

Significant repair – תיקון גדול – In the Rambam's Commentary on the Mishna he explains this in the sense of a significant repair that brought great benefit. Others say that this separation between men and women was called a significant repair only to distinguish it from the previous attempts to ameliorate the situation, which were less successful.

And surrounded the courtyard with a balcony – והקיפוהו גזוזטרא: When the Gemara later raises the problem of introducing structural changes into the Temple, it is referring to the projections, which were permanent, not to the wooden boards placed on the projections to form the balcony, which were temporary. According to the Rambam, they were placed on the Festival eve. Others hold that they were placed at the conclusion of the first Festival day (see *Me'iri*).

LANGUAGE

Balcony [gezuztra] – גזוזטרא – From the Greek ἐξώστρα, *exostra*, meaning a projection from the side of a house upon which boards are laid, forming a balcony.

”בְּמוֹצָאֵי יוֹם טוֹב” כּו'. מֵאֵי תִיקוּן גְּדוֹל? אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: כְּאוֹתָהּ שֶׁשָּׂמְנוּ, חֲלָקָה הֵיטָהּ בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה וְהַקִּיפוּהָ גְּזוּזְטָרָא, וְהִתְקִינוּ שָׂיְהוּ נָשִׁים יוֹשְׁבוֹת מִלְּמַעְלָה וְאֲנָשִׁים מִלְּמַטָּה.

§ The mishna continues: **At the conclusion of the first Festival day**, etc., the priests and the Levites descended from the Israelites' courtyard to the Women's Courtyard, where they would introduce a significant repair. The Gemara asks: **What is this significant repair?**^N Rabbi Elazar said that it is like that which we learned: The walls of the Women's Courtyard were smooth, without protrusions, initially. Subsequently, they affixed protrusions to the wall surrounding the Women's Courtyard. Each year thereafter, for the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water, they placed wooden planks on these projections and surrounded the courtyard with a balcony [gezuztra].^{NL} **And they instituted that the women should sit above and the men below.**

תָּנוּ רַבָּנֵינוּ: בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה הָיוּ נָשִׁים מִבְּפָנִים וְאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּחוּץ, וְהָיוּ בָּאִים לְיַדֵּי קִלּוֹת רֹאשׁ, הִתְקִינוּ שָׂיְהוּ נָשִׁים יוֹשְׁבוֹת מִבְּחוּץ וְאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּפָנִים. וְעַדִּיּוֹן הָיוּ בָּאִין לְיַדֵּי קִלּוֹת רֹאשׁ. הִתְקִינוּ שָׂיְהוּ נָשִׁים יוֹשְׁבוֹת מִלְּמַעְלָה וְאֲנָשִׁים מִלְּמַטָּה.

The Sages taught in the *Tosefta*: **Initially, women would stand on the inside of the Women's Courtyard**, closer to the Sanctuary to the west, **and the men were on the outside** in the courtyard and on the rampart. **And they would come to conduct themselves with inappropriate levity** in each other's company, as the men needed to enter closer to the altar when the offerings were being sacrificed and as a result they would mingle with the women. Therefore, the Sages **instituted that the women should sit on the outside and the men on the inside**, and still they would come to conduct themselves with inappropriate levity. Therefore, **they instituted** in the interest of complete separation **that the women would sit above and the men below.**

הֵיכִי עֲבִיד הַכִּי? וְהִכְתִּיב: ”הַכֹּל בְּכַתָּב מִיַּד ה' עָלֵי הַשִּׁבְלִים!”

The Gemara asks: **How could one do so**, i.e., alter the structure of the Temple? **But isn't it written** with regard to the Temple: **“All this I give you in writing, as the Lord has made me wise by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern”** (1 Chronicles 28:19), meaning that all the structural plans of the Temple were divinely inspired; how could the Sages institute changes?

אָמַר רַב: קָרָא אֲשַׁבְּחוּ וַדְרוּשׁ:

Rav said: **They found a verse, and interpreted it homiletically and acted accordingly:**

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”וְסִפְּדָה הָאָרֶץ מִשְׁפָּחוֹת מִשְׁפָּחוֹת לְבֵד מִשְׁפָּחַת בֵּית דָּוִד לְבֵד וּנְשֵׂיהֶם לְבֵד.” אָמְרוּ: וְהֵלֵא דְבָרִים קָל וְחוֹמֵר: וּמָה לְעֵתִיד לְבָא – שְׁעוֹסְקִין בְּהֶסְפֵּד וְאִין יֵצֵר הָרַע שׁוֹלֵט בָּהֶם – אֲמָרָה תוֹרָה אֲנָשִׁים לְבֵד וְנָשִׁים לְבֵד, עֲכָשִׁי שְׁעוֹסְקִין בְּשִׂמְחָה וְיֵצֵר הָרַע שׁוֹלֵט בָּהֶם – עַל אַחַת כְּמָה וְכְמָה.

It is stated: **“The land will eulogize,^N each family separately; the family of the house of David separately, and their women separately, the family of the house of Nathan separately, and their women separately”** (Zechariah 12:12). This indicates that at the end of days a great eulogy will be organized during which men and women will be separate. **They said: And are these matters not referred a fortiori? If in the future**, at the end of days referred to in this prophecy, **when people are involved in a great eulogy and consequently the evil inclination does not dominate them**, as typically during mourning inappropriate thoughts and conduct are less likely, and nevertheless **the Torah says: Men separately and women separately; then now that they are involved in the Celebration of the Drawing of the Water, and as such the evil inclination dominates them**, since celebration lends itself to levity, **all the more so should men and women be separate.**

NOTES

The land will eulogize, etc. – וְסִפְּדָה הָאָרֶץ וכו' – In the Jerusalem Talmud this verse is applied to both opinions. According to the opinion that the eulogy is for Messiah ben Yosef, this verse proves that even during times of mourning there must be separation between men and women. According to the opinion that the eulogy is for the evil inclination that was killed, if men and women must be separated when the evil inclination has no dominion, all the more so they must be separated when it does have dominion.

Messiah, the evil inclination – יצר הרע: The verse in Zechariah cited in the Gemara is referring to an only son, and later in the verse there is reference to the firstborn. Both terms can apply to both Messiah ben Yosef and the evil inclination. Each was unique until their counterparts, Messiah ben David and the good inclination, came into being. And once their counterparts came into being, Messiah ben Yosef and the evil inclination are called firstborn relative to those counterparts.

Eulogy for the evil inclination that was killed – הקפד: Many have suggested homiletic interpretations to explain why the righteous would cry over the evil inclination that was killed. Some say it is because they have painful recollections of past battles with the evil inclination (Rashi). Others explain that the crying is not for the slain evil inclination, but that the tears are shed in the course of begging for mercy on behalf of the wicked (*Arukh LaNer* and others). Yet others suggest that with the evil inclination gone, the service of God will not be as remarkable as it was before, as there will be no challenge involved (Maharsha).

As a high mountain, as a strand of hair – כהר גבוה כחוט: Many of the early authorities sought to understand why the evil inclination is not perceived by everyone in the same way (see *Otzar HaGeonim*, Rav Hai Gaon, and others). One explanation is based on the idea that initially when the evil inclination begins to overcome someone, it is merely with subtle threads of deceit, as the sinner begins with minor transgressions. However, the righteous individual, who resists the initial subtle pull of the evil inclination, is confronted with an evil inclination that continually grows more powerful in its attempt to overcome him, reaching the dimensions of a high mountain. Nevertheless, he successfully overcomes it (Rabbi Yoshiya Pinto).

Messiah ben Yosef – משיח בן יוסף: Much has been written about Messiah ben Yosef in homilies about the redemption. Most of these sources indicate that a man from the house of Joseph, i.e., from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, will arise and achieve great accomplishments for the Jewish people to the point that it will seem that the ultimate redemption is near. The nations of the world will then wage war against Israel. Israel will suffer a great defeat and Messiah ben Yosef will be killed. That will be the ultimate test of faith that the Jewish people will face to establish the identity of the true believers (Rav Hai Gaon). Messiah ben David will then be revealed and the final redemption will ensue.

The evil inclination has seven names – שבעה שמות יש לו: Many have interpreted these names as symbolizing different gradations of evil, each worse than the one that preceded it. Some explain that the evil inclination is called evil because it is the source of everything evil in a person. Furthermore, it conceals good from the individual, a characteristic represented by the name uncircumcised, as the foreskin conceals. Next, it corrupts even the pure thoughts in the heart of man, as represented by the name impure. It does not do this passively, but plots and takes action against him like an enemy. Worse yet, in order to corrupt one who resists, it employs artifice in order to become an obstacle to entrap him. Once the obstacle is in place it is difficult to remove, as it is hard and heavy as a stone. Finally, the most difficult aspect of the evil inclination is that it acts stealthily, as it is hidden in the heart of man (*Arukh LaNer*).

LANGUAGE

Web [bukhya] – **בוכיא**: It appears that this word is not *bukhya*, but *kukhya*, the latter of which is used in rabbinic Hebrew and various dialects of Aramaic.

הא הספידא מאי עבידתיה? פליגי בה רבי דוסא ורבנן. חד אמר: על משיח בן יוסף שנהרג, וחד אמר: על יצר הרע שנהרג.

בשלמא למאן דאמר על משיח בן יוסף שנהרג – היינו דכתיב: "והביטו אלי את אשר דקרו וספרו עליו כמספד על היחיד". אלא למאן דאמר על יצר הרע שנהרג – האי הספידא בעי למעבד? שמחה בעי למעבד! אמאי בכי?

כדרש רבי יהודה: לעתיד לבא מביא הקדוש ברוך הוא ליצר הרע ושוחטו בפני הצדיקים ובפני הרשעים. צדיקים נדמה להם כהר גבוה, ורשעים נדמה הם כחוט השערה. הללו בוכין, והללו בוכין. צדיקים בוכין ואומרים: היאך יכולנו לכבוש הר גבוה כזה! ורשעים בוכין ואומרים: היאך לא יכולנו לכבוש את חוט השערה הזה! ואף הקדוש ברוך הוא תמה עמם, שנאמר: "כה אמר ה' צבאות כי פלא בעיני שארית העם הזה בימים ההם גם בעיני פלא".

אמר רב אסי: יצר הרע, בתחילה דומה לחוט של בוכיא, ולכסוף דומה כעבותות העגלה, שנאמר: "הוי מושבי העון בחבלי השוא וכעבות העגלה חטאה".

תנו רבנן: משיח בן דוד שעתיד להגלות במהרה בימינו, ואמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא: שאל ממני דבר ואתן לך, שנאמר: "אספדה אל חוק וגו' אני היום ולדתך שאל ממני ואתנה גוים נחלתך". וכיון שראה משיח בן יוסף שנהרג, אמר לפניו: רבוננו של עולם, איני מבקש ממך אלא חיים. אמר לו: חיים, עד שלא אמרת – כבר התנבא עליך דוד אביך שנאמר: "חיים שאל ממך נתתה לו" וגו'.

דרש רבי עירא, ואיתימא רבי יהושע בן לוי: שבעה שמות יש לו ליצר הרע. הקדוש ברוך הוא קראו "רע", שנאמר: "כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו". משה קראו "ערל", שנאמר: "ומלתם את ערלת לבבכם". דוד קראו "טמא", שנאמר: "לב טהור ברא לי אלהים" – מכלל דאיכא טמא.

Apropos the eulogy at the end of days, the Gemara asks: For what is the nature of this eulogy? The Gemara answers: Rabbi Dosa and the Rabbis disagree concerning this matter. One said that this eulogy is for Messiah ben Yosef who was killed in the war of Gog from the land of Magog prior to the ultimate redemption with the coming of Messiah ben David. And one said that this eulogy is for the evil inclination^N that was killed.^N

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the one who said that the lament is for Messiah ben Yosef who was killed, this would be the meaning of that which is written in that context: "And they shall look unto Me because they have thrust him through; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son" (Zechariah 12:10). However, according to the one who said that the eulogy is for the evil inclination that was killed, does one need to conduct a eulogy for this? On the contrary, one should conduct a celebration. Why, then, did they cry?

The Gemara answers: This can be understood as Rabbi Yehuda taught: In the future, at the end of days, God will bring the evil inclination and slaughter it in the presence of the righteous and in the presence of the wicked. For the righteous the evil inclination appears to them as a high mountain, and for the wicked it appears to them as a mere strand of hair.^N These weep and those weep. The righteous weep and say: How were we able to overcome so high a mountain? And the wicked weep and say: How were we unable to overcome this strand of hair? And even the Holy One, Blessed be He, will wonder with them, as it is stated with regard to the eulogy: "So says the Lord of hosts: If it be wondrous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, it should also be wondrous in My eyes" (Zechariah 8:6).

Apropos the evil inclination and the battle against it, the Gemara cites that which Rav Asi said: Initially, when it begins to entice someone, the evil inclination is like a strand of a spider's web [*bukhya*];¹ and ultimately it is like the thick ropes of a wagon, as it is stated: "Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as if it were with a wagon rope" (Isaiah 5:18). Initially, the enticement is almost imperceptible, like a thin strand; however, after one sins, it is like wagon ropes tied tightly around him.

The Sages taught: To Messiah ben David, who is destined to be revealed swiftly in our time, the Holy One, Blessed be He, says: Ask of Me anything and I will give you whatever you wish, as it is stated: "I will tell of the decree; the Lord said unto me: You are My son, this day have I begotten you, ask of Me, and I will give the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession" (Psalms 2:7–8). Once the Messiah ben David saw Messiah ben Yosef,^N who was killed, he says to the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, I ask of you only life; that I will not suffer the same fate. The Holy One, Blessed be He, says to him: Life? Even before you stated this request, your father, David, already prophesied about you with regard to this matter precisely, as it is stated: "He asked life of You, You gave it to him; even length of days for ever and ever" (Psalms 21:5).

S Rabbi Avira, and some say Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, taught: The evil inclination has seven names.^N The Holy One, Blessed be He, called it evil, as it is stated: "For the inclination of a man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21). Moses called it uncircumcised, as it is stated: "And circumcise the foreskin of your hearts" (Deuteronomy 10:16). David called it impure, as it is stated: "Create for me a pure heart, O God" (Psalms 51:12); by inference, there is an impure heart that is the evil inclination.

NOTES

As it set its eyes – שִׁתְּנוּ עֵינָיו – The forces of evil, which adhere more to those on higher levels of sanctity, caused the destruction of both Temples. Those forces appear and intensify wherever there is increased sanctity, affecting Jews more than gentiles, and Torah scholars more than the rank and file (see Maharsha, Rabbi Yoshiya Pinto, and others).

BACKGROUND

Three parasangs – תְּלָתָא פְּרָסִי: The parasang is an ancient measure of distance originating in Persia. It is the equivalent of four mil. In today's measurements, three parasangs are approximately 12 km. The map below shows that the parasang was in use even in the nineteenth century.



Map of Persia from 1814 with scale in parasangs

שְׁלֹמֹה קָרָא "שׁוֹנֵא", שְׁנֵאמֵר: "אִם רָעַב שְׁנֵאָךְ הָאֲכִילָהוּ לֶחֶם וְאִם צָמָא הִשְׁקָהוּ מִיַּם כִּי גַחְלִים אֶתְּהָ חוֹתְנָה עַל רֵאשׁוֹ וְהוּ' יִשְׁלֵם לְךָ", אֵל תִּקְרִי "יִשְׁלֵם לְךָ" אֶלָּא "יִשְׁלִימֵנוּ לְךָ".

Solomon called it enemy, as it is stated: "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for you will heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord will reward you" (Proverbs 25:21-22). Do not read it as: And the Lord will reward you [yeshalem lakh]; rather read it as: And the Lord will reconcile it to you [yashlimenu lakh]. God will cause the evil inclination to love you and no longer seek to entice you to sin.

יִשְׁעִיָה קָרָא "מְכַשׁוֹל", שְׁנֵאמֵר: "סוּלוּ סוּלוּ פְּנֵי דְרִיךְ הַרִימוּ מִכְשׁוֹל מִדְּרִיךְ עִמִּי". יְחֻזְקָאֵל קָרָא "אֶבֶן", שְׁנֵאמֵר: "וְהִסְרֵתִי אֶת לֵב הָאֶבֶן מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם וְנִתְתִּי לָכֶם לֵב בֶּשֶׂר". יוֹאֵל קָרָא "צִפּוֹנִי", שְׁנֵאמֵר: "אֶת הַצִּפּוֹנִי אֲרַחֵק מֵעֵלְיֶיךָ". תְּנִי רַבָּנִי: "וְאֶת הַצִּפּוֹנִי אֲרַחֵק מֵעֵלְיֶיךָ" – זֶה יִצְרָה רַע, שְׁצִפּוֹן וְעוֹמֵד בְּלִבּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם;

Isaiah called it a stumbling block, as it is stated: "And He will say: Cast you up, cast you up, clear the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of My people" (Isaiah 57:14). Ezekiel called it stone, as it is stated: "And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26). Joel called it hidden one, as it says: "But I will remove the northern one [hatzefoni] far off from you" (Joel 2:20). The Sages taught concerning the verse: "But I will remove the northern one [hatzefoni] far off from you," that this is referring to the evil inclination. And why is the evil inclination referred to as tzefoni? It is due to the fact that it is always hidden [tzafun] in the heart of man.

– וְהִדְחֵתִיו אֶל אֶרֶץ צִיָּה וּשְׁמָמָה – לְמָקוֹם שֶׁאֵין בְּנֵי אָדָם מְצוּיִין לְהַתְגַּרְוֹת בְּהֵן; "אֶת פְּנֵיו אֶל הַיָּם הַקְּדָמוֹנִי" – שְׁנֵתָן עֵינָיו בְּמִקְדָּשׁ רֵאשׁוֹן וְהַחְרִיבוּ וְהָרַג תְּלִמְדֵי חֻכְמָם שָׁבוּ; "סוּפוֹ אֶל הַיָּם הָאַחֲרוֹן" – שְׁנֵתָן עֵינָיו בְּמִקְדָּשׁ שְׁנִי וְהַחְרִיבוּ, וְהָרַג תְּלִמְדֵי חֻכְמָם שָׁבוּ; "וְעֵלָה בְּאִשׁוֹ וְתַעַל צַחֲנָתוֹ" – שְׁמַנִּיחַ אוֹמֵת הָעוֹלָם וּמִתְגַּרָּה בְּשׁוֹנְאֵיהֶם שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל; "כִּי הִגְדִּיל לַעֲשׂוֹת" – אָמַר אַבְיִי: וּבִתְלִמְדֵי חֻכְמָם יוֹתֵר מִכּוֹלֵם.

The baraita continues interpreting the verse in the book of Joel. "And will drive it to a land barren and desolate" (Joel 2:20), where there are no people for the evil inclination to incite. And what damage does the evil inclination cause? "With its face toward the eastern [hakadmoni] sea" (Joel 2:20), as it set its eyesⁿ on the First [mukdam] Temple and destroyed it, and killed the Torah scholars that were in it; "and its end toward the western [ha'aharon] sea" (Joel 2:20), as it set its eyes on the Second [aharon] Temple and destroyed it, and killed the Torah scholars that were in it; "its foulness may come up, and its ill odor may come up" (Joel 2:20), as it forsakes the nations of the world and incites the enemies of the Jewish people: In this context, the term the nations is a euphemism for the Jewish people. The evil inclination seeks to corrupt the Jews more than it does the members of any other nation. "Because it has done greatly" (Joel 2:20): Abaye^p said: And it provokes Torah scholars more than it provokes everyone else.

כִּי הָא, דְּאֲבֵי שְׁמַעִיָה לְהֵוָה גְּבַרָא דְקָאמַר לְהֵוָה אֶתְתָא: נִקְדִּים וְנִזְוִיל בְּאוֹרְחָא. אָמַר: אֵיזִיל אֶפְרָשִׁינְהוּ מֵאִיסוּרָא. אֲזַל בְּתַרְיֵיהוּ תְּלָתָא פְּרָסִי בְּאַגְמָא. כִּי הוּוּ פְּרָשִׁי מִהַדְרֵי שְׁמַעִינְהוּ דְקָא אָמְרִי: אוֹרְחִין רַחֲמֵי וְצוֹתִין בְּסִימָא.

The Gemara illustrates that point. It is like this incident, as Abaye once heard a certain man say to a certain woman: Let us rise early and go on the road. Upon hearing this, Abaye said to himself: I will go and accompany them and prevent them from violating the prohibition that they certainly intend to violate. He went after them for a distance of three parasangs⁸ in a marsh among the reeds, while they walked on the road, and they did not engage in any wrongful activity. When they were taking leave of each other, he heard that they were saying: We traveled a long distance together, and the company was pleasant company.

אָמַר אַבְיִי: אִי מֵאֵן דְּסִנֵּי לִי הוּוּ – לֵא הוּוּ מִצִּי לְאוֹקוּמִיָּה נִפְשִׁיָּה. אוֹל תְּלָא נִפְשִׁיָּה בְּעִיבוּרָא דְדִשָׂא, וּמְצַטְעֵר. אֶתְתָא הֵוָה סָבָא, תְּנָא לִיָּה: כֹּל הַגְּדוֹל מִחֲבִירוֹ יִצְרוּ גְדוֹל הַיִּמְנוּ.

Abaye said: In that situation, if instead of that man it had been one whom I hate, a euphemism for himself, he would not have been able to restrain himself from sinning. After becoming aware of so great a shortcoming he went and leaned against the doorpost, thinking and feeling regret. A certain Elder came and taught him: Anyone who is greater than another, his evil inclination is greater than his. Therefore, Abaye should not feel regret, as his realization is a consequence of his greatness.

אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק: יִצְרוּ שֶׁל אָדָם מִתְגַּבֵּר עֲלָיו בְּכָל יוֹם, שְׁנֵאמֵר: "רַק

Rabbi Yitzhak said: A person's inclination overcomes him each day, as it is stated: "Only

PERSONALITIES

Abaye – אַבְיִי: One of the outstanding Sages of the Talmud, Abaye was a fourth-generation Babylonian amora. Abaye was orphaned at the time of his birth and raised by his paternal uncle, Rabba. Some say that his real name was Nahmani or Killil and that Abaye was just a nickname. The woman who assisted his uncle in raising him impressed upon him many life lessons that he quotes in her name. There are several incidents related in the Gemara that illustrate his intelligence even as a child, including some where his adoptive father, Rabba, tests his knowledge. Although Rabba was a priest and the head of his yeshiva, he lived in poverty, as did Abaye.

Abaye was the primary student of Rabba and of Rav Yosef. After Rav Yosef's death, Abaye succeeded him as the head of the yeshiva in Pumbedita. He celebrated the study of Torah and would announce a holiday for the scholars whenever one of them completed a tractate. Growing up in his uncle's home he was aware of the difficulties of scholars who were without financial means. The Gemara in tractate Berakhot (35b) relates that he testified that many were successful following the path of Rabbi Yishmael, who instructed his students to plow, plant, and harvest in the appropriate time; only very few were successful following the path of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai who taught that

one should devote himself entirely to Torah and ignore worldly concerns. In addition to Abaye's prominence as a Torah scholar, he was known for his righteousness and his acts of kindness. Abaye's exchanges and halakhic arguments with his uncle and, even more so, with Rav Yosef, can be found throughout the Talmud. However, his disputes with his colleague Rava are especially significant. Their disputes, known as the discussions of Abaye and Rava, are examples of profound and edifying disputes and are among the foundations of the Babylonian Talmud. In these disputes, with six exceptions, the halakha is ruled in accordance with the opinion of Rava.

NOTES

אם ברזל הוא מתפוצץ – If it is like iron it will be shattered – See *Tosafot*. The early authorities discuss whether the intent is that the iron smashes the rock or that the rock smashes the iron. There is a variant reading: If it is like iron, it will be melted, in which case it is derived from the beginning of the verse: “Is not My word like fire, says the Lord” (see Ritva).

The evil inclination incites a person to sin in this world, and then testifies against him in the next world – יצר יצר הרע מסיתו לאדם בעולם הזה ומעיד עליו לעולם הבא: Once an individual succumbs to his evil inclination, he internalizes that tendency and that conduct becomes part of his very essence. Once it is second nature and an integral part of one’s personality it is virtually impossible to eradicate it. That conduct will ultimately testify against him (*Midrash Shlomo*).

רע כל היום. אמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש: יצריו של אדם מתגבר עליו בכל יום ומבקש להמיתו, שנאמר: “צופה רשע לצדיק ומבקש להמיתו”, ואלמלא הקדוש ברוך הוא שעוזר לו – אינו יכול לו, שנאמר: “ה’ לא יעזבנו בידו ולא ירשיענו בהשפטו”.

תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: אם פגע בך מנוול זה – משכהו לבית המדרש. אם אבן הוא – נימות, אם ברזל הוא – מתפוצץ. אם אבן הוא – נימות, דכתיב: “הוי כל צמא לכו למים”, וכתיב: “אבנים שחקו מים”. אם ברזל הוא – מתפוצץ, דכתיב: “הא כה דברי כאש נאם ה’ וכפטיש יפוצץ סלע”.

אמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן: יצר הרע מסיתו לאדם בעולם הזה, ומעיד עליו לעולם הבא. שנאמר: “מפנק מנוער עבדו ואחריתו יהיה מנון”, שכן באטב”ח של רבי חייא קורין לסהדה “מנון”.

רב הונא רמי: פתיב “כי רוח זנונים התעה” וכתיב “בקרבים!” בתחלה התעם, ולבסוף בקרבים.

אמר רבא: בתחלה קראו “הלך” ולבסוף קראו “אורח” ולבסוף קראו “איש”, שנאמר: “ויבא הלך לאיש העשיר ויחמול לקחת מצאנו ומבקרו לעשות אורח”, וכתיב: “ויקח את כבשת האיש הרש ועשה לאיש הבא אליו”.

אמר רבי יוחנן: אבר קטן יש לו לאדם, מרעבו – שבע, משביעו – רעב, שנאמר: “כמרעיתם וישבעו” וגו’.

evil all day” (Genesis 6:5). All day long his thoughts and desires are for evil. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: A person’s evil inclination overcomes him each day and seeks to kill him, as it stated: “The wicked watches the righteous and seeks to kill him” (Psalms 37:32); the wicked here is referring to the wickedness inside one’s heart. And if not for the Holy One, Blessed be He, Who assists him with the good inclination, he would not overcome it, as it is stated: “The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor suffer him to be condemned when he is judged” (Psalms 37:33).

The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: If this scoundrel, the evil inclination, accosted you, seeking to tempt you to sin, drag it to the study hall and study Torah. If it is like a stone, it will be dissolved by the Torah. If it is like iron, it will be shattered. The Gemara elaborates: If it is like stone, it will be dissolved, as it is written: “Ho, everyone who is thirsty, come you for the water” (Isaiah 55:1), water in this context meaning Torah; and it is written: “Stones were worn by water” (Job 14:19). If it is like iron, it will be shattered,ⁿ as it is written: “Is not My word like fire, says the Lord; and like a hammer that shatters rock” (Jeremiah 23:29).

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani said that Rabbi Yohanan said: The evil inclination incites a person to sin in this world, and then testifies against him in the next world,ⁿ as it is stated: “He that delicately brings up his servant from a child shall have him become a master [*manon*] at the last” (Proverbs 29:21). Initially, in one’s youth, the evil inclination, which should have been enslaved to him, takes control of him and causes him to sin. Then, ultimately, that same evil inclination becomes his *manon*. *Manon* means witness, as in Rabbi Hiyya’s coded alphabet in which *alef* and *tet* and *beit* and *het*, etc., are interchanged. Witness [*sahada*] is called *manon*. The letters *mem* and *samekh*, *nun* and *heh*, and *vav* and *dalet* are interchanged with other letters.

Rav Huna raised a contradiction between two verses. It is written: “For the spirit of harlotry caused them to err” (Hosea 4:12), indicating that this spirit was a temporary phenomenon and not an integral part of their persona. And it is also written: “For the spirit of harlotry is within them” (Hosea 5:4), indicating that it is an integral part of their persona. The Gemara explains: Initially, it causes them to err from without, and ultimately, it is from within them.

Rava said: Initially, the verse called the evil inclination a traveler coming from afar. Subsequently, the verse calls it a guest, as one welcomes it. Ultimately, the verse calls it man, indicating significance, as it became the homeowner. As it is stated in the parable of the poor man’s lamb that Nathan the prophet said to David: “And there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was reluctant to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to prepare for the guest” (II Samuel 12:4). And it is written in the same verse: “And he took the poor man’s lamb, and prepared it for the man that was come to him.” In other words, the evil inclination that began as a traveler gradually rose in prominence.

Rabbi Yohanan said: A man has a small organ used in sexual relations. If he starves the organ, and does not overindulge, it is satiated; however, if he satiates the organ and overindulges in sexual relations, it is starving, and desires more, as it is stated: “When they were fed, they became full, they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten Me” (Hosea 13:6).

There are four creations that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created, yet regrets that He created them – אַרְבַּעָה – מִתְחַרֵּט עֲלֵיהֶן הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שְׁבָרָאָם: Although certainly God does not actually experience regret, this is an anthropomorphism to indicate that these creations pain Him (Rav Ya'akov Emden). They serve a purpose as a means for punishing the wicked, as each is an effective outlet for God's wrath in different circumstances.

Four craftsmen – אַרְבַּעָה חֲרָשִׁים – See Rashi, who explains why each of the four was referred to as a craftsman. Some explain that the four are famous for their victorious battles against the wicked. Some, including Rashi, explain that the righteous priest is Melchizedek, King of Salem (Genesis 14:18), who assisted Abraham in his battle against the four kings (Arukh LaNer).

Righteous High Priest – כֹּהֵן צַדִּיק – Some explain that the righteous High Priest is the High Priest who will serve in the Temple after the coming of the Messiah, an amalgam of Aaron the High Priest and Ezra the Scribe (see *Asara Ma'amarot*).

Seven shepherds – שִׁבְעָה רוּעִים: The Maharsha notes that with regard to most of them it was taught explicitly or even implicitly that they were, at one time or another, actual shepherds, and were therefore called shepherds. That is why Isaac is not listed among them, as he was a farmer (see Rashi).

אָמַר רַב חֲנַנְיָ בַר אֲחָא, אָמְרֵי בִי רַב: אַרְבַּעָה מִתְחַרֵּט עֲלֵיהֶן הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שְׁבָרָאָם, וְאֵלוּ הֵן: גְּלוּת, כְּשָׂדִים, וְיִשְׁמַעְאֵלִים, וְיֵצֵר הָרַע. גְּלוּת – דְּכַתְּיב: "וְעַתָּה מַה לִּי פֹה נֹאֵם ה' כִּי לִקַּח עִמִּי חֲנָם" וְגו'. כְּשָׂדִים – דְּכַתְּיב: "הֵן אֲרָץ כְּשָׂדִים זֶה הָעָם לֹא הָיָה".

יִשְׁמַעְאֵלִים – דְּכַתְּיב: "יִשְׁלֹו אֱהָלִים לְשׂוֹדְדִים וּבִטְחוֹת לְמִרְגִּיזֵי אֵל לְאִשׁוּר הִבִּיא אֱלוֹהֵי בִידוֹ". יֵצֵר הָרַע – דְּכַתְּיב: "וְאִשׁוּר הָרַעֲתִי".

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אֵלֶּמְלֵא שְׁלֹשׁ מִקְרָאוֹת הֲלָלוּ נְתַמּוּטְטוּ וְגַלְיָהֶם שׁוֹנְאֵיהֶן שׁוֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל, חַד – דְּכַתְּיב: "וְאִשׁוּר הָרַעֲתִי", וְחַד – דְּכַתְּיב: "הִנֵּה כְחוֹמֵר בְּיַד הַיּוֹצֵר כֵּן אַתֶּם" וְגו'. וְאִידֶךָ – "וְהִסְרֵתִי אֶת לֵב הָאָבֶן מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב בְּשָׂר".

רַב פַּפָּא אָמַר: אִף מִהָאֵי נִמְי: "וְאֵת רוּחִי אֲתֵן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם" וְגו'.

"וְיִרְאֵנִי ה' אַרְבַּעָה חֲרָשִׁים". מֵאֵן נִינְהוּ אַרְבַּעָה חֲרָשִׁים? אָמַר רַב חֲנַנְיָ בַר בִּיזְנָא אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן חֲסִידָא: מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד וּמְשִׁיחַ בֶּן יוֹסֵף, וְאֵלֵיהוּ, וְכֹהֵן צַדִּיק. מִתִּיב רַב שֵׁשֶׁת: אֵי הֵי, הֵינּוּ דְכַתְּיב: "וְיִאֲמַר אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֹהֵי הַקְרָנוֹת אִשׁוּר זָרוּ אֶת יְהוּדָה" הֵי לְשׁוֹבָה אֲתוּ!

אָמַר לֵיה: שְׁפִיל לְסִיפֵיה דְקָרָא, "וְיִבֹאוּ אֱלֹהֵי הַתְּחִרִיד אוֹתָם לִידוֹת אֶת קְרָנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם הַנּוֹשָׂאִים קֶרֶן אֶל אֲרָץ יְהוּדָה לְזִרוּתָהּ" וְגו'. אָמַר לֵיה: בְּהַדִּי חֲנַנְיָ בְּאַגְדָתָא לְמַה לִּי.

"וְהָיָה זֶה שְׁלוֹם אִשׁוּר כִּי יִבֵּא בְּאַרְצֵנוּ וְכִי יִדְרֹךְ בְּאַרְמוֹתֵינוּ וְהִקְמֵנוּ עָלָיו שִׁבְעָה רוּעִים וְשִׁמְנָה נְסִיכֵי אֲדָם". מֵאֵן נִינְהוּ שִׁבְעָה רוּעִים? דָּוִד בְּאַמְצַע, אֲדָם שֵׁת וּמִתוֹשֵׁלַח מִימֵינוּ, אַבְרָהָם יַעֲקֹב וּמֹשֶׁה בְּשִׂמְלוֹ. וּמֵאֵן נִינְהוּ שְׁמֹנֶה נְסִיכֵי אֲדָם – יִשְׂחָר וְשָׂאוֹל, וְשִׁמְוֹאֵל, עֲמוֹס, וְצַפְנִיָּה, צַדִּיקָה, וּמִשִּׁיחַ, וְאֵלֵיהוּ.

Rav Hana bar Aha said that the Sages in the school of Rav say: There are four creations that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created, yet He, as it were, regrets that He created them,ⁿ as they do more harm than good. And these are they: Exile, Chaldeans, and Ishmaelites, and the evil inclination. Exile, as it is written: "Now therefore, for what am I here, says the Lord, seeing that My people is taken away for naught" (Isaiah 52:5). God Himself is asking: For what am I here? Chaldeans, as it is written: "Behold the land of the Chaldeans, this is the people that was not" (Isaiah 23:13), meaning, if only they never were.

Ishmaelites, as it is written: "The tents of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, in whatsoever God brings with His hand" (Job 12:6). God brought upon Himself these Arabs that dwell in the deserts in tents. The evil inclination, as it is written: "On that day, says the Lord, will I assemble her that is lame, and I will gather her that is driven away, and her that I corrupted" (Micah 4:6). God is saying that He created the evil inclination that led the people to sin and to be cast into exile.

Rabbi Yohanan said: Were it not for these three verses that follow that indicate that God controls people's hearts, the legs of the enemies of the Jewish people, a euphemism for the Jewish people themselves, would have collapsed, unable to withstand the repercussions of their sins. One, as it is written: "And her that I corrupted," indicating God's regret for doing so. And one, as it is written: "Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel" (Jeremiah 18:6). And the other verse: "And I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26), indicating that the matter is not solely in human hands, but in the hands of God as well.

Rav Pappa said: It is derived from this verse as well: "And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My ordinances, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27).

§ Apropos the end of days, the Gemara cites another verse and interprets it homiletically. It is stated: "The Lord then showed me four craftsmen" (Zechariah 2:3).ⁿ Who are these four craftsmen? Rav Hana bar Bizna said that Rabbi Shimon Hasida said: They are Messiah ben David, Messiah ben Yosef, Elijah, and the righteous High Priest,ⁿ who will serve in the Messianic era. Rav Sheshet raised an objection: If so, if that is the identity of the four craftsmen, then that which is written in the previous verse: "And he said to me: These are the horns that scattered Judea" (Zechariah 2:2), is difficult; these four in the first verse are coming for their enemies, and are not redeemers.

Rav Hana said to Rav Sheshet: Go to the end of the verse: "These then are come to frighten them, to cast down the horns of the nations, which lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it." This indicates that the horns refer to the nations that exiled the Jewish people and that the four craftsmen will hurl those horns aside. Rav Sheshet said to him: Why should I disagree with Rav Hana in matters of *aggada*, where he is more expert than I, and I cannot prevail?

The Gemara continues homiletically interpreting verses that relate to the end of days. It is stated: "And this shall be peace: When the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight princes among men" (Micah 5:4). The Gemara asks: Who are these seven shepherds?ⁿ The Gemara explains: David is in the middle; Adam, Seth, and Methuselah are to his right; Abraham, Jacob, and Moses are to his left. And who are the eight princes among men? They are Yishai, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephania, Zedekiah, Messiah, and Elijah.

NOTES

Were superior – משופחין היו – These priests in training are deemed superior because they climbed a steep ladder, holding on to the ladder in one hand, and a large basin of oil in the other hand, all the while ensuring that the oil would not spill (Ritva).

PERSONALITIES

Marta, daughter of Baitos – מרתא בת בייטוס: This exceptional personality is mentioned several times in the Talmud and due to her great fortune served as the archetypal woman of wealth and influence. Apparently, she was a member of the wealthy Baitos family, which was one of the most powerful priestly families in Jerusalem during the Second Temple era and which produced High Priests and other prominent Temple functionaries.

According to the incidents related in the Talmud surrounding the destruction of the Second Temple, even Marta's great wealth could not save her, and she died of starvation in the streets of Jerusalem.

BACKGROUND

Two thighs – שתי יריכות – Two thighs of one bull after skinning and the removal of waste can weigh as much as 200 kg or more. In contrast, thirty log of oil weigh only about 40 kg.

“ארבעה סולמות” כו'. תנא: גובהה של מנורה חמשים אמה. “וארבעה ידים של פרחי כהונה ובידיהם בדי שמן של מאה ועשרים לוג.” איבעיא להו: מאה ועשרים לוג בולהו, או דלמא לכל חד וחד? תא שמע: ובידיהם בדי שמן של שלשים שלשים לוג, שהם בולם מאה ועשרים לוג.

תנא: והן משופחין היו יותר מבנה של מרתא בת בייטוס. אמרו על בנה של מרתא בת בייטוס שהיה נוטל שתי יריכות של שור הגדול, שלקוח באלף זוז, ומהלך עקב בצד גודל ולא הנחיהו אחיו הכהנים לעשות כן משום “ברב עם הדרת מלך”.

מאי משופחים? אילימא משום יוקרא – הנני יקירי טפיל! אלא, התם כבש ומרובע ולא זקוף, הקא סולמות, וזקוף טובא.

“ולא היה חצר בירושלים”. תנא:

§ The mishna continues: **And there were four ladders for each pole. One of the Sages taught: The height of the candelabrum upon the pole is fifty cubits. And there were four children from the priesthood trainees holding and in their hands jugs of oil with a capacity of 120 log of oil. A dilemma was raised: Was it 120 log altogether, or perhaps each and every child carried that amount? Come and hear proof from this baraita: And in their hands were jugs of oil, each with a capacity of thirty log, that were all together 120 log.**

One of the Sages taught: **And these young priests who held the pitchers were superiorⁿ in strength to the son of Marta, daughter of Baitos,^p who was a priest renowned for his might. They said about the son of Marta, daughter of Baitos, that he would take two thighs^b of a large bull that was so large that it would be purchased for one thousand zuz, and walk up the ramp in small steps, heel to toe, without hurrying, due to his strength. However, his brethren the priests would not allow him do so, due to the principle: “In the multitude of people is the King’s glory” (Proverbs 14:28).** The more priests engaged in the Temple service, the greater glory for God. Therefore, it is preferable for the thighs to be carried to the altar by multiple priests.

The Gemara asks: In what sense were these young priests superior? If we say it is due to the weight of the pitchers that they carried, these two thighs are heavier than the thirty log of oil. The Gemara answers: **Rather**, the difference is that there, in the case of the son of Marta, he walked on a ramp that was wide, and with a moderate gradient of only one cubit every four cubits of length, and it is not steep; here they climbed ladders, and those are very steep.

§ The mishna continues: **And there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that was not illuminated from the light of the Place of the Drawing of the Water. One of the Sages taught:**

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NOTES

Happy is our old age that atoned [shekippera] – אשוי – קנותנו שכפרה: There is a variant reading, shekifra, from the word kefira, meaning denial. The phrase would then read: Our old age negated the sinful actions of our youth because we repented (Me’iri).

אשה היתה בוררת חטים לאור של בית השואבה.

It was so bright that a woman would be able to sort wheat by the light of the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water.

“חסידים ואנשי מעשה” כו'. תנו רבנן, יש מהן אומרים: “אשרי ילדותנו שלא ביישנה את זקנותנו” – אלו חסידים ואנשי מעשה, ויש מהן אומרים: “אשרי זקנותנו שכפרה את ילדותנו” – אלו בעלי תשובה. אלו ואלו אומרים “אשרי מי שלא חטא, ומי שחטא ישוב ומחול לו”.

§ The mishna continues: **The pious and the men of action would dance before the people who attended the celebration. The Sages taught in the Tosefta that some of them would say in their song praising God: Happy is our youth, as we did not sin then, that did not embarrass our old age. These are the pious and the men of action, who spent all their lives engaged in Torah and mitzvot. And some would say: Happy is our old age, that atonedⁿ for our youth when we sinned. These are the penitents. Both these and those say: Happy is he who did not sin; and he who sinned should repent and God will absolve him.**