The mishna teaches: For the first blessing he recites: He Who answered Abraham. It was taught in a baraita: Some reverse the order of the conclusion of two blessings, by reciting: Who cries, in the fifth blessing, which includes Elijah, and the conclusion: Who hears prayer, in the blessing of Samuel. The Gemara asks: Granted, with regard to Samuel both options are appropriate, as it is written concerning him: Prayer, and it is likewise written concerning him: Crying. One verse states: “And Samuel said: Gather all of Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray for you to the Lord” (1 Samuel 7:5), while another verse states: “And Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel” (1 Samuel 7:9).

However, with regard to Elijah, although prayer is written, as it says: “Elijah the prophet came near and said: Lord, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel” (1 Kings 18:36), which is referring to a prayer, crying is not written. How, then, can one conclude a blessing that deals with Elijah by mentioning crying? The Gemara answers that Elijah’s statement: “Answer me, Lord, answer me” (1 Kings 18:37), is an expression of crying, even if the term crying does not itself actually appear.

The mishna further teaches: For the sixth he recites: He Who answered Jonah; for the seventh he recites: He Who answered David. The Gemara asks: Since Jonah was after David and Solomon, what is the reason that the tanna mentions Jonah first? The Gemara answers: The reason is due to the fact that he wants to conclude the series with: Blessed are You, Lord, Who has mercy on the Land. Therefore, the last blessing mentions David and Solomon, who were kings of Eretz Yisrael and prayed on its behalf. It was taught in the name of Sumakhos that they said he concludes the final blessing with: Blessed are You, Lord, Who humbles the exalted.

The mishna teaches that on the first three fasts, the members of the priestly watch fast but do not complete their fasts until nightfall. The mishna then proceeds to cite other halakhot that deal with the members of the priestly watch and the patrilineal family. The Sages taught: For what reason did they say that the members of the priestly watch are permitted to drink wine at nights but not during the days? They said this lest on a certain day the Temple service becomes burdensome for the members of the patrilineal family, and the members of the priestly watch are called to come and assist them. Therefore, it is prohibited for them to drink wine during the day, when their help might be needed, so that they do not enter the Temple after drinking wine.

Since Jonah was after David – מַשְׁפִּיל יֵהוּדָה, meaning an ally.

Simon – מַשְׁפִּיל יֵהוּדָה, meaning an ally.

At nights but not during the days – תַּלִּית, meaning an ally.

The early authorities discuss the connection between this concluding formula and David and Solomon. Some commentators explain that both David and Solomon grew overly proud (Ritva, citing Jerusalem Talmud). David’s pride led him to conduct a census of the nation against the advice of his counselor (2 Samuel 24:3–4), and Solomon glorified in his achievement of building the Temple (1 Kings 8:13). Both of them were subsequently humbled by God, after which they repented and their prayers were answered. This blessing expresses the hope that just as the repentance of David and Solomon was accepted by God, so will the repentance of those who are fasting be accepted, and the calamity threatening the community will be averted.

Others explain this concluding formula in a very different manner. During the reigns of David and Solomon the elevated were humbled, i.e., the nations of the world became subjugated to the Jewish people. Therefore, the series of special blessings recited on account of drought concludes with a general expression of praise to God (Shita Mekubetzet). A variant reading, cited by several early authorities, states: Blessed are You, Lord, Who humbles and exalts.
The members of the patrilineal family neither by day nor by night – מַכִּיר אוֹתוֹ אוֹמֵר לְסַפֵּר אֲבוֹתָיו. Most early authorities explain that it is prohibited for the members of the patrilineal family whose turn it is to serve in the Temple to drink wine, not only during the day but also at night, as certain tasks, e.g., the burning of fats and limbs, are carried out at night as well as by day.

Others explain that they may not drink wine at night, lest they rise early in the morning and begin to serve in the Temple before they are entirely sober, thereby violating the prohibition against serving the Temple service in a state of intoxication (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhos Bet HaMikdash 1:6).

It has been noted that there is a practical difference between these two explanations: According to the Rambam, it is prohibited for a member of the patrilineal family to drink wine on the night prior to their service in the Temple, whereas according to the other early commentaries they may not drink wine on the night following the day on which they perform their service (Hosdei David).

Any priest who knows his priestly watch – הלֹא אֵלֵינוּ רִאִים וּשְׁמַדְתִּינוּ. The baraita continues to explain the reason for the mishna’s ruling. For what reason did they say that the members of the patrilineal family may not drink wine, neither by day nor by night?5 Because they are constantly engaged in the Temple service.

From here the Sages stated: Even nowadays, after the destruction of the Temple, with regard to any priest who knows his priestly watch,6 in which his family served, and the watch of his patrilineal family, and he knows that the family of his forefathers was established as fit for the Temple service there,7 it is prohibited for him to drink wine that entire day, in the event that the Temple is rebuilt on that day and he will be called to return to the service. In the case of a priest who knows his priestly watch, i.e., the week of the year in which his family served, and does not know the watch of his patrilineal family, the day of the week that his family served, but he knows that the family of his forefathers was established there, it is prohibited for him to drink wine that entire week.

Finally, if he does not know his priestly watch or the watch of his patrilineal family, but he knows that the family of his forefathers was established there, he is permitted to drink wine that entire year. When the Temple will be rebuilt, his priestly watch might be called upon to serve, and he is unaware of the appointed time for his Temple service.

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: I say that in accordance with this reasoning it is prohibited for any priest to drink wine at any time, even if he knows his priestly watch, as the order of the watches might change when the Temple is rebuilt, or perhaps all the watches will participate in the rededication of Temple. However, what can I do, as his misfortune is his advantage?8 The unfortunate fact that so many years have passed since the destruction of the Temple means that this decree prohibiting the priests from drinking cannot be sustained. Abaye said: In accordance with whose opinion do priests drink wine nowadays?9 It is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi.

The mishna teaches: It is prohibited for both members of the priestly watch and the members of the non-priestly watch to cut their hair or launder their garments throughout the week, but on Thursday they are permitted10 to cut their hair and launder their clothes in deference to Shabbat. The Gemara asks: What is the reason for these prohibitions?Rabba bar bar Ḥana said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: These prohibitions were enacted in order to ensure that the priests will cut their hair and launder their clothes during the week before their service, so that they will not enter their priestly watch when they are unempt.12

In accordance with whose opinion do priests drink wine nowadays – מַכִּיר אוֹתָנוּ אוֹמֵר לְסַפֵּר אֲבוֹתֵינוּ. If a priest knows the identity of his priestly watch and patrilineal family, and he also knows that his family was established as fit to serve in the Temple, it is prohibited for him to drink wine throughout the day on which his patrilineal family used to serve. If he knows his watch but does not know his patrilineal family, it is prohibited for him to drink wine throughout the week in which his watch served in the Temple. If the priest is unaware of either his priestly watch or his patrilineal family, by right he should be permanently barred from drinking wine. However, his ignorance works to his advantage and he is permitted to drink wine, as he will not be able to serve in the Temple, even when it is rebuilt, until his priestly watch and patrilineal family are established (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhos Bet HaMikdash 1:7).

But on Thursday they are permitted – הלֹא אֵלֵינוּ רִאִים וּשְׁמַדְתִּינוּ. It is prohibited for the members of the priestly watch and the patrilineal family on duty in the Temple to cut their hair or launder their clothes during the period of their service, so that they do not enter their watch with untrimmed hair or dirty clothing (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhos Bet HaMikdash 1:2).
A king cuts his hair every day — Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak. A king must cut his hair and groom himself every day. Furthermore, he must dress in appropriate and splendid garments, in accordance with the verse (Isaiah 33:17) “Your eyes shall see the king in his beauty” (Rambam Sefer Shoftim, Hilkhot Melachim Ul’hilelotei hem 2:3).

A High Priest cuts his hair every Friday — Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak. A High Priest must never let his hair grow long, even if he does not enter the Temple. Rather, he must cut his hair at least once a week on Fridays (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Keeli HalMikdash b.6).

A common priest once every thirty days — Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak. A common priest who serves in the Temple must cut his hair at least once every thirty days (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Bat HalMikdash 1:1).

An unspecified nazirite — Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak. If one knows to be a nazirite without specifying a time limit, he is a nazirite for a period of thirty days (Rambam Sefer HaGara, Hilkhot Nezirut 3:3).

It is when one enters that it is prohibited — Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak. Just as it is prohibited for a priest to drink wine only when he enters the Temple, it is likewise prohibited for him to let his hair grow long only when he enters the Temple. Some authorities claim that a priest may not let his hair grow long even when he does not actually enter the Temple. It is only when there is no Temple that he is permitted to let his hair grow long (Ravad, Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Bat HalMikdash 1:10).

**LANGUAGE**

**Numerical value [gimmatria]:** From the Greek γεωμετρία, geometria, which means measurement or calculation in general, although it later came to refer to a specific type of calculation. In rabbinic literature, it also refers broadly to mathematical calculations, and specifically for tabulating the numerical value of the letters.

**PERSONALITIES**

Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak — A Babylonian amorah of the third generation. Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak was one of Rav’s younger students. He later became a disciple of Rav Huna. Like many of Rav Huna’s students, he immigrated to Eretz Yisrael, apparently when he was middle-aged. Although no statements of his in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan are recorded, he is presented as engaged in discussion with Rabbi Yoḥanan’s students, some of whom quote him. Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak’s aggadic and halakhic statements are found both in the Babylonian Talmud and in the Jerusalem Talmud. While it is unknown what he did for a living, it is known that his daughter married Rabbi Hoshaya. Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak conducted himself with humility and deferred to those younger than himself. He used to dance before brides to delight them, as stated in tractate Ketuba in the Babylonian Talmud (17a); and in tractate Pes in the Jerusalem Talmud.

Rav Mattana — A second-generation Babylonian amorah. Rav Mattana studied with first-generation amoraim in Babylonia. His name is possibly a shortened form of the biblical name Matanya. He was a disciple of Shmuel, although he also transmitted statements in the name of Rav. Rav Mattana’s colleague, Rav Yehuda, was also a disciple of Rav and Shmuel. Many third-generation amoraim were Rav Mattana’s pupils, and they transmitted statements in his name. Rav Mattana lived in Paphusia, near Pumbedita. He was the rabbi of that town and may also have headed a small academy there. According to a tradition of the geonim, Rav Mattana was the son of the great amorah Rabbi Yoḥanan of Eretz Yisrael, who had ten sons who died during his lifetime. He was sent by his father to Babylonia to study with Shmuel.

The Sages taught: A king cuts his hair every day. A High Priest cuts his hair every Friday, and a common priest once every thirty days. The Gemara clarifies: A king cuts his hair every day. What is the reason for this? Rabbi Abba bar Zava said that the verse states: “Your eyes shall see the king in his beauty” (Isaiah 33:17), which indicates that a king must always look his best. A High Priest cuts his hair every Friday. The Gemara asks: What is the reason for this? Rav Shmuel bar Yitzḥak said: Since the watches are renewed and changed every Friday, it is fitting for every watch to see the High Priest with his hair perfectly groomed.

A common priest cuts his hair once every thirty days. The Gemara asks: From where do we derive this number? It is derived by a verbal analogy from the word pera with regard to priests and pera in connection with a nazirite. It is written here, concerning priests: “Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks [pera] to grow long” (Ezekiel 44:16), and it is written there, with regard to a nazirite: “He shall be sacred, he shall let the locks [pera] of the hair of his head grow long” (Numbers 6:5). Just as there, a nazirite who does not specify any other time period cuts his hair after thirty days, so too here, a priest cuts his hair every thirty days.

The Gemara asks: And a nazirite himself, from where do we derive that he may not have his hair for thirty days? Rav Mattana said: It is a principle that an unspecified nazirite[3] lasts thirty days. The Gemara inquires: From where do we derive this principle? The Gemara answers that the verse states: “He shall be [yihye] sacred” (Numbers 6:5), and the numerical value [gimmatria] of yihye is thirty. Rav Pappa said to Abaye: But perhaps this is what the Merciful One is saying in the Torah: They should not grow their hair at all, as they must cut it every day. Abaye said to him: If it were written: They shall not grow long, I might have explained as you originally said. Now that it is written: ‘Nor suffer their locks to grow long,’ this indicates that they may have locks, but they may not let them grow long.

The Gemara asks: If it is so that cutting one’s hair is a necessary preparation for the Temple service by Torah law, then even nowadays priests should cut their hair every thirty days as well, in case the Temple is rebuilt and they must resume their service. The Gemara answers: This issue is similar to the prohibition concerning those who have drunk wine. Just as with regard to those who have drunk wine, it is when one enters the Temple that it is prohibited,[4] whereas when one does not enter the Temple it is permitted to drink wine, here the same also applies.

The Gemara questions this conclusion: But isn’t it taught in the aforementioned baraita that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: I say that it is prohibited for all priests to drink wine at any time. However, what can I do, as his misfortune is his advantage? And Abaye said: In accordance with whose opinion do priests drink wine nowadays?
From the fact that the Rabbis prohibit –

It is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. From the fact that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi permits priests to drink wine, it may be inferred that the Rabbis prohibit it even nowadays. Why, then, isn’t it prohibited for priests to grow their hair as well? The Gemara explains: What is the reason for the prohibition? It is due to the hope: May the Temple be speedily rebuilt, and we will require a priest who is fit for the Temple service, and there will be none available, as they have all imbibed wine. The time that it will take for the effects of the wine to wear off will delay the Temple service considerably. Here, however, with regard to hair, it is possible for a priest to cut his hair and be ready to enter and perform the Temple service with minimal delay.

The Gemara asks: If so, with regard to those who have drunk wine too, it is possible for him to sleep a little and then enter, in accordance with the opinion of Rami bar Abba, as Rami bar Abba said: Walking a distance of a mil, and similarly, sleeping even a minimal amount, will dispel the effect of wine that one has drunk. The Gemara rejects this proof: Wasn’t it stated about this halakha that Rav Nahman said that Rabbi bar Avuh said: They taught this only with regard to one who has drunk the measure of a quarter-log of wine, but with regard to one who has drunk more than a quarter-log, walking this distance will preoccupy and exhaust him all the more, and a small amount of sleep will further intoxicate him. For this reason, it is prohibited for priests to drink wine, lest no suitable priest will be ready for the Temple service.

Rav Ashi said that there is a different way to distinguish between these two halakhot. In the case of those who have drunk wine, who desecrate the Temple service, the Sages issued a decree concerning them, that priests should not drink wine even nowadays. However, with regard to those who have long hair, who do not desecrate the Temple service, the Sages did not issue a decree concerning them.

The Gemara raises an objection from a baraita: And these are the transgressors who are punished by death at the hand of Heaven: Priests who enter the Temple to serve who have drunk wine, and those priests who have long hair while they serve. The Gemara asks: Granted, those who have drunk wine are punished by death, as it is explicitly written: “Drink no wine nor strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you enter the Tent of Meeting, that you should not die” (Leviticus 10:9). However, with regard to those who have long hair, from where do we derive that they are punishable by death?

The Gemara answers that this is as it is written: “Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks [pera] to grow long” (Ezekiel 44:20), and it is written immediately afterward: “Neither shall any priest drink wine when they enter the inner courtyard” (Ezekiel 44:21). And in this manner the prohibition concerning those who have long hair is juxtaposed with the prohibition concerning those who have drunk wine, to teach the following: Just as those who have drunk wine and perform the Temple service are subject to death, so too, those who have long hair are punishable by death.

Walking a distance of a mil and sleeping a minimal amount –

Those who have drunk wine –

If a priest who is fit for service in the Temple has drunk wine, he is prohibited to go beyond the altar in the Temple courtyard. If he enters and performs the Temple service, his service is disqualified and he is subject to death at the hand of Heaven (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Bet haMikdash 1:1). Those who have long hair –

If a priest has let his hair grow long, it is prohibited for him to go beyond the altar in the Temple courtyard. If he enters and serves, he is subject to death at the hand of Heaven, but his service is not disqualified (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Bet haMikdash 1:8–9).
The Gemara raises a difficulty: And from this comparison one can also argue as follows: If so, just as those who have drunk wine desecrate the Temple service, so too, those who have long hair desecrate the service. The Gemara rejects this contention: No, when the two cases were juxtaposed, it was with regard to death that they were juxtaposed. However, as for desecrating the Temple service, in this regard they were not juxtaposed. Consequently, Rav Ashi’s distinction concerning the practical application of these two halakhot still applies.

On this issue, Ravina said to Rav Ashi: Before Ezekiel came and stated this halakha, who said it? From where was it derived before Ezekiel that priests may not serve with long hair? This prohibition, which is not mentioned in the Torah, could not have been innovated by Ezekiel, as prophets may not enact new halakhot. Rav Ashi said to him: And according to your reasoning, there is a similar difficulty with that which Rabbi Hisdas said: This matter, that an uncircumcised priest may not serve in the Temple, we did not learn it from the Torah of Moses, but we learned it from the text of the tradition, i.e., Prophets and Writings: “No stranger, uncircumcised in heart or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter my Temple” (Ezekiel 44:9). Before Ezekiel came, who said that it is prohibited for an uncircumcised priest to serve?

Rather, you must say that it is learned as a definite tradition, like the rest of the Oral Torah, and Ezekiel came and supported it by means of a verse in his book. He did not, however, teach this halakha anew. Here too, with regard to a priest with long hair, it is learned as a tradition, and Ezekiel came and supported it by a verse. And when they learned this halakha, they learned only that it is punishable by death; however, with regard to desecrating the Temple service, they did not learn this halakha.

The mishna teaches: Any day concerning which it is written in Megillat Ta’anit not to eulogize on that day, it is also prohibited to fast on the day before, but it is permitted to do so on the following day. The Sages taught in Megillat Ta’anit: These are the days on which fasting is prohibited, and on some of them eulogizing is prohibited as well: From the New Moon of Nisan until the eighth of the month, the proper sacrifice of the daily offering was established, and therefore it was decreed not to eulogize on these dates. From the eighth of Nisan until the end of the festival of Passover, the festival of Shavuot was restored and it was likewise decreed not to eulogize during this period.

The daily offering was established… the festival of Shavuot was restored – Rav Shuna: These commemorative days, like the others listed in Megillat Ta’anit, are associated with the struggles of the Sages against the Sadducees and the Boethusians. Apparently these cults received significant support from the Hasmonaeans and many important priests who followed them. The sacrifice of the daily offering refers to the victory over the Sadducees, who claimed that it is permitted to bring this animal from individual gift-offerings. This was a fundamental dispute, as the Sages insisted that the expenses of the Temple sacrificial rites must be taken away from the control of individuals, which in practice meant priests and important persons. Instead, they said, it must be a true communal offering shared by the entire community by means of the universal donation of the half-shekels. The restoration of the festival of Shavuot is connected to a different, long-standing dispute with the Boethusians, who maintained that the phrase “On the morrow after Shabbat” (Leviticus 23:8), which discusses the offerer offering, refers to the day after Shabbat. Accordingly, they always celebrated Shavuot on a Sunday. The Boethusians used every means at their disposal to enforce their opinion, including bribing witnesses and misleading the court (see Rashi HaShanos 22b). The victory of the Sages in this dispute removed a serious obstacle to the proper observance of the Festival.
The Gemara seeks to clarify these statements by comparing them to the ruling of the mishna. The Master said above: From the New Moon of Nisan until the eighth of the month, the daily offering was established, and therefore it was decreed not to eulogize on these dates. The Gemara asks: Why do I need Megillat Tannit to say: From the New Moon? Let it say: From the second of Nisan, as the New Moon is itself a holiday, and it is already prohibited to eulogize on that day. Rav said: It is necessary to mention the New Moon of Nisan only to prohibit eulogizing on the day before, in accordance with the statement in Megillat Tannit that fasting on the day before any of the specified commemorative days is also prohibited.

The Gemara asks: And with regard to the day before the New Moon of Nisan as well, one can derive the prohibition against eulogizing on this day from the fact that it is the day before the New Moon. Since it is prohibited to fast on the New Moon, it is likewise prohibited on the day before. The Gemara answers that as the New Moon is by Torah law and a Torah law requires no reinforcement, it is permitted to fast on the previous day.

As it is taught in a baraita: With regard to these days that are written in Megillat Tannit, it is prohibited to fast before them and after them. However, concerning Shabbatot and Festivals, fasting on those days is prohibited, but before them and after them fasting is permitted. And what is the difference between this and that? These, Shabbat and Festivals, are statements of Torah, and statements of Torah do not require reinforcement, whereas these days mentioned in Megillat Tannit are statements of rabbinic law, and statements of rabbinic law require reinforcement.

§ The Master said above: From the eighth of Nisan until the end of the Festival of Passover, the Festival of Shavuot was restored and it was decreed not to eulogize. The Gemara asks: Why do I need Megillat Tannit to say: Until the end of the Festival? Let it say: Until the Festival, as it is anyway prohibited to eulogize on the festival of Passover. Rav Pappa said that this, too, should be explained as Rav said: It is necessary to mention the first of Nisan

only to prohibit eulogizing on the day before. Here too, it is necessary to mention Passover only to prohibit eulogizing on the following day. The Gemara asks: In accordance with whose opinion is this ruling? It is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosei, who said that eulogizing is prohibited both on the day before the date recorded in Megillat Tannit and on the following day. The Gemara asks: If so, with regard to the twenty-ninth of Adar too, why state specifically that eulogizing is prohibited then because it is the day before the day on which the daily offering was established? Let him derive this prohibition from the fact that it is the day after the twenty-eighth of Adar.

As it is taught in Megillat Tannit: On the twenty-eighth of Adar good tidings came to the Jews, that they would not be restricted from Torah study, and they declared this date a commemorative day. The baraita proceeds to describe the events of this day. As on one occasion the wicked empire, Rome, issued a decree of apostasy against the Jews, that they may not occupy themselves with Torah study, and that they may not circumcise their sons, and that they must desecrate Shabbat. What did Yehuda ben Shammua and his colleagues do? They went and sought the advice of a certain Roman matron [matronita] whose company was kept by all the prominent people of Rome.

As the New Moon is itself a holiday—Rashi explains that the New Moon is considered a holiday in accordance with the interpretation of the verse: “He has called a solemn assembly [moed] against me” (Lamentations 1:15), as a reference to the New Moon (see 2:9). The term moed is one of the biblical synonyms for a holiday. Others suggest that the verse “And on the day of your rejoicing, and on your appointed seasons, and on your New Moons” (Numbers 10:10) equates New Moons and the other holidays with regard to fasting and eulogizing (Rabbi Elyakim).

As it is taught in a baraita: With regard to these days that are written in Megillat Tannit, it is prohibited to fast before them and after them. However, concerning Shabbatot and Festivals, fasting on those days is prohibited, but before them and after them fasting is permitted. And what is the difference between this and that? These, Shabbat and Festivals, are statements of Torah, and statements of Torah do not require reinforcement, whereas these days mentioned in Megillat Tannit are statements of rabbinic law, and statements of rabbinic law require reinforcement.

The Gemara asks: And with regard to the day before the New Moon of Nisan as well, one can derive the prohibition against eulogizing on this day from the fact that it is the day before the New Moon. Since it is prohibited to fast on the New Moon, it is likewise prohibited on the day before. The Gemara answers that as the New Moon is by Torah law and a Torah law requires no reinforcement, it is permitted to fast on the previous day.

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