

NOTES

Were superior – משׁוּבְּחִין הֵיוּ – 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 – מִרְתָּא בַת בַּיְתוֹס: 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 – שְׁתֵּי יָרִיכוֹת – 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.

”אַרְבַּעַה סוּלָמוֹת” כּוּ. תִּנְא: גּוֹבְהָהּ שֶׁל מְנוּרָה חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה. ”וְאַרְבַּעַה יָדַיִם שֶׁל פְּרָחֵי כְהוּנָה וּבִידֵיהֶם בְּדֵי שָׁמֶן שֶׁל מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים לֹג.” אִיבַעֲיָא לְהוּ: מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים לֹג בּוֹלְהוּ, אִו דְּלִמָּא לְכָל חַד וְחַד? תָּא שְׁמַע: וּבִידֵיהֶם בְּדֵי שָׁמֶן שֶׁל שְׁלִשִׁים לֹג, שְׁלִשִׁים בּוֹלִם מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים לֹג.

תִּנְא: וְהֵן מְשׁוּבְּחִין הֵיוּ יוֹתֵר מִבְּנֵה שֶׁל מִרְתָּא בַת בַּיְתוֹס. אָמְרוּ עַל בְּנֵה שֶׁל מִרְתָּא בַת בַּיְתוֹס שֶׁהִיָּה נוֹטֵל שְׁתֵּי יָרִיכוֹת שֶׁל שׂוֹר הַגָּדוֹל, שֶׁלְקוֹחַ בְּאַלְף זוּז, וּמְהַלֵּךְ עֶקֶב בְּצַד גּוֹדֵל, וְלֹא הִנְחִיחוּהוּ אֲחֵיו הַכֹּהֲנִים לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן מִשּׁוּם ”בְּרַב עִם הַדֶּרֶת מְלֵךְ”.

מֵאִי מְשׁוּבְּחִים? אִילִימָא מִשּׁוּם יוֹקְרָא – הֵן יוֹקְרֵי טִפְי! אֵלָּא, הָתֵם כְּבֵשׁ וּמְרוּבַע וְלֹא יוֹקֵי, הַבָּא סוּלָמוֹת, וְיוֹקֵי טוֹבָא.

”וְלֹא הָיָה חֲצֵר בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם.” תִּנְא:

§ The mishna continues: **And there were four ladders for each pole. One of the Sages taught: The height of the candela-brum 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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Happy is our old age that atoned [shekippera] – אֲשֶׁרִי – קִנְיַתְנֵנוּ שְׁכַפְּרָה: 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).

אִשָּׁה הִיָּתָה בּוֹרֶרֶת חֲטָיִם לְאוּר שֶׁל בֵּית הַשּׁוֹאֵבָה.

”חֲסִידִים וְאֲנָשֵׁי מַעֲשֵׂה” כּוּ. תִּנְּנוּ רַבָּנֵי. יֵשׁ מֵהֶן אֹמְרִים: ”אֲשֶׁרִי יְלֻדוּתְנוּ שְׁלֹא בִּישָׁה אֶת זְקִנּוֹתֵנוּ” – אֵלּוּ חֲסִידִים וְאֲנָשֵׁי מַעֲשֵׂה, וְיֵשׁ מֵהֶן אֹמְרִים: ”אֲשֶׁרִי זְקִנּוֹתְנוּ שְׁכַפְּרָה אֶת יְלֻדוֹתֵנוּ” – אֵלּוּ בְּעַלֵּי תְשׁוּבָה. אֵלּוּ וְאֵלּוּ אֹמְרִים ”אֲשֶׁרִי מִי שְׁלֹא חָטָא, וּמִי שֶׁחָטָא יִשׁוּב וּיִמְחֹל לוֹ”.

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.

§ 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.**

Hillel the Elder – הלל הזקן – Hillel the Elder was Shammai's partner in the last of the pairs of Sages; he was *Nasi* of the Sanhedrin, and Shammai was the Head of the Court. Hillel and Shammai lived about one hundred years prior to the destruction of the Temple, at the beginning of Herod's reign. Despite the fact that each founded a school, Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai respectively, both of which continued many years after their passing, they themselves disagreed about only three or four matters. The difference between Hillel and Shammai themselves was mainly one of personality. Hillel was easygoing in his approach to himself and to others, avoiding conflict wherever possible. Shammai took a more exacting approach and scrutinized people's motives and actions.

Tradition has it that Hillel began as an impoverished student engaged in menial labor to earn money to pay the entrance fee to attend the lectures of Shemaya and Avtalyon. Ultimately, the Gemara likens Hillel to Ezra the Scribe, crediting him with reestablishing Torah during a period in history when it was in danger of being forgotten (*Sukka* 20a). His disciples were praised as well. According to the Gemara, Hillel the Elder had eighty students; thirty were worthy to have the Divine Presence rest upon them like Moses, thirty were worthy to have the sun stand still for them, as it did for Joshua bin Nun; and twenty were considered average. The greatest among them all was Yonatan ben Uziel and the least prominent among them Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai (*Sukka* 28a).

תנא, אמרו עליו על הלל הזקן כשהיה שמח בשמחת בית השואבה אמר כן: אם אני כאן – הכל כאן, ואם איני כאן – מי כאן. הוא היה אומר כן: מקום שאני אוהב שם רגלי מוליכות אותי, אם תבא אל ביתי – אני אבא אל ביתך, אם אתה לא תבא אל ביתי – אני לא אבא אל ביתך, שנאמר: "בכל המקום אשר אוכיר את שמי אבא אליך וברכתך".

אף הוא ראה גלגולת אחת שצפה על פני המים, אמר לה: על דאטפת אטפוך, ומטיפוך יטפון. אמר רבי יוחנן: רגלוהי דבר איניש אינון ערבין ביה, לאתר דמיתבגי תמן מובילין יתיה.

הנהו תרתין כושאי דהוו קיימי קמי שלמה, אליהרף ואחיה בני שישא, סופרים דשלמה הוו. יומא חד חזייה מלאך המות דההו קא עציב. אמר ליה: אמאי עציבת? אמר ליה: דקא בעו מינאי הני תרתין כושאי דיתבי הכא. מסרינהו לשעירים שדרינהו למחוזא דלזו. כי מטו למחוזא דלזו שכיבו.

למחר חזיא מלאך המות דההו קבדח, אמר ליה: אמאי בדיחת? אמר ליה: באתר דבעו מינאי תמן שדרינהו. מיד פתח שלמה ואמר: רגלוהי דבר איניש אינון ערבין ביה, לאתר דמיתבגי תמן מובילין יתיה.

It is taught in the *Tosefta*: They said about Hillel the Elder^p that when he was rejoicing at the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water he said this: If I am here, everyone is here;ⁿ and if I am not here, who is here? In other words, one must consider himself as the one upon whom it is incumbent to fulfill obligations, and he must not rely on others to do so. He would also say this: To the place that I love, there my feet take me, and therefore, I come to the Temple. And the Holy One, Blessed be He, says: If you come to My house, I will come to your house; if you do not come to My house, I will not come to your house, as it is stated: "In every place that I cause My name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you" (Exodus 20:20).

The Gemara cites another statement of Hillel the Elder. **Additionally, he saw one skullⁿ that was floating on the water and he said to it: Because you drowned others, they drowned you, and those that drowned you will be drowned.** That is the way of the world; everyone is punished measure for measure. Apropos following one's feet, Rabbi Yohanan said: **The feet of a person are responsible for him; to the place where he is in demand, there they lead him.**

The Gemara relates with regard to these two Cushites who would stand before Solomon: "Eliohereph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha" (1 Kings 4:3), and they were scribes of Solomon. One day Solomon saw that the Angel of Death was sad. He said to him: Why are you sad? He said to him: They are asking me to take the lives of these two Cushites who are sitting here. Solomon handed them to the demons in his service, and sent them to the district of Luz,ⁿ where the Angel of Death has no dominion. When they arrived at the district of Luz, they died.

The following day, Solomon saw that the Angel of Death was happy. He said to him: Why are you happy? He replied: In the place that they asked me to take them, there you sent them. The Angel of Death was instructed to take their lives in the district of Luz. Since they resided in Solomon's palace and never went to Luz, he was unable to complete his mission. That saddened him. Ultimately, Solomon dispatched them to Luz, enabling the angel to accomplish his mission. That pleased him. **Immediately, Solomon began to speak and said: The feet of a person are responsible for him; to the place where he is in demand, there they lead him.**

NOTES

אם אני כאן – הכל כאן – If I am here, everyone is here – Most commentaries follow Rashi's explanation that Hillel is speaking in God's name. If God is present, everything is present, and in God's absence there is nothing (Rabbeinu Yehonatan, Ritva, and others). Some explain that Hillel is referring to the Jewish people, speaking in the singular as a member of the Jewish people. That is also the understanding in the Jerusalem Talmud: When Hillel saw that the Jewish people were going through the motions in their worship of God, he would say: Does God need their praise? Doesn't He have millions of angels praising Him? And when he saw that they were worshipping for the sake of Heaven, he would say: If I, the Jewish people, am here, everything is here, because God desires the praise of Israel more than anything else.

There are some who add to the explanation that says that Hillel spoke in the name of the Divine Presence: if God is present in a given place, then the place becomes a small area that holds

the multitudes, and everyone could be there. However, if the Divine Presence is not there, then the space would not be able to hold all the people there (Rabbi Meir Arak).

אף הוא ראה גלגולת אחת – In Hillel's previous statement and in this one, he is referring to the divine attribute of measure for measure, extending it to all aspects of life. There are some who divide this statement into two independent scenarios. Because you drowned others, they drowned you, as a punishment that fits the crime. However, if you are not guilty, those that drowned you will be drowned (*Midrash Shmuel*).

מחוזא דלזו – The district of Luz – In Judges, chapter 1, there is an incident involving the city of Luz. It is said that it is a city of refuge even from the Angel of Death, as he is not permitted to enter there.

PERSONALITIES

רבן שמעון בן גמליאל – Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel: The reference here is to Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel the Elder, who followed in the footsteps of his father Rabban Gamliel the Elder and his grandfather Hillel the Elder, and served as *Nasi*. According to his testimony, he was raised among the Sages (*Avot* 1:17). Josephus relates that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel was appointed *Nasi* eighteen years prior to the destruction of the Temple. From the little we know about him, he was a forceful yet pious individual. Aside from the story that appears here, the mishna records his sensitivity to community needs and describes how he brought down the price of turtledoves in Jerusalem by ruling that women needed to bring only one sacrifice even after several births (*Keritot* 8a).

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel supported the rebels in their revolt against Roman rule, and according to tradition he was one of the Ten Martyrs killed before the Temple was destroyed. His son, Rabban Gamliel of Yavne, served as *Nasi* after Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai.

King Shapur – שבור מלכא: This is the Persian King Shapur I, Shahpuhr I (241–272 CE), second king of the Sassanid dynasty. He was one of the great Persian kings and expanded the empire. He waged several wars against the Romans and occupied extensive territories, reaching as far as Syria. In one battle, he even captured the Roman emperor Valerian the Elder. However, he did not win all his wars, and in some battles he was routed by the Romans.

Unlike other kings in the Sassanid dynasty, Shapur was tolerant of other faiths. There are many incidents related reflecting his close relationship with the Jewish people, as well as his love and appreciation for Jewish customs. In several places the Gemara describes his friendship with the *amora* Shmuel.



Image of King Shapur I of Persia on a coin minted during his reign

HALAKHA

Taking an oath in vain – שְׁבוּעַת שוֹא: One who takes an oath to perform an impossible task, e.g., one who swears that he will not sleep for three days, has taken an oath in vain. He need not wait until he is overwhelmed by exhaustion; rather, he is flogged and may sleep immediately (*Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 236:4).

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One flogs him and he may sleep immediately – מִלְקִין וְשָׁנָה: In other words, he may go to sleep immediately if he chooses and he need not wait until he submits to exhaustion. The oath is inherently impossible to fulfill, and therefore he is flogged for taking it (*Me'iri*).

תנאי, אמרו עליו על רבן שמעון בן גמליאל כשהיה שמת בית השואבה היה נוטל שמונה אבוקות של אור, וזרק אחת ונוטל אחת ואין נוגעות זו בזו. וכשהוא משתחוה נועץ שני גודליו בארץ ושוחה, ונושק את הרצפה וזוקף, ואין כל בריה יכולה לעשות כן. וזו היא קידה.

לוי אחי קידה קמיה דרבי, ואיטלע. והא גרמא ליה? והאמר רבי אלעזר: לעולם אל יטיח אדם דברים בלפי מעלה, שהרי אדם גדול הטיח דברים כפי מעלה ואיטלע, ומנו – לוי! הא והא גרמא ליה.

לוי היה מטייל קמיה דרבי בתמי סביני. שמואל קמיה שבור מלכא בתמיא מוגי חמרא. אביי קמיה (דרבא) בתמיא ביעי, ואמרי לה בארבעה ביעי.

תנאי, אמר רבי יהושע בן חנניה: כשהיינו שמחים שמת בית השואבה לא ראינו שינה בעינינו. כיצד? שעה ראשונה – תמיד של שחר, משם – לתפלה, משם – לקרבן מוקף, משם – לתפלת המוספין, משם – לבית המדרש, משם – לאכילה ושתייה, משם – לתפלת המנחה, משם – לתמיד של בין הערבים, מכאן ואילך – לשמת בית השואבה.

איני? והאמר רבי יוחנן: "שבועה שלא אישן שלשה ימים" – מלקין אותו וישן לאחור! אלא הכי קאמר: לא טעמנו טעם שינה, דהווי מנמנמי אכתפא דהדר.

"חמש עשרה מעלות." אמר ליה רב חסדא ליהוה מדרבנן דהו קמסדר אגדתא קמיה, אמר ליה: שמיע לך היי חמש עשרה מעלות כנגד מי אמרם דוד? אמר ליה, הכי אמר רבי יוחנן: בשעה שברה דוד שיתין, קפא תהומא ובעי למשטפא עלמא, אמר דוד חמש עשרה מעלות והורידן! אי הכי, חמש עשרה "מעלות" יורדות מיבעי ליה!

It is taught in a *baraita*: They said about Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel^p that when he would rejoice at the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water, he would take eight flaming torches and toss one and catch another, juggling them, and, though all were in the air at the same time, they would not touch each other. And when he would prostrate himself, he would insert his two thumbs into the ground, and bow, and kiss the floor of the courtyard and straighten, and there was not any other creature that could do that due to the extreme difficulty involved. And this was the form of bowing called *kidda* performed by the High Priest.

The Gemara relates: Levi demonstrated a *kidda* before Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and strained his thigh and came up lame. The Gemara asks: And is that what caused him to be lame? But didn't Rabbi Elazar say: One should never speak impertinently toward God above; as a great person once spoke impertinently toward God above, and even though his prayers were answered, he was still punished and came up lame. And who was this great person? It was Levi. Apparently his condition was not caused by his bow. The Gemara answers: There is no contradiction. Both this and that caused him to come up lame; because he spoke impertinently toward God, he therefore was injured when exerting himself in demonstrating *kidda*.

Apropos the rejoicing of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel at the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water, the Gemara recounts: Levi would walk before Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi juggling with eight knives. Shmuel would juggle before King Shapur^p with eight glasses of wine without spilling. Abaye would juggle before Rabba with eight eggs. Some say he did so with four eggs. All these were cited.

It is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya said: When we would rejoice in the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water, we did not see sleep in our eyes the entire Festival. How so? In the first hour of the day, the daily morning offering was sacrificed and everyone came to watch. From there they proceeded to engage in prayer in the synagogue; from there, to watch the sacrifice of the additional offerings; from there, to the synagogue to recite the additional prayer. From there they would proceed to the study hall to study Torah; from there to the eating and drinking in the *sukka*; from there to the afternoon prayer. From there they would proceed to the daily afternoon offering in the Temple. From this point forward, they proceeded to the Celebration of the Place of the Drawing of the Water.

The Gemara wonders: Is that so? But didn't Rabbi Yohanan say: One who took an oath that I will not sleep three days, one flogs him immediately for taking an oath in vain,^h and he may sleep immediatelyⁿ because it is impossible to stay awake for three days uninterrupted. Rather, this is what Rabbi Yehoshua is saying: We did not experience the sense of actual sleep, because they would merely doze on each other's shoulders. In any case, they were not actually awake for the entire week.

The mishna continues: The musicians would stand on the fifteen stairs that descend from the Israelites' courtyard to the Women's Courtyard, corresponding to the fifteen Songs of the Ascents in Psalms. Rav H̄isda said to one of the Sages who was organizing *aggada* before him: Did you hear with regard to these fifteen Songs of Ascents in Psalms, corresponding to what did David say them? He said to him that this is what Rabbi Yohanan said: At the time that David dug the drainpipes in the foundation of the Temple, the waters of the depths rose and sought to inundate the world. Immediately, David recited the fifteen Songs of the Ascents and caused them to subside. Rav H̄isda asked: If so, should they be called fifteen Songs of the Ascents? They should have been called Songs of the Descents.

אמר ליה: הואיל ואדברתן (מלתא). הכי אתמר: בשעה שדוד שפך דוד שיתין קפא תהומא ובעא למשטפא עלמא. אמר דוד: מי איבא דידע אי שרי למכתב שם

Rav Hisda continued and said to him: Since you reminded me of this matter, this is what was originally stated: At the time that David dug the drainpipes, the waters of the depths rose and sought to inundate the world. David said: Is there anyone who knows whether it is permitted to write the sacred name

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Daf 53 Amud b

אחספא ונשדיה בתהומא ומנח? ליבא דקאמר ליה מידי. אמר דוד: כל דידע למימר ואינו אומר – יחנק בגרונו. נשא אחיתופל קל וחומר בעצמו: ומה לעשות שלום בין איש לאשתו, אמרה תורה: שמי שנכתב בקדושה ימחה על המים, לעשות שלום לכל העולם כולו – על אחת כמה וכמה. אמר ליה: שרי.

on an earthenware shard? If it is permitted, we will write it and throw it into the depths, and they will subside. There was no one who said anything to him. David said: Anyone who knows what to say and does not say anything may be strangled in his throat.ⁿ Then Ahithophel raised an *a fortiori* argument on his own and said: And just as in order to make peace between a man and his wife in the case of *sota*, when the husband suspects his wife of having committed adultery, the Torah said: My Name that was written in sanctity will be erased on the water to establish peace for the whole world in its entirety, all the more so it is permitted. He said to David: It is permitted.

כתב שם אחספא, ושדי לתהומא, ונחית תהומא שיתסר אלפי גרמידי. כי חזי דנחית טובא, אמר: כמה דמידלי טפי מירטב עלמא. אמר חמש עשרה מעלות ואפקיה חמיסר אלפי גרמידי, ואוקמיה באלפי גרמידי. אמר עולא: שמע מינה, סומכא דארעא אלפי גרמידי. והא חזינן דכרינן פורתא ונפקי מיא! אמר רב משרשיא: ההוא מסולמא דפרת.

He wrote the sacred name on an earthenware shard and cast it into the depths, and the waters in the depths subsided sixteen thousand cubits. When he saw that they subsided excessively, he said: The higher the waters in the aquifers, the moister and more fertile the soil of the world. He recited the fifteen Songs of the Ascents and elevated them fifteen thousand cubits, and established them at a depth of one thousand cubits. Ulla said: Learn from here that the thickness of the earth above the waters of the depths is one thousand cubits. The Gemara asks: But don't we see that when we dig a little, significantly less than one thousand cubits, water emerges? Rav Mesharshiyya said: That is from the ascent of the Euphrates River, which flows at a higher altitude than do other rivers. The water flows up through underground passages to reach the river. That is why water emerges when one digs in the hills of Babylonia.

“ועמדו בהנמם בשער העליון שיוירד” כו'. בעי רבי ירמיה: למעלה עשרית דנחית חמשה וקאי אעשרה, או דלמא דנחית עשרה וקאי אחמשה? תיקו.

§ The mishna continues: And two priests stood with two trumpets at the Upper Gate that descends from the Israelites' courtyard to the Women's Courtyard, and when those drawing the water reached the tenth stair they sounded the trumpets. Rabbi Yirmeya raised a dilemma: Does the phrase reached the tenth stairⁿ mean that he would descend five stairs and stand on the tenth from the bottom? Or perhaps it means that he would descend ten stairs and stand on the fifth from the bottom? The Gemara notes: The dilemma shall stand unresolved.

תנו רבנן: ממשמע שנאמר “ופניהם אל קדמה” אינו יודע שאחוריהם אל היכל ה'?

The mishna describes: When they reached the gate through which one exits to the east, they turned from facing east to facing west toward the Holy of Holies, and said: Our ancestors who were in this place during the First Temple period did not conduct themselves appropriately and stood “with their backs toward the Sanctuary of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east” (Ezekiel 8:16), and we, our eyes are to God. The Sages taught: By inference, from the fact that it is stated: “And their faces toward the east,”ⁿ don't I know that “their backs were toward the Sanctuary of the Lord”? The Sanctuary was to the west.

NOTES

Anyone who knows what to say and does not say anything may he be strangled in his throat – רבי יוחנן בגרונו: There are some who explain that David said this as a punishment that fits the crime. Drowning is a form of strangulation. Therefore, one who causes the masses to drown should be strangled. The Gemara relates this incident to impart that Ahitophel hated David from the outset (see *Arukh LaNer* and others). In tractate *Makkot* it is derived from here that a curse uttered by one of the Sages, even if it was uttered conditionally, will take effect. Ultimately, Ahitophel hanged himself.

Tenth stair – מעלה עשירית: The early and later authorities sought to understand the significance of the tenth stair, in that the blasts were sounded specifically there. Some explain that in the fifth and the tenth of the Songs of Ascents there are allusions to this matter (*Arukh LaNer*). The Maharsha wrote that the name of God uttered during the water libation was the name *yod heh*, whose numerological value is ten and five respectively, totaling fifteen. The stairs, the songs, and the blasts all correspond to that number.

By inference, from the fact that it is stated: And their faces toward the east – ממשמע שנאמר ופניהם קדמה: It is explained in the Jerusalem Talmud that the verse: “Two evils has My people committed” (Jeremiah 2:13) refers to their bowing both to God and to idolatry. It also explains the unique term in the verse cited here: *Mishtahavitem* (Ezekiel 8:16) in a similar manner.

One who says: Listen, listen – האומר שמע שמע: It is prohibited to recite *Shema* twice, whether one is repeating the word *shema* itself or whether he is repeating the entire first verse. If he must repeat the verse because he did not have the requisite intent when he recited it the first time, he should not repeat it immediately, but should pause a bit before repeating it (see *Magen Avraham; Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim* 61:9).

Trumpet blasts in the Temple – תקיעות במקדש: Each weekday, twenty-one trumpet blasts were sounded in the Temple: Three for the opening of the gates in the morning, nine for the daily morning offering, and nine for the daily afternoon offering. On a day on which additional offerings were sacrificed, nine additional blasts were sounded in honor of the additional offering. Even if multiple additional offerings were offered marking different occasions, e.g., when Shabbat and the New Moon coincided, they sufficed with the same nine blasts as per the mishna, and contrary to the opinion cited later in the Gemara (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Kelei HaMikdash* 7:5).

Trumpet blasts on Shabbat and Festivals – תקיעות בשבת ומועדים: On Friday six additional blasts were sounded: Three to stop the people from their labor, and three to demarcate between the sacred and the profane. On the festival of *Sukkot*, three additional blasts were sounded for the opening of the lower gate, three for the opening of the upper gate, three for the filling of the water, and three more when pouring the water libation on the altar (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Kelei HaMikdash* 7:6).

אלא מה תלמוד לומר "אחוריהם אל היכל ה'" – מלמד שהיו פורעין עצמן, ומתרוצין כלפי מטה.

"אנו ליה וליה ענינו" כו'. איני? והאמר רבי זירא: כל האומר "שמע" "שמע" כאלו אמר "מודים" "מודים"! אלא הכי אמרי: המה משתחיים קדמה, ואנו ליה (אנחנו מודים), וענינו ליה מוחלת.

מתני' אין פותחין מעשרים ואחת תקיעות במקדש, ואין מוספין על ארבעים ושמנה. בכל יום היו שם עשרים ואחת תקיעות במקדש: שלש לפתיחת שערים, ותשע לתמיד של שחר, ותשע לתמיד של בין הערבים. ובמוספין היו מוספין עוד תשע.

ובערב שבת היו מוספין שש: שלש להבטיל את העם ממלאכה, ושלש להבדיל בין קדש לחול.

ערב שבת שבתותך החג היו שם ארבעים ושמנה: שלש לפתיחת שערים, שלש לשער העליון, ושלש לשער התחתון, ושלש למילוי המים, ושלש על גבי מזבח, תשע לתמיד של שחר, ותשע לתמיד של בין הערבים, ותשע למוספין, שלש להבטיל את העם מן המלאכה, ושלש להבדיל בין קודש לחול.

Rather, to what purpose does the verse state: "Their backs toward the Sanctuary of the Lord"? It is an allusion to the fact that in addition to turning their backs on the Sanctuary of the Lord, they performed an additional evil. It teaches that they would expose themselves and defecate downward, a euphemism for the direction of the Divine Presence.

The mishna continues: In the Second Temple period they would say: We are to God, and to God are our eyes. The Gemara asks: Is that so? May one pray in that manner? Didn't Rabbi Zeira say: One who repeats himself while reciting *Shema* and says: Listen, listen,^h is like one who says: We give thanks, we give thanks, and he is silenced, as it appears that he is worshipping two authorities. How then did they recite God's name twice, consecutively? Rather, this is what they said: They bow toward the east,ⁿ while we give thanks to God, and our eyes turn in hope to God, so that they would not recite God's name consecutively.

MISHNA One sounds no fewer than twenty-one trumpet blasts in the Temple,^h and one sounds no more than forty-eight. The mishna elaborates: Each day there were twenty-one trumpet blasts in the Temple: Three blasts were sounded for the opening of the gates in the morning, nine for the daily morning offering, and nine for the daily afternoon offering,ⁿ totaling twenty-one. And on a day when the additional offerings were sacrificed, e.g., the New Moon, with the additional offerings they would add nine additional blasts.

And on Shabbat eve they would add six blasts sounded adjacent to the onset of Shabbat:ⁿ Three to stop the people from their labor, as the blasts inform the people that Shabbat is approaching and they stop working, and three at the onset of Shabbat to demarcate between sacred and profane.

On Shabbat eve during the festival of *Sukkot*, there were forty-eight blasts.^h How so? Three in the morning for the opening of the gates; three for the upper gate; and three for the lower gate; and three for the filling of the vessel with water, as described in the sequence of the ritual of drawing the water for the water libation (48b); and three when pouring the water libation upon the altar; nine for the daily morning offering; and nine for the daily afternoon offering; and nine for the additional offerings; three to stop the people from work; and three more to demarcate between sacred and profane, totaling forty-eight blasts.

NOTES

They bow toward the east – המה משתחיים קדמה: The question was raised: Why did they denigrate their deceased ancestors? *Yad Ne'eman* dealt with this issue at length, citing both early and later authorities who explained that there is no prohibition against denigrating the dead unless they were Torah scholars. The *Me'iri* explained that they mentioned their ancestors only to stir the Jewish people to worship God by reminding them that it was the idolatry of their ancestors that caused the destruction of the First Temple, and that therefore they must intensify their worship of God.

Nine for the daily offering – תשע לתמיד: It is explained in tractate *Tamid* that the song sung by the Levites during the

sacrifice of the daily offering was divided into three sections, and they would sound the blasts during the breaks between the sections.

Six blasts on Shabbat eve – שש תקיעות בערב שבת: In tractate *Shabbat* it is explained that there were significant intervals between each of the first three blasts. The first indicated to the farmers in the field that it was time to cease their labor. The second indicated to the people in the city to cease their labor. The third indicated that the time had arrived to insulate the hot water and to kindle the Shabbat lights. They would wait a short period thereafter and sound three consecutive blasts to inform the people that Shabbat had begun.

There is no pause between a *tekia* and a *terua* at all – אין בין תקיעה לתרועה ולא כלום – There are some authorities (Rabbi Yitzhak ibn Giat; Ramban) who sought to prove from here that one may not pause between the various *shofar* blasts of Rosh HaShana, even to catch one's breath; rather, the *tekia*, *terua*, *tekia* must all be sounded in one breath. In practice, there are many customs both with regard to whether it is permitted to pause when sounding the *shofar* and, if so, with regard to where one may pause. However, most authorities hold that when the Gemara says: There is no pause at all, it does not mean that no pause is allowed, only that the pauses should not be extended and conspicuous (see *Me'iri*).

GEMARA The Gemara notes: **The mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda, as it is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Yehuda says: The one who seeks to minimize the number of blasts shall not minimize their number to fewer than seven blasts. And one who seeks to add to the number of blasts shall not add beyond sixteen.** The Gemara asks: With regard to **what do they disagree?** The Gemara explains that **Rabbi Yehuda holds: A series of blasts consisting of *tekia*, *terua*, *tekia* is counted as one blast. And the Rabbis hold: A *tekia* is counted separately and a *terua* is counted separately.** They agree with regard to the sequence and the number of the blasts, and disagree only with regard to how the blasts are tallied.

The Gemara asks: **What is the rationale for the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda?** It is as the verse states: **“And you shall sound [*utkatem*] a *terua*”** (Numbers 10:5), and it is written: **“A *terua* they will sound [*yitke'u*]”** (Numbers 10:6). **How is it that the Torah uses a verb from the root of *tekia* to describe the sounding of a *terua*?** Apparently, a *tekia* and a *terua* together compose one blast. **And how do the Rabbis interpret these verses?** **This comes to teach that each *terua* blast is accompanied by a plain unembellished blast, a *tekia*, preceding it and following it.** The Gemara asks: **And from where does Rabbi Yehuda derive that each *terua* must be accompanied by a *tekia* preceding it and following it?** The Gemara explains: **He derives it from the verse when it says: “And you shall sound [*utkatem*] a *terua* a second time”** (Numbers 10:6), indicating an additional *tekia*.

The Gemara asks: **And what is the rationale for the opinion of the Rabbis?** It is as it is written: **“And when congregating the people you shall sound a *tekia* and shall not sound a *terua*”** (Numbers 10:7). **And if it enters your mind that a *tekia* and a *terua* are considered one blast, would the Merciful One say to perform half a mitzva and not to perform the other half of the mitzva?** Apparently, each is a separate mitzva. The Gemara asks: **And how does Rabbi Yehuda interpret the verse?** The Gemara answers: **That single *tekia* mentioned in the context of congregating the people came merely as a signal to the camps and was not for the purpose of fulfilling the mitzva, which, in Rabbi Yehuda's opinion, always comes in groups of three.**

And how do the Rabbis counter that assertion? They say: **Indeed, it is a signal to assemble the people; however, the Merciful One rendered it a mitzva.** Therefore, one can derive that a single *tekia* blast is a distinct mitzva. The Gemara asks: **In accordance with whose opinion is this statement of Rav Kahana: There is no pause between a *tekia* and a *terua* at allⁿ and they are sounded in one continuous blast? In accordance with whose opinion is it? It is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda.** The Gemara asks: **If Rav Kahana's statement is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda; that is obvious.** Why was it necessary for the Gemara to raise the matter at all?

Perek V
Daf 54 Amud a

מהו דתימא אפילו כרבנן, ולאפוקי מדרבני יוחנן, דאמר: שמע תשע תקיעות בתשע שעות ביום – יצא, קא משמע לן.

The Gemara answers: It is not obvious that Rav Kahana's statement was stated in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda. **Lest you say that Rav Kahana's statement is even in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis, and that he is coming to exclude the opinion of Rabbi Yohanan who said: If one heard nine blasts in nine different hours on the day of Rosh HaShana, despite the considerable gap between them, he fulfilled his obligation.** Therefore, the Gemara teaches us that Rav Kahana holds in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda alone and he does not allow even a brief pause between the sounds of the *shofar*.