do items that are generally considered interpositions that invalidate an immersion interpose in this immersion, or do they not interpose, since the immersion is only ancillary and serves as a reminder? Rav Yosef said to him: All ordinances that the Sages instituted, they instituted parallel to Torah law. Therefore, this immersion by rabbinic law has the same basic parameters as immersion by Torah law. There may be no interposition.

Abaye said to Rav Yosef: Is partial entry, when one enters a certain place with only part of his body, considered entry or not? Rav Yosef said to him: The thumbs of the leper will prove this point, as the leper reaching his thumbs into the Temple constitutes partial entry, and it was taught in a baraita: A leper immerses and stands at the Gate of Nicano, indicating that immersion is required before even partial entry. A dilemma was raised before the Sages: What is the halakha; may an impure person craft a very long knife and slaughter an animal in the Temple courtyard while remaining outside the courtyard? Is it the essence of the service that requires immersion, or is it entry into the courtyard that requires immersion?

The Gemara comments: Raise the dilemma according to ben Zoma, who rules stringently with regard to immersion; and raise the dilemma according to the Rabbis who disagree with Rabbi Yehuda and do not obligate all people in this immersion. The Gemara elaborates: Raise the dilemma according to ben Zoma: Does ben Zoma require immersion only for entry inside the courtyard; however, for standing outside the courtyard, no, he does not require immersion? Or perhaps even for one standing outside the courtyard ben Zoma requires immersion, lest he inadvertently come to be drawn inside in the course of his service.

Similarly, raise the dilemma according to the Rabbis, who disagree with Rabbi Yehuda: How so? Do the Rabbis say that there is no requirement of immersion only there, where he is not performing any Temple service; however, here, where he is performing service, no, they would require immersion? Or perhaps there is no difference, and they would not require immersion under any circumstances. The Gemara concludes: The dilemma shall stand unresolved.

All ordinances that the Sages instituted – The philosophy behind this statement is that the Sages institute only ordinances that have parallels in the Torah, so that their ordinances would not be perceived as completely independent of the Torah. Although the Sages instituted entirely new ordinances, they were based on various Torah regulations. However, the differences between the severity of Torah law and the relative leniency of rabbinic law remain clear. Some commentators suggest that the need for this distinction existed only with regard to tannaitic ordinances and not those instituted by the amoraim, as no one would confuse their ordinances with Torah law (Tosafot; Ba’er Hevroni).

Partial entry – The dilemma with regard to partial entry is not limited to the matter of immersion but is raised in the context of other halakhot as well. One example would be with regard to the liability of an impure person who partially enters the Temple-grounds. Because the fundamental dilemma is not resolved, it had to be raised in the context of the case here and the Gemara could not rely on the discussion of the principle elsewhere (Gevurat Ari).

A long knife – The dilemma is posed in this manner even though, practically speaking, it is difficult to imagine effectively slaughtering an animal with a knife of that kind. As is common in talmudic discourse, the Gemara merely cites the example to clarify a principle.

And raise the dilemma according to the Rabbis – Some explain that the dilemma could be raised according to Rabbi Yehuda as well (Gevurat Ari). However, it was unnecessary to raise the dilemma according to Rabbi Yehuda once it was raised according to the Rabbis. Since the Rabbis are more lenient than Rabbi Yehuda with regard to immersion, certainly the dilemma could be raised according to Rabbi Yehuda as well.
It was taught in the mishna: Five immersions and ten sanctifications the High Priest immerses and sanctifies his hands and feet, respectively. The Sages taught in a baraita: Five immersions and ten sanctifications the High Priest immerses and sanctifies his hands and feet, respectively, on the day of Yom Kippur. And all of these immersions and sanctifications take place in the sacred area, the Temple courtyard, in the Hall of Parus, except for this first immersion, which was in the non-sacred area on the roof of Gate of the Water, and that gate was alongside his chamber. Abaye said: Conclude from that which was taught in this baraita that Ein Eitam, 8 the spring from which water was supplied to the Temple, was twenty-three cubits higher than the ground of the Temple courtyard.

As we learned in a mishna: All the entrances that were there in the Temple, their height is twenty cubits and their width is ten cubits, except for the entrance to the Entrance Hall of the Sanctuary, which was twice that, i.e., forty cubits high and twenty cubits wide. And it was taught in a baraita that it is stated: “And he shall wash his flesh in water” (Leviticus 15:13), and it is stated in another verse: “And he shall wash all of his flesh in water” (Leviticus 15:16). This refers to water known as the waters of a ritual bath. The verse adds the emphasis: All of his flesh, to say that immersion must be in water that one’s entire body enters6 at the same time.9 And how much water is it? It is one cubit length by one cubit width by a height of three cubits. 10 That is sufficient water to cover a person’s height. And the Sages calculated that the volume of the waters of a ritual bath that fit into that space is forty se’ah.

NOTES

2 Twenty-three cubits – Tosafot: There is no obligation for a ritual bath to be three cubits high, and in fact, even a ritual bath that is three cubits long and one cubit high is acceptable. Nevertheless, since the ritual bath was constructed for the High Priest, who was required to immerse multiple times, it was built to enable him to immerse without exertion, rather than forcing him to immerse lying down (Tosafot Yeshanim, Tosafot Hallah).

5 By a height of three cubits – Tosafot and the gronim dispute whether the height of an average man is indeed three cubits or whether that measure excludes the head. Even if it is the latter, a person entering a ritual bath would displace enough water to cover his head (Ritva).

BACKGROUND

Immersion – מים ס xu yי. To achieve purification in a ritual bath or a spring, an individual must completely submerge his body all at once. The measure of the water in which this can be accomplished is one cubit by one cubit by three cubits of water (Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De’a 31:1).

Water that one’s entire body enters – מים ש xu yי ע xu yי. Some ancient ritual baths found in Israel illustrate how small a ritual bath may be. The image below is of such a ritual bath found at Herodion, which is south of Jerusalem in modern-day Gush Etzion. The stairs are part of the bath itself.
**HALAKHA**

They spread a sheet of fine linen – ספה ירва מחתף - before the daily offering was slaughtered, a linen sheet was spread between the High Priest and the people. The reason that it was specifically a linen sheet was so that the High Priest would be aware that he is to perform the Yom Kippur service wearing linen garments (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Avodat Yom HaKippurim 4:4).

He removed the white garments, descended, and immersed – רדן, דק, טנק. The High Priest was required to immerse whenever he changed his garments (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Avodat Yom HaKippurim 2:2).

The slaughter of the daily offering – בהקטום: On Yom Kippur, the High Priest slaughters the daily offering by cutting the majority of each of the two organs, the windpipe and the guilot, and another person completes the slaughter. The High Priest then receives the blood in a vessel and sprinkles it on the altar (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Avodat Yom HaKippurim 4:1).

The immersion of an old High Priest – מי חרב נבదל חרב: If the High Priest was old or sick, they heated up chunks of iron in the fire on Yom Kippur eve and the next day put them in the ritual bath to temper the water’s chill. Alternatively, they would mix hot water into the cold water of the ritual bath (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Avodat Yom HaKippurim 3:4).

So that he will be aware that the service of the day of Yom Kippur is performed in fine linen garments – ס洳כי סאה מחתף במדי כותב ירווה: This statement and spreading the linen sheet actually belong elsewhere, with regard to a different immersion: The immersion performed before the High Priest dons the white garments. Spreading the linen sheet is necessary then so that he does not mistakenly don the golden garments instead. However, since the service of the day is performed in white garments, they spread a linen sheet to remind him of that fact and did not distinguish between one immersion and another (Yoreh De’ah 65).

He ascended and dried himself – מהじゃ נשב ורחבי: The High Priest did not merely dry himself because it is what one who is wet does; rather, the drying had import in and of itself. Several explanations have been given for it. The author of the Mishne Le’Eishel suggests that the High Priest needed to dry himself so that the water would not serve as an interposition between his garments and his skin. Another explanation is that if the High Priest enjoyed the cooling effect of the water as it remained on his skin, he would violate the prohibition against bathing on Yom Kippur (Rabbi Meir Arak).

And the daily griddle-cake offering – קקך: Many commentators ask why the mishna does not include the flour brought as a meal-offering accompanying the daily offering among the items brought by the High Priest. Some answer that it is subsumed in the mention of the griddle-cake offering, which is also a meal-offering (Lehem Shanayim, Melechet Shiloa). Alternatively, once the mishna mentions the libation of wine, the meal-offering that accompanies the offering need not be listed, as the meal-offering and the libations are always brought together (Sad Hitzich).

**NOTES**

So we learned in the mishna: They spread a sheet of fine linen between the High Priest and the people in the interest of modesty. The Gemara asks: What is different? They specifically used a sheet of fine linen? The Gemara answers: It is as Rav Kahana said with regard to a related issue: So that he will be aware that the service of the day of Yom Kippur is performed in fine linen garments. Here, too, a linen sheet was used so that he will be aware that the service of the day of Yom Kippur is performed in fine linen garments.

**MISHNA**

The High Priest removed the white garments that he was wearing, descended to the ritual bath, and immersed. He ascended and dried himself with a towel. Then they brought him the golden garments of the High Priest, and he dressed in the garments, and he sanctified his hands and his feet. They brought him the sheep for the daily morning offering, which he slaughtered by cutting most of the way through the guilot and the windpipe. And a different priest completed the slaughter on his behalf so that the High Priest could receive the blood in a vessel and proceed with the order of the Yom Kippur service. As soon as the slaughter was completed, the High Priest received the blood in a vessel and sprinkled it on the altar.

He entered the Sanctuary to burn the morning incense and to remove the ashes from the lamps of the candelabrum; and he left the Sanctuary and returned to the courtyard to sacrifice the head and the limbs of the sheep sacrificed for the daily offering and the High Priest’s daily griddle-cake offering, and the wine libation of the daily offering. The Mishina comments: The morning incense was burned between the receiving and sprinkling of the blood and the burning of the limbs; and the afternoon incense was burned between the taking of the limbs up to the altar and the pouring of the libations that accompanied the offering.

With regard to the immersion, if the High Priest was old and found it difficult to immerse in cold water, or if he was delicate, they would heat hot water for him on Yom Kippur eve and place it into the cold water of the ritual bath in order to temper its chill so the High Priest could immerse without discomfort.

**GEMARA**

The Sages said this matter before Rav Pappa: This mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Meir, as, if it were in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Meir, since he said: The High Priest performs two sanctifications of his hands and his feet upon each change of garments, once before donning the garments and once after donning them, here too, in the mishna, let him perform two sanctifications upon the change of garments. However, the description in the mishna indicates that he removes his garments and does not sanctify his hands and feet.
Rav Pappa said to them: Both according to the opinion of the Rabbis and according to the opinion of Rabbi Meir, there is one sanctification upon removal of sacred garments, and one sanctification upon donning other sacred garments. And here, it is with regard to this issue that they disagree. It is written: And he shall remove the linen garments that he put on when he entered the Sanctuary and leave them there. And he shall wash his flesh in water in a sacred place and he shall put on his garments (Leviticus 16:23–24). Rabbi Meir holds: The Torah juxtaposes removal of garments to donning of garments for the following reason: Just as when donning the garments, he dons the garments and afterward sanctifies his hands and feet, so too, with regard to removal of the garments, he removes the garments and afterward sanctifies his hands and feet.

And the Rabbis hold that the Torah juxtaposes removal of garments to donning of garments for the following reason: Just as when donning the garments, when he is dressed, he sanctifies his hands and feet; so too, for removal of the garments, he sanctifies his hands and feet when he is dressed. Therefore, when he completes the service he sanctifies his hands and feet and only then removes the garments. However, the first time that the High Priest dons the priestly vestments on Yom Kippur he certainly does not require two sanctifications, since at that point he does not remove any other garments.

The Sages said to Rav Pappa: And how can you say that according to Rabbi Meir the first time that the High Priest dons the garments he does not require two sanctifications? Wasn’t it taught in a baraita as follows? They spread a sheet of fine linen between him and the people, and he removed his garments and descended and immersed, and he ascended and dried himself. They brought him golden garments, and he donned them, and he sanctified his hands and his feet. Rabbi Meir says: He removed his garments and sanctified his hands and feet, and he ascended and dried himself. They brought him golden garments and he donned them and sanctified his hands and his feet. Apparently, Rabbi Meir maintains that there is a special sanctification prior to donning the garments. He said to them: If it was taught, it was taught. Even though the amora’im were well versed in the entire Mishna, it is possible that their knowledge of baraitot was less extensive. Baraitot were collected in different anthologies, and not every Sage was familiar with all the baraitot taught in different places.

The Gemara asks: Granted, according to the approach of Rabbi Meir, that is how you find that possibility of

ten sanctifications, as according to his opinion each of the five immersions is accompanied by two sanctifications. However, according to the opinion of the Rabbis who do not require sanctification before donning the garments for the first time, only nine sanctifications are performed. The Gemara answers that The Rabbis could have said to you: With regard to the final sanctification, when he removes the sacred garments and dons non-sacrificial garments, he performs it there. According to the Rabbis’ opinion, he sanctifies his hands and his feet when he removes the sacred garments. Rabbi Meir holds that sanctification of his hands and feet is performed only before donning sacred garments.