

HALAKHA

The fourth cup, he completes *hallel* over it – רביעי גומר – עָלֵיו אֶת הַהֲלֵל: An alternative version of this passage, cited by the Rif, reads: He recites the great *hallel* over the fifth. According to this variant reading, one must apparently drink a fifth cup of wine. The Ran rules likewise. However, many authorities claim that the fifth cup is not mandatory (Rambam). Some authorities state that one should drink a fifth cup only if he has a strong desire to do so (Rema, based on *Mordekhai*; see *Shulhan Arukh HaRav*; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim* 481:1).

NOTES

Between the third cup and the fourth cup one should not drink – בין שלישי לרביעי לא ישתה – It is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud that the reason for this prohibition is to prevent intoxication. Although the wine drunk before or during a meal does not cause inebriation, once one has finished eating he runs a greater risk of becoming drunk. Others explain that the prohibition against additional cups is part of the general prohibition against eating after the *afikoman*, with the exception of the wine prescribed by the Sages (*ge'onim*; *Seder Rav Amram*). Some authorities state that if one continues to drink after the meal, when it is no longer a mitzva, it will not be evident that he drank the four cups in celebration of the redemption (Ra'avad).

עֲלֵיָא בַר רַב נַחֲתִית קַמֵּיה דְרַבָּא. אָמַר כְּסָבִי דְפּוּמְבֵדִיתָא, וְלֵא אָמַר לֵיה וְלֵא מִיָּדִי. אֲלֵמָא: הָדַר בֵּיה רַבָּא. רַב נָתַן אָבִיָה דְרַב הוּנָא בְרִיה דְרַב נָתַן נַחֲתִית קַמֵּיה דְרַב פַּפָּא. אָמַר כְּסָבִי דְפּוּמְבֵדִיתָא, וְשַׁבְחִיה רַב פַּפָּא.

The Gemara reports: Ulla bar Rav descended to lead the prayer service before Rava. He said the formula in accordance with the opinion of the Elders of Pumbedita, and Rava did not say anything to him. Apparently, Rava retracted his opinion and accepted the formula of the Elders of Pumbedita. Likewise, the Gemara relates: Rav Natan, father of Rav Huna, son of Rav Natan, descended to lead the prayer service before Rav Pappa and recited the liturgy in accordance with the opinion of the Elders of Pumbedita, and Rav Pappa praised him for his correct recitation.

אָמַר רַבִּינָא: אֲנָא אִיקְלַע לְסוּרָא קַמֵּיה דְמַרְיִמַר, וְנַחֲתִית קַמֵּיה שְׁלוּחָא דְצִיבּוּרָא. וְאָמַר כְּסָבִי דְפּוּמְבֵדִיתָא, וְהוּוּ מְשַׁתְקִי לֵיה כּוּלֵי עַלְמָא. אָמַר לְהוּ: שַׁבְּקוּהוּ! הֵילְכַתָּא כְּסָבִי דְפּוּמְבֵדִיתָא. וְלֵא הוּוּ מְשַׁתְקוּ לֵיה.

Ravina said: I happened to come to Sura before Mareimar, and the prayer leader descended before him and recited the liturgy in accordance with the opinion of the Elders of Pumbedita, and everyone tried to silence him, as they had never heard that version of the prayer before. Mareimar said to them: Leave him, as the *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of the Elders of Pumbedita. And the people in attendance listened to him and no longer tried to silence the prayer leader, but allowed him to complete the prayer.

מִתַּנִּי מוּגוּ לוֹ בּוֹס שְׁלִישִׁי – מִבְּרֵךְ עַל מוּזוֹן. רַבִּיעִי – גּוֹמֵר עָלָיו אֶת הַלֵּל, וְאוֹמֵר עָלָיו בְּרַכַּת הַשִּׁיר. בֵּין הַבּוֹסוֹת הַלֵּלוּ, אִם רוּצֵה לְשִׁתּוֹת – יִשְׁתֶּה; בֵּין שְׁלִישִׁי לְרַבִּיעִי לֹא יִשְׁתֶּה.

MISHNA They poured for the leader of the seder the third cup of wine, and he recites the blessing over his food, Grace After Meals. Next, they pour him the fourth cup. He completes *hallel* over it,^H as he already recited the first part of *hallel* before the meal. And he also recites the blessing of the song at the end of *hallel* over the fourth cup. During the period between these cups, i.e., the first three cups established by the Sages, if one wishes to drink more he may drink; however, between the third cup and the fourth cup one should not drink.^N

גַּמ' אָמַר לֵיה רַב חֲנַן לְרַבָּא: שְׁמַע מִיָּנָה: בְּרַכַּת הַמּוּזוֹן טְעוּנָה בּוֹס! אָמַר לֵיה: אַרְבַּע כְּסִי תִיקְנו רַבְּנֵי דְרַךְ חִירוֹת, כֹּל חַד וְחַד נַעֲבִיד בֵּיה מִצְוָה.

GEMARA Ran Hanan said to Rava: Since the mishna states that Grace After Meals must be recited over the third cup, learn from it that Grace After Meals requires a cup of wine. Rava said to him: This is no proof, for although the Sages instituted the drinking of four cups in the manner of freedom, once the four cups are in place, with each and every one of them we will perform a mitzva, despite the fact that they were not originally instituted for this purpose. After the Sages instituted these four cups, they attached a special mitzva to each one. However, this does not prove that there is an obligation to recite Grace After Meals over a cup of wine during the rest of the year.

רַבִּיעִי גּוֹמֵר עָלָיו אֶת הַהֲלֵל וְאוֹמֵר עָלָיו בְּרַכַּת הַשִּׁיר.

We learned in the mishna that they pour the leader of the seder the fourth cup and he completes *hallel* over it, and he recites the blessing of the song at the end of *hallel* over that cup.

Perek X Daf 118 Amud a

HALAKHA

What is the blessing of the song – מאי ברכת השיר – In the blessing of the song, one recites the blessing: All Your works shall praise You and: The breath of all living [*nishmat*], in accordance with the opinion of both Rav Yehuda and Rabbi Yoḥanan. In addition, one recites the great *hallel*, Psalm 136, as stated in the *baraita*, in accordance with the opinion of Rav Yehuda (*Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim* 480).

מַאי בְּרַכַּת הַשִּׁיר? רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר: "יְהִלְלוּךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ." וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: "נִשְׁמַת כָּל חַי." תַּנּוּ רַבְּנֵי: רַבִּיעִי גּוֹמֵר עָלָיו אֶת הַהֲלֵל, וְאוֹמֵר הֵלֵל הַגְּדוֹל, דְּבַרֵּי רַבִּי טַרְפוֹן, וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים: "ה' רוּעֵי לֹא אַחְסֵר."

The Gemara asks: What is the blessing of the song^H mentioned in the mishna? Rav Yehuda said: It is the blessing that begins with: They shall praise You, Lord, our God. And Rabbi Yoḥanan said that one also recites: The breath of all living, a prayer that follows the verses of praise [*pesukei dezimra*]. The Sages taught in a *baraita*: With regard to the fourth cup, one completes *hallel* over it and recites the great *hallel*; this is the statement of Rabbi Tarfon. And some say that one recites: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalms 23:1), in appreciation of the food he ate at the meal.

מֵהֵיכַן הֵלֵל הַגְּדוֹל? רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: מִ"הוֹדוּ" עַד "נְהַרּוֹת בְּבֵל." וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אוֹמֵר: מִ"שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת" עַד "נְהַרּוֹת בְּבֵל." רַב אֶחָא בַר יַעֲקֹב אָמַר: מִ"כִּי יַעֲקֹב בָּחַר לֹו יֵה" עַד "נְהַרּוֹת בְּבֵל."

The Gemara asks: From where does the great *hallel* begin and where does it end? Rabbi Yehuda says: From "Give thanks" (Psalms 136:1) until "The rivers of Babylon" (Psalms 137:1). And Rabbi Yoḥanan says: From "A song of ascents" (Psalms 134:1) until "The rivers of Babylon." Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov said: From "For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself" (Psalms 135:4) until "The rivers of Babylon."

Providing a person's food is twice as difficult as the suffering endured by a woman in childbirth – קשין מזונותיו של אדם – בפליים בילדה: Various explanations have been given for this statement. One interpretation is that although childbirth is painful, it also brings the joy of a new baby. By contrast, working for a living is never ending and causes anguish with no compensating happiness. Alternatively, earning a living is not, in fact, doubly as painful as childbirth. Rather, this statement means that twice as many people suffer, as both husband and wife work, whereas only the wife has to endure the pain of childbirth (*Ben Yehoyada*).

ולמה נקרא שמו הלל הגדול? אמר רבי יוחנן: מפני שהקדוש ברוך הוא יושב ברומו של עולם, ומחלק מזונות לכל בריה.

The Gemara asks: **And why is this section called the great hallel?** Rabbi Yohanan said: **Because this passage states that the Holy One, Blessed be He, sits in the heights of the universe and dispenses food to every creature.** The whole world praises God for His kindness through the great *hallel*, which includes the verse: “Who gives food to all flesh” (Psalms 136:25).

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: הני עשרים וששה הודו כנגד מי? כנגד עשרים וששה דורות שברא הקדוש ברוך הוא בעולמו, ולא נתן להם תורה, וזו אותם בחסדו.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: **These twenty-six mentions of the word *hodu*, give praise, in this *hallel* (Psalms 136), to what do they correspond?** He explains: **They correspond to the twenty-six generations that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created in His world, and to whom He did not give the Torah.** There were ten generations from Adam to Noah, another ten from Noah to Abraham, and six generations from Abraham to Moses and the revelation at Sinai, i.e., Isaac, Jacob, Levi, Kehat, Amram, and Moses. **And why did these generations survive, despite the fact that they did not learn Torah or perform mitzvot? They survived only because God sustained them through His mercy, even though they were undeserving.**

אמר רב חסדא, מאי דכתיב: “הודו לה' כי טוב” – הודו לה' שגובה חובתו של אדם בטובתו: עשיר – בשורו, ואת עני – בשיו, יתום – בביתו, אלמנה – בתרגולתה.

Rav Hisda said: **What is the meaning of that which is written: “Give thanks to the Lord for He is good” (Psalms 136:1)? It means give thanks to the Lord who exacts one's debt, the punishment for a person's sins and wickedness, in accordance with the goodness of each individual.** God punishes each person based on his means. He punishes a **wealthy person by taking his ox, and He punishes a poor person by means of his sheep.** He punishes the **orphan by taking away his egg, and He punishes the widow by means of her chicken.** God punishes each person based on his ability to endure deprivation, and He does not punish people with more than they can handle.

אמר רבי יוחנן: קשין מזונותיו של אדם בפליים בילדה. דאילו בילדה כתיב: “בעצב, ובמזונות כתיב: “בעצבון”.

With regard to the praise due to God for sustaining the world, the Gemara cites a statement that **Rabbi Yohanan said:** The task of providing a **person's food is twice as difficult as the suffering endured by a woman in childbirth.**ⁿ While, with regard to a **woman in childbirth, it is written: “In pain [*be'etzev*] you shall bring forth children” (Genesis 3:16), with regard to food, it is written: “In toil [*be'itzavon*] you shall eat of it, all the days of your life” (Genesis 3:17).** *Itzavon* is a superlative form of *etzev*, which indicates that it is more difficult to support oneself than to give birth.

ואמר רבי יוחנן: קשין מזונותיו של אדם יותר מן הגאולה. דאילו בגאולה כתיב: “המלאך הגואל אותי מכל רע” – מלאך בעלמא, ואילו במזונות כתיב: “האלהים הרועה אותי”.

And Rabbi Yohanan said: **The task of providing a person's food is more difficult than the redemption.** While, with regard to the redemption, it is written: **“The angel who has redeemed me from all evil” (Genesis 48:16), indicating that a mere angel is sufficient to protect a person from all evil; whereas, with regard to sustenance, it is written: “The God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day” (Genesis 48:15).** This verse implies that only God can help one who is struggling to earn a living.

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: בשעה שאמר הקדוש ברוך הוא לאדם: “וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך”, ולגו עינו דמעוה. אמר לפניו: רבונן של עולם, אני וחמורי נאכל באבוס אחד? בין שאמר לו: “בזעת אפך תאכל לחם” – נתקרה דעתו.

The Gemara cites a similar statement. **Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: When the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Adam: “Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you, and you shall eat the herb of the field” (Genesis 3:18), his eyes streamed with tears.** Adam said before Him: **Master of the Universe, will my donkey and I eat from one trough? After God said to him: “In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread” (Genesis 3:19), his mind was settled, assured that if he toils he will be able to eat bread, unlike the donkey.**

אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש: אשרינו אם עמדנו בראשונה, ועדיין לא פלטנו מינה, דקא אכלין עיסבי דדברא.

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: **We would have been fortunate had we remained under the first decree and were still able to eat the herbs of the field. And we still have not entirely escaped from this decree, as we sometimes eat the grass of the field, in the form of vegetables and leaves.**

NOTES

Providing a person's food is as difficult as the splitting of the Red Sea – קָשִׁין מְזוּנֹתָיו שֶׁל אָדָם כְּקָרִיעַת יַם סוּף. Many commentaries are puzzled by this comparison, as the relevant verses are not adjacent to one another. Some answer that the statement: Who gives food to all flesh, which depicts God's beneficence, is not listed among the first praises in the psalm, all of which are natural events. Instead, it appears together with the miraculous acts of God, which refer to the miracles of the Exodus, the greatest of which was the splitting of the sea. Others state that God sustains all people including the wicked, just as the nation of Israel was rescued at the sea despite the inclusion of some undeserving and idolatrous individuals (*Hokhmat Mano'ah; Ben Yehoyada*).

HALAKHA

כָּל הַמְבַזֵּה אֶת הַמּוֹעֵדוֹת – כל המבזה את המועדות: Whoever disparages the Festivals is compared to one who has fallen prey to idolatry (*Rambam Sefer Zemanim, Hillkhot Yom Tov 6:16*).

אָמַר רַב שִׁיזְבִי מִשְׁמִיָּה דְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה: קָשִׁין מְזוּנֹתָיו שֶׁל אָדָם כְּקָרִיעַת יַם סוּף. דְּכַתְּיב: "נֹתֵן לָחֶם לְכָל בְּשָׂר׃ וְסִמְךָ לַיהוָה: לְגִזְזוֹר יַם סוּף לְגִזְרוֹרִים."

אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה: קָשִׁין נִקְבְּיוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם כִּיּוֹם הַמִּיתָה וְכְקָרִיעַת יַם סוּף. שְׁנָאֲמַר: "מִהָר צוּעָה לְהַפְתִּיחַ", וְכַתְּיב בְּתַרְיָה: "רוֹנֵעַ הַיָּם וַיהוָה מוֹלִיאוֹ."

וְאָמַר רַב שֶׁשֶׁת מְשׁוּם רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה: כָּל הַמְבַזֵּה אֶת הַמּוֹעֵדוֹת – כְּאִילוֹ עוֹבֵד עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, שְׁנָאֲמַר: "אֱלֹהֵי מִסְכָּה לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה לָךְ", וְכַתְּיב בְּתַרְיָה: "אֶת חַג הַמִּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר."

וְאָמַר רַב שֶׁשֶׁת מְשׁוּם רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה: כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לְשׁוֹן הָרַע, וְכָל הַמְקַבֵּל לְשׁוֹן הָרַע, וְכָל הַמַּעֲיֵד עֵדוּת שֶׁקָר בְּחֻבֵירוֹ – רְאוּי לְהַשְׁלִיכוֹ לְכַלְבִּים, שְׁנָאֲמַר: לְכַלֵּב תִּשְׁלִיכוֹן אוֹתוֹ" וְכַתְּיב בְּתַרְיָה: "לֹא תִשָּׂא שִׁמְעַ שְׂוֵא" וְקָרִי בִיה: "לֹא תִשָּׂא."

וְכִי מֵאַחַר דְּאִיכָּא הַלֵּל הַגָּדוֹל, אֲנִי מֵאֵי טַעְמָא אֲמַרִּינֵן הָאֵי? מְשׁוּם שְׁיֵשׁ בּוֹ חֲמִשָּׁה דְּבָרִים הַלְלוּ: יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, קָרִיעַת יַם סוּף, וּמַתַּן תּוֹרָה, וְתַחֲיֵית הַמֵּתִים, וְחֻבְלוֹ שֶׁל מְשִׁיחַ.

יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם – דְּכַתְּיב: "בְּצִיאַת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם"; וְקָרִיעַת יַם סוּף – דְּכַתְּיב: "הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנוּס"; מַתַּן תּוֹרָה – דְּכַתְּיב: "הִהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאִילִים"; תַּחֲיֵית הַמֵּתִים – דְּכַתְּיב: "אֶת־הַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי ה'"

Rav Sheizvi said, citing Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya: The task of providing a person's food is as difficult as the splitting of the Red Sea,ⁿ as it is written: "He gives food to all flesh, for His mercy endures forever" (Psalms 136:25), and juxtaposed to it is the verse: "To Him who divided the Red Sea in sunder, for His mercy endures forever" (Psalms 136:13). The reiteration of the last part of the verse indicates that the two praises are to a certain extent equivalent.

Likewise, Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya said: A person's orifices, when he cannot properly relieve himself, are as difficult for him as the day of death and the splitting of the Red Sea, as it is stated: "He who is bent down shall speedily be loosed; and he shall not go down dying into the pit, neither shall his bread fail" (Isaiah 51:14). The phrase "dying into the pit" indicates that the opening of the orifices is similar to a rescue from death. And afterward it is written: "Who stirs up the sea, that its waves roar" (Isaiah 51:15), which compares the previous matter to the splitting of the sea.

After citing a statement of Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya that was transmitted by *amora'im*, the Gemara quotes additional expositions attributed to him. And Rav Sheshet said, citing Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya: Anyone who disparages the Festivals,^h it is considered as though he engages in idol worship. This, too, is derived from the juxtaposition of verses, as it is stated: "You shall make yourself no molten gods" (Exodus 34:17), and afterward it is written: "The Festival of matzot you shall keep" (Exodus 34:18), from which it can be inferred that anyone who does not observe the Festivals properly is likened to one who fashions idols.

And Rav Sheshet further said, citing Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya: Anyone who speaks slander, and anyone who accepts and believes the slander he hears, and anyone who testifies falsely about another, it is fitting to throw him to the dogs, as it is stated: "And you shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field, you shall cast it to the dogs" (Exodus 22:30), and afterward it is written: "You shall not utter [*tisa*] a false report; put not your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness" (Exodus 23:1). Uttering rumors is here equated to delivering false testimony. Furthermore, read into the verse as though it stated: Do not cause a false report to be accepted [*tasi*], i.e., do not lead others to accept your false reports.

The Gemara asks: And since there is the great *hallel*, which contains the special praise of "Who gives food to all flesh" (Psalms 136:25), as explained above, what is the reason that one also recites this *hallel* of Psalms 113–118, the section recited on every joyous occasion? The Gemara answers: The reason is because the regular *hallel* contains these five matters: The remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, the splitting of the Red Sea, the giving of the Torah, the resurrection of the dead, and the pangs of the Messiah. Since it mentions these key concepts, this *hallel* is also considered important.

The Gemara elaborates: The exodus from Egypt, as it is written: "When Israel came forth out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language" (Psalms 114:1). And the splitting of the Red Sea, as it is written: "The sea saw it and fled; the Jordan turned backward" (Psalms 114:3). The giving of the Torah, as it is written: "The mountains skipped like rams" (Psalms 114:4), which is similar to the description of the giving of the Torah found elsewhere in the books of the Prophets. The resurrection of the dead, as it is written: "I will walk before the Lord in the lands of the living" (Psalms 116:9), which follows the verse: "For you have delivered my soul from death." After mentioning death, the psalm describes the resurrection in the lands of the living.

Nebuchadnezzar – נְבוּכַדְנֶצַר: Among the works built by Nebuchadnezzar was the Ishtar Gate in the city of Babylon. The image depicts the reconstruction of the Ishtar Gate.



Ishtar Gate

LANGUAGE

Yurkamo – יוּרְקָמוֹ: According to Rav Binyamin Musafya, this name is derived from the Greek ἱεροκόμος, *hierokomos*, meaning one who takes charge of a temple. Others interpret the word homiletically, based on its similarity to the Hebrew phrase *yorek mayim*, water shooter. Yet others point out that by changing around the letters, the word can read *yukarmi*, i.e., he who is appointed over the cold (*Ketem Paz*).

חָבְלוּ שֶׁל מְשִׁיחַ – דְּכַתִּיב: לֹא לָנוּ ה' לֹא לָנוּ. וְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: "לֹא לָנוּ ה' לֹא לָנוּ" – זוֹ שְׁעֵבֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ. אִיכָּא דְאָמְרִי, אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: "לֹא לָנוּ ה' לֹא לָנוּ" – זוֹ מִלְחַמַת גּוֹג וּמָגוֹג.

The pangs of the Messiah, as it is written: "Not to us, God, not to us, but to Your name give glory" (Psalms 115:1). And Rabbi Yohanan said: The verse "Not to us, God, not to us" and the entire psalm, including the verse "Why should the nations say, where now is their God?" (Psalms 115:2), is referring to the era of the enslavement of the kingdoms and the redemption of the Jewish people from their dominion. Some say that Rabbi Yohanan said: The verse "Not to us, God, not to us" is referring to the war of Gog and Magog, the catastrophes and wars that will befall the Jewish people in the end of days from which they will be delivered.

רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק אָמַר: מִפְּנֵי שֵׁישׁ בּוּ מִלּוּט נְפִשׁוֹת שֶׁל צְדִיקִים מִגֵּיהֶנֶם, שְׁנֵאמַר: "אֵנָּה ה' מַלְטָה נַפְשִׁי". חֲזַקִּיָּה אָמַר: מִפְּנֵי שֵׁישׁ בּוּ יְרִידְתוֹ שֶׁל צְדִיקִים לְכַבֵּשׁן הָאֵשׁ וְעֲלִייתוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ.

Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: Another reason why one recites *hallel* of Psalms 113–118 is because it contains a reference to the deliverance of the souls of the righteous from Gehenna, as it is stated: "I beseech you, Lord, deliver my soul" (Psalms 116:4). Hizkiya said: Another reason is because it contains the story of the descent of the righteous Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah into the fiery furnace and their miraculous ascent from it.

יְרִידְתוֹ – דְּכַתִּיב: "לֹא לָנוּ ה' לֹא לָנוּ" – אָמַר חֲנַנְיָה; "כִּי לְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כְּבוֹד" – אָמַר מִישָׁאֵל; "עַל חֶסֶדְךָ וְעַל אֱמֻנָתְךָ" – אָמַר עֲזַרְיָה; "לְמַעַן יֵאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם" – אָמְרוּ בּוֹלָן.

Hizkiya clarifies his previous statement: Their descent is mentioned in this *hallel*, as it is written: "Not to us, God, not to us," a verse that Hananiah recited. Mishael recited: "But to Your name give glory." Azariah recited: "For Your mercy and for Your truth's sake." They all recited together: "Why should the nations say: Where now is their God?"

עֲלִייתוֹ מִכַּבֵּשׁן הָאֵשׁ – דְּכַתִּיב: "הִלְלוּ אֵת ה' כָּל גּוֹיִם" אָמַר חֲנַנְיָה; "שִׁבְחוּהוּ כָּל הָאוֹמִים" – אָמַר מִישָׁאֵל; "כִּי גָבַר עֲלֵינוּ חֶסֶדְךָ" – אָמַר עֲזַרְיָה; "וְאֵמַת ה' לְעוֹלָם הִלְלוּיָהּ" – אָמְרוּ בּוֹלָן.

This *hallel* also alludes to the ascent of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah from the fiery furnace, as it is written: "Praise the Lord, all you nations, laud Him all you peoples. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever, *halleluya*" (Psalms 117). Hananiah recited: "Praise the Lord, all you nations," for the overt miracle performed for them before the nations. Mishael recited: "Laud Him all you peoples." Azariah recited: "For His mercy is great toward us." They all recited together: "And the truth of the Lord endures forever, *halleluya*."

וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים: "וְאֵמַת ה' לְעוֹלָם" – גְּבַרְיָאֵל אָמַר. בְּשַׁעַה שֶׁהִפִּיל נְמֻרוֹד הַרְשָׁע אֵת אַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוּ לְתוֹךְ כַּבֵּשׁן הָאֵשׁ אָמַר גְּבַרְיָאֵל לְפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם: אֵרֵד וְאֶצְנֵן, וְאֶצִּיל אֵת הַצְּדִיק מִכַּבֵּשׁן הָאֵשׁ. אָמַר לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: אֲנִי יְחִיד בְּעוֹלָמִי וְהוּא יְחִיד בְּעוֹלָמוֹ, נֶאֱדָר לְיַחֲדֵי לְהַצִּיל אֵת הַיְחִיד. וְלִפְנֵי שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֵינוֹ מְקַפֵּחַ שְׂכָר כָּל בְּרִיָּה. אָמַר: תִּזְכֶּה וְתַצִּיל שְׁלֹשָׁה מִבְּנֵי בְּנָיו.

And some say that the angel Gabriel recited: "And the truth of the Lord endures forever." This Gemara elaborates: When the evil Nimrod threw our father, Abraham, into the fiery furnace, Gabriel said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, I will descend and cool the furnace, and I will thereby save the righteous Abraham from the fiery furnace. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: I am unique in my world and Abraham is still unique in his world. It is fitting for the unique to save the unique. Therefore, God Himself went down and saved him. And as the Holy One, Blessed be He, does not withhold reward from any creature who sought to perform a good deed, He said to Gabriel: You will merit the rescue of three of his descendants under similar circumstances.

דָּרַשׁ רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן הַשְּׁלוּנִי: בְּשַׁעַה שֶׁהִפִּיל נְבוּכַדְנֶצַר הַרְשָׁע חֲנַנְיָה מִישָׁאֵל וְעֲזַרְיָה לְתוֹךְ כַּבֵּשׁן הָאֵשׁ, עָמַד יוֹרְקָמוֹ שֶׁר הַבְּרַד לְפָנֵי הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא. אָמַר לְפָנָיו: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, אֵרֵד וְאֶצְנֵן אֵת הַכַּבֵּשׁן, וְאֶצִּיל לְצְדִיקִים הִלְלוּ מִכַּבֵּשׁן הָאֵשׁ. אָמַר לוֹ גְּבַרְיָאֵל: אֵין גְּבוּרְתוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּכֵן, שֶׁאֵתָּה שֶׁר בְּרַד, וְהִבֵּל יוֹדֵעִין שֶׁהֵמִים מְכַבִּין אֵת הָאֵשׁ. אֵלֶּא אֲנִי שֶׁר שֶׁל אֵשׁ, אֵרֵד וְאֶקְרַר מִבְּפָנַי.

Rabbi Shimon HaShiloni taught: When the evil Nebuchadnezzar^b threw Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah into the fiery furnace, Yurkamo,^c the ministering angel of hail, stood before the Holy One, Blessed be He, and said before Him: Master of the Universe, I will go down and cool the fiery furnace, and I will save these righteous ones from the fiery furnace. Gabriel said to him: The strength of the Holy One, Blessed be He, will not be evident in this manner, as you are the minister of hail, and everyone knows that water extinguishes fire. Your action would not be regarded as a great miracle. Rather, I, the ministering angel of fire, will descend, and I will cool the furnace from within,

NOTES

Just as we are ascending – כִּשְׁם שָׁאֲנוּ עוֹלִין – It is unclear why the Jewish people believed that a miracle would be performed for the Egyptians as well. One explanation is that the Jewish nation did not actually cross the Red Sea but merely entered a narrow strip of water and returned to the same side as before. Therefore, they thought that the Egyptians had not drowned but had also stayed near the shore (*Tosafot* on tractate *Arakhin*).

Ancient [*kedumim*] river – נַחַל קְדוּמִים: One interpretation is that the term *kedumim* can be split into two words, *kedum yam*, ancient sea, indicating that the river was appointed a guarantor for the sea long ago (Rav Shmuel Strashun).

BACKGROUND

Chosen chariots – רֶכֶב בְּחוּר: The wall painting depicts Ramses II in a chariot battling Nubians, found in the temple of Beit el-Wali.



Pharaoh on chariot

Kishon River – נַחַל קִישׁוֹן: The Kishon River in Israel flows from the city of Jenin and into the Mediterranean Sea in the vicinity of modern-day Haifa.



Kishon River with Haifa in the background



Kishon River pouring into the Mediterranean Sea

וְאֶקְדִּיחַ מִבְּחוּץ, וְאֶעֱשֶׂה נֶס בְּתוֹךְ נֶס. אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: רַד. בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה פָּתַח גַּבְרִיאֵל וְאָמַר: 'וְאָמַת ה' לְעוֹלָם'.

רַבִּי נָתַן אוֹמַר: 'וְאָמַת ה' לְעוֹלָם' דְּגִים שְׂבִימִים אֶמְרוּהוּ. כְּדָרַב הוּנָא. דְּאָמַר רַב הוּנָא: יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂבָאוֹתוֹ הַדּוֹר מִקִּטְנֵי אֲמָנָה הָיוּ. וְכַדְרָשׁ רִבְהַ בַּר מַרִּי, מַאי דְכָתִיב: 'וַיִּמְרוּ עַל יָם בְּיַם סוּף' – מִלְּמַד שֶׁהִמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה וְאָמַרוּ: כִּשְׁם שָׁאֲנוּ עוֹלִין מִצַּד אַחַד – כֵּךְ מִצְרַיִם עוֹלִים מִצַּד אַחֵר.

אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לִשְׂרָשׁוֹר שֶׁל יָם: פְּלוּט אוֹתָן לִיבְשָׁה. אָמַר לְפָנָיו: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, כְּלוּם יֵשׁ עֶבֶד שְׂנוֹתָן לוֹ רְבוּ מִתְנַהֵ, וְחוּזָר וְנוֹטֵל מִמֶּנּוּ? אָמַר לוֹ: אֵתָן לְךָ אַחַד וּמְחַצָּה שְׂבִיבָהּ.

אָמַר לוֹ: רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, יֵשׁ עֶבֶד שְׂנוֹבֵעַ אֶת רְבוּ? אָמַר לוֹ: נַחַל קִישׁוֹן יֵהָא לִי עֶרֶב. מִיָּד פְּלוּט אוֹתָן לִיבְשָׁה, וּבָאוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְרָאוּ אוֹתָן, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: 'וַיִּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל שִׁפְתַי הַיָּם'.

מַאי 'אַחַד וּמְחַצָּה שְׂבִיבָהּ'? דְּאִילוּ בְּפִרְעָה כְּתִיב: 'יֵשׁ מֵאוֹת רֶכֶב בְּחוּר', וְאִילוּ בְּסִסְרָא כְּתִיב: 'תִּשְׁעַ מֵאוֹת רֶכֶב בְּרוֹל'.

כִּי אֵתָא סִסְרָא [אֵתָא עֲלִיָּהּ בְּדַקְרֵי דְּפִרְזָלָא. הוֹצִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עֲלֵיהֶם כּוֹכְבִים מִמַּסְיִלוֹתָם, דְּכָתִיב: 'מִן שָׁמַיִם נִלְחְמוּ הַכּוֹכְבִים'. כִּיֵּן דְּנַחֲתוּ כּוֹכְבֵי שָׁמַיִם עֲלֵיהֶם אֶקְדִּירוּ הֵי דַקְרֵי דְּפִרְזָלָא. נַחֲתוּ לְאֶקְרוּרֵי, לְמִסְחֵי נַפְשֵׁיהוּ בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן.

אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְנַחַל קִישׁוֹן: לְךָ וְהַשָּׁלֵם עֶרְבוּנְךָ. מִיָּד גָּרַפְסָם נַחַל קִישׁוֹן וְהִשְׁלִיכָן לַיָּם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: 'נַחַל קִישׁוֹן גָּרַפְסָם נַחַל קְדוּמִים'. מַאי 'נַחַל קְדוּמִים'? נַחַל שֶׁנֶּעֱשֶׂה עֶרֶב מִקֶּדֶם. בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה פָּתַחוּ דְּגִים שֶׁל יָם וְאָמְרוּ: 'וְאָמַת ה' לְעוֹלָם'.

and I will burn it from the outside, to consume those who threw the three righteous men into the furnace; and I will thereby perform a miracle within a miracle. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: Descend. At that time Gabriel began praising God and recited: "And the truth of the Lord endures forever" (Psalms 117:2), as God fulfilled His promise to him from more than a thousand years earlier.

Rabbi Natan says: "And the truth of the Lord endures forever" was actually recited by the fish in the sea, in accordance with a statement of Rav Huna. As Rav Huna said: The Jewish people of that generation, during the Exodus, were of little faith. And this statement is as Rabba bar Mari taught: What is the meaning of that which is written: "But they were rebellious at the sea, even at the Red Sea" (Psalms 106:7)? This teaches that the Jews rebelled against Moses at that time, and said: Perhaps, just as we are ascendingⁿ from one side, so too the Egyptians are ascending from the other side, and we will not be saved.

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the ministering angel of the sea: Spew out the dead Egyptians onto dry land. The sea said before Him: Master of the Universe, is there a servant whose master gives him a gift and then takes it from him? Since the dead Egyptians were given to me for my fish to eat, how can God retract His gift? He said to him: I will give you one and a half times their number. Although I am taking them back now, later I will give you one and a half times as many people.

He said to him: Master of the Universe, can a servant issue a claim against his master for a gift promised to him? Who will be my guarantor? He said to him: The Kishon River will be a guarantor for Me. Immediately, the sea spewed them out onto the land, and the Jewish people came and saw that they were dead. As it is stated: "And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore" (Exodus 14:30).

The Gemara asks: What is this one and a half times their number? How was God's promise fulfilled? The Gemara answers: While, with regard to Pharaoh, it is written: "Six hundred chosen chariots" (Exodus 14:7),^b whereas, with regard to Sisera, it is written: "Nine hundred iron chariots" (Judges 4:13).

The Gemara relates: When Sisera came to fight Israel, he came upon them with iron spears, whereupon the Holy One, Blessed be He, removed the stars from their orbits to fight against Sisera's army, as it is written: "They fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (Judges 5:20). Since the stars fell on them, these iron spears heated up and they went to cool them and wash themselves in the Kishon River.^b

At this point, the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the Kishon River: Go and pay your guarantee that you issued to the ministering angel of the sea. Immediately, the Kishon River swept them away and cast them into the sea, as it is stated: "The Kishon River swept them away, that ancient river" (Judges 5:21). What is the meaning of the expression: "ancient river"?ⁿ The Gemara explains: This is referring to the river that was appointed a guarantor from ancient times. At that time, the fish of the sea began praising God and recited: "And the truth of the Lord endures forever," in reference to God's fulfillment of the promise He issued centuries earlier.

אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש, מאי דכתיב: "מושיבי עקרת הבית"? אמרה כנסת ישראל לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבוננו של עולם, שמוני בניך בחולדה זו הדרה בעיקרי בתים.

The Gemara cites more *midrashim* on the verses of *hallel*. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Who makes the barren woman dwell in her house as a joyful mother of children, *halleluya*" (Psalms 113:9)? The Congregation of Israel, i.e., the leaders of the Jewish people, said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, due to their sins, Your children treat me like this rat that dwells in the vaults of houses, barely able to find a place in the house.

דרש רבא, מאי דכתיב: "אהבתי כי ישמע ה'?" אמרה כנסת ישראל: רבוננו של עולם, אימת אני אהובה לפניך – בזמן שתשמע קול תחנוני. "דלותי ולי יהושיע", אמרה כנסת ישראל לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא: רבוננו של עולם, אף על פי שדלה אני במצות – לך אני, ולי נאה להושיע.

Rava taught: What is the meaning of that which is written: "I love that the Lord should hearⁿ my voice and my supplications" (Psalms 116:1)? The Congregation of Israel said: Master of the Universe, when am I beloved by You, and I know that I am loved? When You hear the voice of my supplications. "I was brought low, and He saved me" (Psalms 116:6). The Congregation of Israel said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, although I am lowly in mitzvot, as I do not always fulfill them properly, I am Yours, and therefore it is fitting that I should be saved.

אמר רב כהנא: כשחלה רבי ישמעאל ברבי יוסי שלח לו רבי: אמור לנו שנים ושלושה דברים שאמרת לנו משום אביך.

Rav Kahana said: When Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Yosei, fell ill, Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi sent a message to him: Tell us two or three matters that you said to us, citing your father.

שלח לו, כך אמר אבא: מאי דכתיב "הללו את ה' כל גוים", אומות העולם מאי עבדתיהו? הכי קאמר: "הללו את ה' כל גוים" – אגבורות ונפלאות דעביד בהדיהו, כל שכן אנו דגבר עלינו חסדו.

He sent back to him: My father said as follows: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Praise the Lord, all you nations, laud Him all you peoples. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever, *halleluya*" (Psalms 117)? What are the nations of the world doing by praising God for His great mercies toward Israel? Rabbi Yosei explained: Rather, this is what the verse is saying: "Praise the Lord, all you nations" for the mighty acts and the wonders that God performed before their eyes. All the more so we, the recipients of these acts, should praise and thank Him, as His mercy is great toward us.

ועוד: עתידה מצרים שתביא דורון למשיח. כסבור אינו מקבל מהם. אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשיח: קבל מהם. אכסניא עשו לבני במצרים. מיד: "יאתיו חשמנים מני מצרים".

And furthermore, Rabbi Yishmael sent another of his father's teachings to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi: In the future, Egypt will bring a gift to the Messiah when all of the nations gather before him, as the verse says: "Out of Your temple at Jerusalem, where kings shall bring presents to you" (Psalms 68:30). The Messiah will think it appropriate not to accept gifts from them, as the Egyptians abused Israel. The Holy One, Blessed be He, will say to the Messiah: Accept their gifts from them, as they granted lodging to My children in Egypt. They lived there for many years before being enslaved. Immediately, "Nobles shall come out of Egypt" (Psalms 68:32).

נשאה בוש קל וחומר בעצמה: ומה הללו שנותעבדו בהן כך, אני שלא נשתעבדתי בהן לא כל שכן? אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: קבל מהם. מיד: "בוש תריץ ידיו לאלהים".

Upon seeing that Egypt's gift has been accepted, Kush will want to bring a gift too. Kush will draw an *a fortiori* inference with regard to itself: Just as the gifts of these Egyptians were accepted despite the fact that they enslaved the Jewish people, all the more so is it not clear that a gift from me, who did not enslave them, should be accepted? The Holy One, Blessed be He, will say to the Messiah: Accept it from them. Immediately, "Kush shall hasten to stretch out her hands to God" (Psalms 68:32).

NOTES

I love that the Lord should hear – אהבתי כי ישמע: The difficulty with this verse is that to love is generally a transitive verb, whereas here it does not appear to refer to a person or an object. Therefore, the phrase is understood as a reference to God's love for Israel (Maharsha; Rav Yoshiya Pinto). Some commentaries state that this verse appears disrespectful, as King David seems to be saying that he loves God only when He listens to his pleas. For this reason, the Gemara seeks an alternative to the straightforward meaning of the verse (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

NOTES

Written with a single quill – נכתבין בקולמוס אֶחָד: Some commentaries explain that Rome writes only negative comments about Israel (*Arukh*; Rashi; Rashbam). Incidentally, the *ge'onim* use the phrase: Written with a single quill, in reference to any unequivocal matter. Other authorities teach that every nation has two angels, one of which records the nation's merits, while the other inscribes its sins. Rome is the exception to this rule. Since it commits exclusively negative acts, it has only a single stenographer (*ge'onim*).

The intimacies [*kereivot*] that they desired – קריבות שהיו – תפצים: The Maharsha's version of the text reads: Battles [*keravot*], instead of closeness. This is referring to the wars of Israel's rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar during the period of the First Temple. These wars were fought against the advice of Jeremiah the Prophet. Likewise, toward the end of the Second Temple period, the Sages warned against taking up arms against Rome. Their pleas were ignored, and the destruction of the Temple followed soon after.

BACKGROUND

The great city of Rome – כרך גדול של רומי: The statement of Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Yosei, was issued when Rome was at the pinnacle of its glory and power. The city itself was extremely large, with an overflowing population. Since Italy could not provide enough food for all of the residents of Rome, they imported grain, mainly from Egypt. Abundant storehouses were filled to serve the city's needs.



Ruins of Trajan's Market in Rome, thought to be the world's most ancient shopping center

נשאה מלכות [רומי] הרשעה קל וחומר בעצמה: ומה הללו שאין אחיהן – כך, אנו שאנו אחיהן – לא כל שבן? אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא לגבריאל: "גער חית קנה" – געור חיה וקנה לך עדה.

דבר אחר: געור חית קנה שדרה בין הקנים, דכתיב: "כרסמנה חזיר מעור וזיו שדי ירענה".

אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אמר רבי יוחנן: געור בחיה שכל מעשיה נכתבין בקולמוס אחד. "עדת אבירים בעגלי עמים" – ששחטו אבירים בעגלים שאין להם בעלים.

מתרפס ברצי כסף" שפושטין יד לקבל ממון, ואין עושין רצון בעלים. "פיזר עמים קרבות יחפצין", מי גרם להם לישראל שיתפזרו לבין אומות העולם? קריבות שהיו חפצין בהן.

ועוד שלח לו: שלש מאות וששים וחמשה שווקים בכרך גדול של רומי. וכל אחד ואחד היו בו שלש מאות וששים וחמשה בירניות, וכל בירנית ובירנית היו בו שלש מאות וששים וחמשה מעלות, וכל מעלה ומעלה היו בו כדי לזון את כל העולם כולו.

אמר רבי (ישמעאל) לרבי, ואמרי לה (לרבי ישמעאל בר יוסי): הני למון? לך ולחברך ולחברותך, שנאמר: "סחרה ואתננה קודש לה" לא יאצר ולא יחסן כי ליושבים לפני ה' יהיה וגו'."

מאי "לא יאצר"? תני רב יוסף: "לא יאצר" – זה בית אוצר; "ולא יחסן" – זה בית גניזה. מאי "כי ליושבים לפני ה'?" אמר רבי אלעזר:

After that, the wicked kingdom of Rome will draw an *a fortiori* inference with regard to itself: Just as the gifts of these, who are not their brothers, were accepted in this manner, we, the descendants of Edom, who are their brothers, all the more so is it not clear that our gifts will be accepted? The Holy One, Blessed be He, will say to Gabriel: "Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds [*kaneh*], the multitude of [*adat*] the bulls" (Psalms 68:31). Rebuke the beast and acquire [*keneh*] the congregation [*eda*] of Israel. The nation of Rome, which enslaved Israel in its current exile, is less worthy than the other two nations.

Alternatively, the verse "Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds," means rebuke the beast that dwells between the reeds, as it is written: "The pig out of the wood ravages it, and that which moves in the field feeds on it" (Psalms 80:14). This verse is referring to Edom, whose behavior is compared elsewhere to that of a pig.

Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba said that Rabbi Yohanan said that the verse means: Rebuke the beast, all of whose actions are written with a single quill.ⁿ *Kaneh* can mean a reed, or a quill. In other words, rebuke a nation that speaks of others in only one manner, for the worse. The verse continues: "The multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the peoples, everyone submitting himself with pieces of silver. He has scattered the peoples who delight in war" (Psalms 68:31). "The multitude of the bulls [*abirim*], with the calves of the peoples"; this is referring to Rome, who slaughtered mighty people [*abirim*] like ownerless calves.

"Everyone submitting himself with pieces of silver," means that the officials of Rome open their hands to receive money as bribes or taxes, but actually they do not perform the will of their masters, as they cannot be trusted even in this regard. "He has scattered the peoples who delight in war"; what caused the Jewish people to be scattered among the nations of the world? The intimacies that they desiredⁿ with them. Their exile among the nations was caused by their attraction to the customs and behavior of gentiles.

And Rabbi Yishmael further sent to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi: There were 365 markets in the great city of Rome,^b and each and every one of them contained 365 towers, and each and every tower contained 365 floors, and each and every floor contained enough food to sustain the entire world.

Rabbi Yishmael also said to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, and some say that he said it to Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Yosei: For whom did they store all this food? He replied: For you and your colleagues and the colleagues of your colleagues, i.e., for the Jewish people and their Sages, as it is stated: "Her grain and her hire shall be consecrated to the Lord; it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her gain shall be for those who dwell before the Lord, to eat their fill, and for stately clothing" (Isaiah 23:18).

The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of the phrase: "It shall not be treasured"? Rav Yosef teaches: "It shall not be treasured," this is referring to items brought into a storehouse; "nor laid up," this means a treasury, where valuable items were stored behind guarded walls. What is the meaning of the phrase: "Who dwell before the Lord?" Rabbi Elazar said: