even against the will of the transgressor.]

Rabbi Chanina, son of Rabbi Hillel, said: Not completely, [as may be understood] from the [analogy that if] a man would say to the king, “You are not king.” [When a king grants a general amnesty, all offenders go free. Nevertheless, the king is not fully reconciled with someone who does not recognize his authority.]

A fire-offering atones for [impure] thoughts of the heart. What is the Scriptural basis for this? “That which arises in your mind shall not be, that which you say, ‘We shall be like the nations, like the families of the Earth, to serve wood and stone.’”⁷⁰⁰ [The Hebrew for “fire-offering” (עֹלָה) means “rise” because fire rises. Similarly, thoughts are said to arise in the human mind, as this verse states. Just as God overrode the improper thoughts and plans of the nation to be like others, so fire-offerings override impure thoughts.]

⁷⁰⁰ Ezekiel 20:32.

Likewise, [the Book of] Job says, “[Job] got up early in the morning and offered fire-offerings [corresponding to] the number of all of [his children], for Job said, ‘Perhaps my children sinned, and they blasphemed God in their hearts.’”⁷⁰¹ This shows that the fire-offering atones for [impure] thoughts of the heart.

Rebbi says: *Yom Kippur* atones for all the transgressions [listed in] the *Torah* except for one who casts off the yoke [of Divine authority by denying God’s existence],⁷⁰² one who cancels the covenant [by surgically or cosmetically hiding his circumcision],⁷⁰³ and one who deliberately misinterprets the *Torah*.⁷⁰⁴ If he repents, then [these] are atoned for, but if he does not repent, then [these] are not atoned for.

Rabbi Zevida quoted Rabbi Yassa as asking: Did Rebbi figure that *Yom Kippur* atones [for all other sins] without repentance?

⁷⁰¹ Job 1:5.

⁷⁰² *Rashi* on *Yoma* 85B sub verba “*Chutz MiPorek*” (חוצ מפורק).

⁷⁰³ In ancient times, Greek idolaters held athletic contests in which the participants did not wear clothing. Jewish participants were ridiculed because they were circumcised, so some employed various means to hide their circumcisions. This extreme rejection of one’s Jewish identity was an exceedingly serious offence.

⁷⁰⁴ The text literally reads “reveals facets of the *Torah* [contrary to its true intent]” (מגלה פנים בתורה). Some, however, understand this expression as referring to an impudent person who deliberately twists around the *Torah*’s meaning. מגלה פנים would then mean “one who [insolently] bares his face” to misconstrue the *Torah*, similar to the English expressions “baldfaced” or “barefaced”, which refer to insolence.

Rabbi Ashian quoted Rabbi Yonah, who quoted Rabbi 'Ba, who quoted Rabbi Chiya, who said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: Rebbi agrees that *Yom Kippur* does not atone except with repentance, but death atones without repentance. [Rebbi was not quoted correctly above, and death should be substituted for *Yom Kippur*.⁷⁰⁵]

It is learned [in a *Braitha*]: The day of death is like the day of repentance. Who is the source of this teaching? It is Rebbi [who held that one need not repent for death to effectuate atonement].

This [contradicts] that which is learned [in a *Mishnah*]: **Death and Yom Kippur [only] atone with repentance.**⁷⁰⁶ [This *Mishnah*] does not accord with [the view of] Rebbi.

Rabbi Mathya ben Cheresch asked Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah in the academy: Did you hear of the four categories of repentance that Rabbi Yishmael used to expound?

He replied: There are three, not including repentance [which is a prerequisite for all of them].⁷⁰⁷

One verse states, "Return wayward children, [and] I will heal your waywardness,"⁷⁰⁸ while another verse states, "For on this day [of *Yom Kippur*, God] shall atone for you to purify you from all your sins; before *Hashem* you shall be purified,"⁷⁰⁹ while

⁷⁰⁵ *Korban Ha'Eidah*.

⁷⁰⁶ *Yoma* 8:8.

⁷⁰⁷ B.T. *Yoma* 86A.

⁷⁰⁸ Jeremiah 3:22.

⁷⁰⁹ Leviticus 16:30.

yet another verse states, “With a rod I shall remember their sin and with plagues their transgression,”⁷¹⁰ and yet another verse states, “[I swear that] this transgression shall [not] be atoned until you die.”⁷¹¹ [These four verses appear to contradict one another. The first implies that atonement requires repentance, the second that it requires *Yom Kippur*, the third that it requires suffering, and the fourth that it requires death.]

How does this work?

If one transgressed a positive commandment [by failing to do something the *Torah* requires], and immediately repented, he does not move from his place until [*Hashem*] forgives him. Concerning this one Scripture states, “Return wayward children, [and] I will heal your waywardness.”⁷¹²

If one transgresses a negative commandment, and immediately repents, the repentance is held in abeyance, and [later on] *Yom Kippur* atones. Concerning this one Scripture states, “For on this day [of *Yom Kippur*, God] shall atone for you to purify you from all your sins; before *Hashem* you shall be purified.”⁷¹³

If one deliberately transgresses [sins warranting] excision or capital punishment [by a human] court, [then] repentance and *Yom Kippur* atone for half, and suffering during the rest of the year atones for half. Concerning this one Scripture states,

⁷¹⁰ Psalms 89:33.

⁷¹¹ Isaiah 22:14.

⁷¹² Jeremiah 3:22.

⁷¹³ Leviticus 16:30.

“With a rod I shall remember their sin and with plagues their transgression.”⁷¹⁴

As for one through whom the Name of Heaven has been desecrated, however, there is no power in repentance to [hold matters in] suspense, nor in *Yom Kippur* to atone, nor in suffering to scour [away the sin]. Rather, repentance and *Yom Kippur* atone for one-third, suffering atones for one-third, and death scours [away the sin] with torments. Concerning this one Scripture states, “[I swear that] this transgression shall [not] be atoned until you die.”⁷¹⁵ Hence we learn that death scours away [even desecration of *Hashem’s* Name].

Rabbi Yochanan said: These are the words of Rabbi ‘Lazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Yishmael, and Rabbi Akiva. The view of the sages, however, is that the scapegoat atones, but if there is no scapegoat, then the day atones. [*Yom Kippur* atones for even the most severe sins if one repents properly.⁷¹⁶]

⁷¹⁴ Psalms 89:33.

⁷¹⁵ Isaiah 22:14.

⁷¹⁶ *P’nei Moshe*.