I will burn them – umas ḥakham: This is why the verse speaks about “each man with his censor in his hand.” The people sinned by burning incense to foreign gods, they were therefore punished by fire (Mahanah).

The man clothed in linen – םירבד תבייח ישון: In the book of Daniel (10:5), the man wearing linen also appears. He is the angel Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel previously (9:21). From this, we learn that the man wearing linen in the book of Ezekiel is also the angel Gabriel.

Gabriel – דְּרָכָי: Everything described here is allegory and allusion. Gabriel is the angel in charge of strength and justice, which is why he is referred to as the angel of fire by the Gemara (see Pesahim 118b). However, the justice he dispenses is not directed at punishing the Jewish people; it is righteous justice. He makes sure that the Jews are judged favorably, even in the face of valid accusations.

One should not deliver a report about destruction – יָדְקָהָה בְּלַעֲבֶר: It is a rule of etiquette that a messenger reports to his overseer when he has successfully concluded his task. However, if he is reporting about a mission of destruction, it is inappropriate for the messenger to boast about his achievement, so as not to associate his overseer with the destruction. Instead, the messenger should only allude to the completion of his task.

Dubiel the ministering angel of the Persians – רְבֵּץ: He was probably given this name because the Persian kingdom is represented as a bear (see Daniel 7:5). The Sages also describe many acts of the Persians that resemble the behavior of bears.

Curtain (pargod) – פרגוד: From the Greek παραγοῦν, pargouda, or the Latin paragauda, both of which derive from Old Persian. One sense of pargod is that of a specific type of screen. The pargod screen was used by Iranian kings. When sitting behind it, they could only be heard but not seen. This is the source of the image of the Divine Presence concealed behind the pargod.

Blows (pulset): פָּרָס: Apparently from the Latin word pulsus, meaning a blow or hit.

In the place of [bahrakel] – בתוּאַרֶךְ: Probably from the Iranian vihīq. The closest term in Middle Persian is apparently guhrīg, meaning equivalent.

Masḥīq – מַשְׁחִיר: The correct version of this place name seems to be màšmàlíh, an island in the Persian Gulf between Oman and Bahrain.

there was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes jealousy” (Ezekiel 8:3). “And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord’s House, and beheld at the opening of the Entrance Hall of the Sanctuary of God, between the porch and the altar were about twenty-five men with the chairs back toward the Temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east, and they worshipped the sun back toward the east” (Ezekiel 8:16). The Gemara explains: From the fact that it is stated “and their faces toward the east,” is it not clear that their backs were toward the Sanctuary, which is in the west? Rather, what is the meaning when the verse states “their backs toward the Temple of the Lord”? This teaches that they would uncover themselves and defecate downward, toward the Divine Presence. The verse used a euphemism to refrain from vulgar language.

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Michael, the ministering angel of the Jewish people: Michael, your nation has sinned (see Daniel 10:21). He replied: Master of the Universe, may it be for enough good people among them to save them from destruction. He said to him: I will burn them and the good among them because the good do not rebuke the wicked. Immediately, God spoke to Gabriel: “He spoke to the man clothed in linen and said: Go in between the wheelwork and beneath the cherub, and fill your hands with coals of fire from between the cherubus, and scatter them over the city; and he came before my eyes” (Ezekiel 10:2). Immediately: And the cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubus into the fire that was between the cherubus, and took it and put it into the hands of him that was clothed in linen, who took it and went out” (Ezekiel 10:7).

Rav Hana bar Bizna said that Rabbi Shimon Hasida said: If it were not for the fact that the embers cooled as they were passed from the hand of the cherub to the hand of Gabriel, instead of Gabriel taking the embers directly himself as he had been told, not a remnant or a refugee of the enemies of the Jewish people, a euphemism for the Jewish people themselves, would have survived. The cooling of the embers limited the punishment.

The Gemara continues. And it is written: “And behold, the man clothed in linen with the side by his side, reported the matter saying: I have done as You have commanded me” (Ezekiel 9:11). Rabbi Yohanan said: At that moment, they cast out Gabriel from behind the curtain [pargod], where the inner angels reside, and they struck him with sixty blows [pulset] of fire. They said to him: If you did not do it, you did not do it; if you did do it, why did you not do it according to what you were commanded but deviated from what you were instructed to do? Moreover, after you already did it, do you not have knowledge of the principle: One should not deliver a report about destruction? If one is sent on a mission of destruction, he should not deliver a detailed report of its success but should only hint at it.

They then brought Dubiel, the ministering angel of Persia and put him in the place of [bahrakel]. Gabriel and he served for twenty-one days. As it is written: “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia stood opposed to me for twenty-one days, but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me and I remained there beside the kings of Persia” (Daniel 10:13). Corresponding to those twenty-one days, they gave him, the ministering angel of Persia, twenty-one kings who ruled and the seaport of Masḥīq.

a. In the book of Daniel, 10:5, the man wearing linen also appears. He is the angel Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel previously (9:21). From this, we learn that the man wearing linen in the book of Ezekiel is also the angel Gabriel.

b. He was probably given this name because the Persian kingdom is represented as a bear (see Daniel 7:5). The Sages also describe many acts of the Persians that resemble the behavior of bears.
The ministering angel of the Persians said: Write for me that the Jews must pay taxes [arkaga] to the Persians. They wrote it for him as he asked. He said: Write for me that the Sages must pay taxes. They wrote this for him. When they wanted to sign the documents, Gabriel stood before the curtain and said: “It is vain for you who rise early who sit up late to eat the bread of sorrow, for He gives His beloved sleep” (Psalms 127:2). What does “for He gives His beloved sleep” mean? Rav Yitzḥak said: These are the wives of Torah scholars who disturb their sleep in this world by staying up waiting for their husbands, who rise early and return late from learning Torah, and they thereby merit the World-to-Come. Gabriel asked: Is this the reward they deserve, to pay more taxes? They did not listen to Gabriel.

He came and found Dubiel the ministering angel of the Persians holding the letter in his hand. Gabriel wanted to take the letter from him, but Dubiel swallowed it. Some say the letter was written, but it was not signed. Some say it was also signed, but when he swallowed it, the signature was erased.

The Gemara comments: ‘This is why, in the kingdom of Persia, there are those who pay taxes and there are those who do not pay taxes, as the decree was not finalized. It also states there: ‘And when I depart from him, the prince of Greece comes’ (Daniel 10:20). Gabriel screamed and screamed that the kings of Greece should not rule over the Jews, but no one listened to him.

The Gemara returns to the issue of whether refraining from bathing is considered affliction. If you wish, say instead: The fact that bathing is considered affliction, from where do we derive this? As it is written: ‘And to Ebiathar the priest the king said: Get to Anatoth to your house; your house is good news from a far country’ (Proverbs 24:26). And it is written with regard to David: ‘For they said the people is hungry and weary, and thirsty in the wilderness’ (1 Samuel 17:29). Hunger means from lack of bread to eat, and thirst means from lack of water to drink. The word weary means lack from what? Is it not from bathing? The comparison of the verses suggests that that too is affliction. The Gemara challenges: And perhaps “weary” means from lack of wearing shoes? Therefore, this does not teach us that refraining from bathing is considered an affliction.

Rather, another source needs to be found. Rav Yitzḥak said: It can be derived from here: “As cold water on a weary soul, so is good news from a far country” (Proverbs 25:25). This implies that the word weary is used to describe someone who has not bathed. The Gemara asks: But perhaps the verse is referring to weariness from not drinking? The Gemara rejects this: Is it written: “As cold water on a weary soul?” That would mean that it entered one like a drink. Rather, “on a weary soul” is written, which implies bathing.
With patched shoes – The Sages said that a Torah scholar should not wear patched shoes because this is considered disgraceful. A Torah scholar who does wear such shoes is considered to be walking barefoot.

Rather, Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: We learn it from here, as it states: “Go and loose the sackcloth from your loins, and remove your shoe from your foot” (Isaiah 20:2). And it is written: “And he did so, walking naked and barefoot” (Isaiah 20:2). Barefoot implies a lack of what? Is it not a lack of wearing shoes? The Gemara challenges: And say that perhaps the meaning of barefoot is that Isaiah walked with patched shoes. Because if you do not say this, but you claim that the verse is to be understood literally, does “naked” mean actually naked? Rather, the meaning is that Isaiah walked in ragged garments. Here too, the meaning is that he walked in patched shoes.

Rather, a different source must be found. Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said that we derive it from here: It states: “Withhold your foot from being barefoot, and your throat from thirst” (Jeremiah 2:13), meaning: Keep yourself from sin, so that your feet will not come to be barefoot; keep your tongue from idle talk, so that your throat will not come to be thirsty. Consequently, we learn that being barefoot is considered an affliction.

The Gemara continues to clarify another of the afflictions of Yom Kippur: From where do we derive the halakha that refraining from conjugal relations is called affliction? As it is written, Laban said to Jacob: “If you shall afflict my daughters, and if you shall take other wives beside my daughters” (Genesis 31:50).

This can be explained as: “If you shall afflict my daughters” by refraining from conjugal relations, “and if you shall take other wives” causing them to suffer from additional rival wives. The Gemara objects: And say that this phrase and that phrase are both referring to taking rival wives. The Gemara rejects this: Is it written: If you take? “And if you shall take” is written. Therefore, the clauses must be referring to two different kinds of affliction.

The Gemara challenges further: And say that this phrase and that phrase are referring to taking rival wives. One phrase is referring to his wives’ current rivals. “If you shall afflict” means that Jacob should not elevate the position of the two maidservants, Bilhah and Zilpah, to the status of wife, which would make them co-wives with Laban’s daughters. And one phrase is referring to rivals who might come to him from the world at large, which would be similar in meaning to “if you shall take.” The Gemara rejects this: Is it written: If you take? “And if you shall take” is written.
The Sages therefore decreed that he should wash both hands. However, if one is ill or has scabs, a teacher is not permitted to pass through water on Yom Kippur. If so, how can it be said that the prohibition is in withholding conjugal relations? He said to him: There, Shechem afflicted her from different relations, meaning he slept with her in an unnatural way. That type of relations is clearly an affliction.

The Gemara clarifies some of the prohibitions relating to Yom Kippur. The Sages taught: It is prohibited to bathe part of the body just as it is prohibited to bathe the whole body. But if one is dirty from mud or excrement, he may bathe in his usual manner, and he need not be concerned about transgressing, since his goal is not pleasure. Similarly, it is prohibited to smear oil on part of the body just as it is prohibited to smear oil on the whole body. But if one was sick and needed to smear oil on his body for medicinal purposes, or if one had scabs on his head that would hurt if he did not smear oil on himself, he may spread oil in his usual manner, and he need not be concerned about transgressing.

The school of Menashe taught that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A woman may rinse one hand in water, so that she does not touch food before she has washed her hands in the morning, and give bread to her child, and she need not be concerned about violating the prohibition of bathing on Yom Kippur.

They said about Shammai the Elder that he did not want to feed his children with one hand, to avoid having to wash it. This prevented the children from eating during all of Yom Kippur. Due to concerns about the health and the suffering of his children, they decreed that he must feed them with two hands, forcing him to wash both hands. What is the reason that they also said in general that one must wash his hands before touching food? Abaye said: Due to an evil spirit named Shitva, who resides on hands that have not been washed in the morning.

The Sages taught: One who goes to greet his father or his teacher, or to greet one who is greater than him in wisdom, and has to cross a river on the way, may cross the water until his neck is in the water, and he need not be concerned that he is violating the prohibition of bathing on Yom Kippur.

A dilemma was raised before them, i.e., the students discussing this question: What is the law concerning a teacher going to visit his student? May he enter the water in order to teach his student? The Gemara tries to bring a proof: Come and hear from what Rav Yitzhak bar bar Hana said: I saw Ze’eri, who went through a river on his way to Rav Hilya bar Ashi, his student. Rav Ashi said: This was not the case. Rather, in that case, it was the student Rav Hilya bar Ashi who went to Ze’eri, his teacher. Therefore, this incident does not answer the question.

Rava permitted those who lived on the right side of the Euphrates to pass through the water to guard the fruit in their fields on Yom Kippur. Abaye said to Rava: A baraita was taught that supports your opinion. We learned: Guards of fruit may cross the river until their necks are in the water, and they need not be concerned that they are violating the prohibition against bathing on Yom Kippur.

Rava permitted the people of the village of Bei Tarbu to cross in the water to come to the lecture he delivered on Yom Kippur. He did not, however, permit them to go back home through the water. Abaye said to him: If so, you are obstructing them from coming in the future. They will not come to the lecture knowing they will be prohibited from returning home. Some say the incident happened differently: Rava permitted them to come and permitted them to go back through the water. Abaye said to him: Granted, you allow them to come, that is well. But what is the reason you allow them to go back? He said to him: So as not to obstruct them from coming in the future.
It is told: Rav Yehuda and Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yehuda were standing on the bank of the Pappa River next to the Hatzdud crossing, and Rami bar Pappa was standing on the other side of the river. He raised his voice to them and asked: What is the ruling with regard to crossing over to come to you to ask a halakha? Rav Yehuda said to him: It is Rav and Shmuel who both say: One may cross in the water, provided that he does not remove his hand from under the hem of his cloak. One may not raise the hems of his cloak to his shoulders to keep them dry, since this form of carrying renders one liable to bring a sin-offering. Rather, one should walk normally and get his clothes wet in the water. Some say this is not how the incident happened. Rather, Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yehuda said to him: We learned in a baraita: One may cross over, provided that he does not remove his hand from the hem of his cloak.

Rav Yosef strongly objects to this: And on a weekday is it permitted to walk in such deep water that it presents a danger of drowning? But isn’t it written with regard to the river that, in the future, will issue forth from the Holy of Holies: “He measured a thousand cubits, and led me through the water; the water was ankle deep” (Ezekiel 47:3); from here it is derived that one is permitted to pass through water that reaches up to the ankles.

Rav Yosef continues explaining the verse: “Again he measured a thousand and he led me through the water, the water was knee deep” (Ezekiel 47:4); from here it is derived that one is permitted to pass through water that reaches up to the knees. “He measured a thousand and led me through the water up to the waist” (Ezekiel 47:4); from here it is derived that one is permitted to pass through water that reaches up to the waist. From this point forward: “And he measured a thousand, a river that I could not pass through” (Ezekiel 47:5). This implies that one is never permitted to pass through water that is more than waist high, because it is dangerous.

Abaye said: That is not a proof, because a river with fast flowing water is different. If it is higher than one’s waist, he could drown. However, one is permitted to cross still water even if it is deeper than that.

§ Apropos the river that will flow in the future, the Gemara explains additional verses in Ezekiel. One might think that Ezekiel could cross the river by swimming. The verse states: “For the water had swollen into salu waters” (Ezekiel 47:5). What does “salu waters” mean? Water that can be traversed only with a boat [shiyuta], as sailing [shayta] is sometimes called swimming [sayha]. I might have thought Ezekiel could pass across in a small boat [burni]. Therefore, the verse states: “No galley with oars shall go” (Isaiah 33:21). I might have thought he could pass through in a large boat. Therefore, the verse states: “Neither shall a fishing boat [tsi adir] be able to cross it” (Isaiah 33:21). The Gemara asks: From where can it be inferred that the words tsi adir mean fishing boat? The Gemara explains: This is how Rav Yosef translated this verse: A fishing boat [mishnat tezayadin] will not travel on it and a large ship will not cross it.

The Gemara continues its discussion of the river that will in the future come out of the Holy of Holies. Rabbi Yehuda ben Pazi said: Even the Angel of Death\(^4\) does not have permission to pass through it to the other side of this river, and proof of this is in the verse, as it is written here: “No galley with oars [ani shayt] can travel” and as it was written there: “Then Satan answered the Lord and said: From going to and fro [mishtut] the earth and from walking up and down in it” (Job 1:7). Even Satan, who is also the Angel of Death, cannot cross through this river.
The Gemara cites more midrashim about the river that will flow from the Holy of Holies. Rabbi Pinehas said in the name of Rav Huna of Tzippari: The spring that comes forth from inside the Holy of Holies is at first very narrow and resembles grasshoppers’ antennae in width. Once it reaches the opening of the Sanctuary it becomes as thick as the thread of the warp; once it reaches the Entrance Hall of the Sanctuary, it becomes as thick as the thread of the woof, which is wider than the warp thread. Once it reaches the opening of the Temple courtyard it becomes like the mouth of a small jug. This is as we learned in a mishna: Rav Eliel ben Ya’akov says: Water,