

JUDAISM

The Talmud

Tamid

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Chapter 1

¹ MISHNA: The priests would keep watch in three places in the Temple courtyard, in honor of the Temple, like guards in royal courtyards: In the Chamber of Avtinas, which is the Chamber where the incense was prepared, and on the two sides of the northern section of the courtyard: In the Chamber of the Spark, where there was a small, perpetual fire, from which the fire of the altar would be lit if it went out; and in the Chamber of the Hearth, where there was also a fire, by which the priests would warm themselves when it was cold. In the Chamber of Avtinas and in the Chamber of the Spark there were upper stories, and the young priests, who were not yet eligible to serve in the Temple, would keep watch there.

² In the Chamber of the Hearth, there was no upper story, as its ceiling was round like a cupola. And it was a large hall, surrounded by rows of stone that protruded from the walls and that served as benches. The elders of the patrilineal priestly family that would serve in the Temple the following day would sleep there, and the keys to the Temple courtyard were in their possession.

³ The young men of the priesthood, who were old enough to serve in the Temple, would also sleep in the Chamber of the Hearth. They would not sleep on benches, but instead each of the priests would sleep with his garment on the ground. Furthermore, they would not sleep dressed in the sacred vestments; rather, they would remove them and fold them up. And then they would place their vestments on the floor beneath their heads, and cover themselves with their own non-sacred garments. If a seminal emission befell one of the priests, rendering him ritually impure and unfit for service, he would leave the Chamber of the Hearth, and he would walk

⁴ through the circuitous passage that extended beneath the Temple, as he could not pass through the Temple courtyard, due to his impurity. And there were lamps burning on this side and on that side of the passage. He would walk through the passage until he reached the Chamber of Immersion. And there was a fire burning there to warm the priests after they had immersed, and also a bathroom of honor, so that the priests could urinate before immersion. This was the manifestation of its honor: If one found the door closed, he would know that there was a person there, and he would wait for him to exit before entering. If one found the door open, it was known that there was no person there, and he could enter. In this manner, the one using it was afforded privacy.

⁵ After the priest descended and immersed in the ritual bath, he ascended and dried himself with a towel, and warmed himself opposite the fire. He then came back to the Chamber of the Hearth and sat with his brethren the priests until dawn, when the gates of the Temple courtyard would be opened. He would then leave the Temple and go on his way. Since the purification process of one who immerses is not complete until sunset, by rabbinic law he could not remain in the Temple during the daytime.

⁶ The mishna describes the commencement of the daily service in the Temple: Among the members of the priestly family who are to serve in the Temple that day, whoever wants to remove the ashes from the altar rises early and immerses himself in a ritual bath, as required of anyone who enters the Temple courtyard. He must immerse before the appointed priest arrives, as the appointed priest oversees the lottery that determines which priests perform the various rites of the Temple service, and the first of those lotteries determines who will be charged with the removal of the ashes. And at what time does the appointed priest arrive? The times of his arrival are not all the same. There are times that he comes at the call of the rooster [hagever], or he might come at an adjacent time, either before the call of the rooster or after it.

⁷ The appointed priest arrived at the Chamber of the Hearth, where the priests of the patrilineal family were assembled, and he knocked on the gate to alert them to open the gate for him. And when they opened the gate for him, he said to them: Whoever immersed in the ritual bath may come and participate in the lottery. They then conducted the lottery, and whoever won that lottery won the privilege to perform the rite of the removal of the ashes.

⁸ GEMARA: The mishna teaches that the priests would keep watch in three locations in the Temple. The Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived? Abaye said that they are derived from a verse, as the verse states: “And those that were to camp before the Tabernacle eastward, before the Tent of Meeting toward the sunrise, were Moses and Aaron and his sons, keeping the watch of the Sanctuary, for the watch of the children of Israel, and the non-priest who came near was to be put to death” (Numbers 3:38).

⁹ The Sages say in response: Yes, we have found in this verse that in general the Torah requires a watch to be kept. Furthermore, the verse indicates that it is the priests and Levites who are required to perform the watch, as it states the precedent of Moses, who was a Levite, and Aaron, who was a priest. But the mishna (Middot 1:1) teaches: The priests would keep watch in three places in the Temple courtyard...and the Levites in twenty-one places. According to the mishna, the priests and Levites kept watch in different locations, whereas in the verse the priests and the Levites are written together, indicating that they kept watch in the same places.

¹⁰ The Sages say that this is what the verse is saying: “And those that were to camp before the Tabernacle eastward, before the Tent of Meeting toward the sunrise, were Moses,” indicating that the Levites keep watch. And then the verse states with regard to the separate watch kept by the priests: “Aaron and his sons, keeping the watch of the Sanctuary.” Furthermore, the verse indicates that Aaron keeps watch in one place, and his sons keep watch in two other places, from which it is derived that the priests keep watch in three different places.

¹¹ The Gemara asks: From where is it derived that the verse should be interpreted in this manner? This is derived from the fact that it is written: “And those that were to camp...were Moses,” and it is written separately: “Aaron and his sons, keeping the watch.” This indicates that those who were to camp and thereby keep watch are discrete, and those keeping the watch are discrete, i.e., they perform different watches in separate places.

¹² The Gemara objects: One can say that all of the priests keep watch in one place that is discrete from the watches of the Levites, but not in three separate places. The Gemara explains: That possibility should not enter your mind, as the verse juxtaposes the watches of Moses and Aaron. This

indicates that just as Moses keeps watch in one place discretely, so too, Aaron and his sons each keep watch in one place discretely, and they do not keep watch together.

¹³ Rav Ashi said that the halakha that the priests keep watch in three places is derived from the end of the verse, which states: “Moses and Aaron and his sons, keeping [shomerim] the watch [mishmeret] of the Sanctuary, for the watch [lemishmeret] of the children of Israel.” The verse uses three terms from the root shin, mem, reish, which means to watch, indicating that there should be three separate watches.

¹⁴ § The mishna teaches that the Chamber of Avtinas and the Chamber of the Spark were upper stories. Concerning this, a dilemma was raised before the Sages: Were these halls actual upper stories? Or perhaps they were merely very tall, built upon pillars, and therefore were like upper stories.

¹⁵ The Gemara explains: Come and hear a resolution, as we learned in a mishna that discusses the seven gates to the Temple courtyard (Middot 1:5): There were three gates that were in the north, and the first of these was the Gate of the Spark. It was like a portico [akhsadra], and there was an upper story built atop it, where the honor guard stood, with the priests watching from above, in the upper story; and the Levites would keep watch from below. And the hall had an entrance toward the non-sacred area of the Temple Mount. This mishna indicates that the Chamber of the Spark was an actual upper story.

¹⁶ The Gemara asks: From where are these matters, that the priests and Levites kept watch on different stories, derived? This is derived from a verse, as the Sages taught in a baraita: The verse states that God said to Aaron: “And your brethren also, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, you shall bring near with you, that they may accompany you and serve you” (Numbers 18:2). The verse is speaking of the Levites accompanying Aaron in your, i.e., Aaron’s, service of keeping watch in the Temple, which is the only service performed by both priests and Levites. Since the verse speaks of the watch of the Levites only as an accompaniment to the watch of the priests, the Levites do not keep watch from above like the priests, but only from below.

¹⁷ The baraita asks: Do you say that the verse speaks of the Levites’ accompanying the priests in your service, of the priests keeping watch, or is it only stating that the Levites should accompany the priests through their own service of bearing the sacred vessels? The baraita explains that when the verse states: “And they shall accompany you, and they shall keep the watch of the Tent of Meeting” (Numbers 18:4), this is referring to keeping watch of all the Temple’s vessels and all its service, and consequently their own service of bearing the sacred vessels is already stated. How, then, do I realize the meaning of the previous verse: “That they may accompany you and serve you” (Numbers 18:2)? The verse is speaking of the Levites accompanying the priests in your service, of the priests keeping watch in the Temple. How so? The priests keep watch from above, and the Levites accompany them from below.

¹⁸ § With regard to the third place in which the priests would keep watch, the mishna states: In the Chamber of the Hearth the ceiling was round like a cupola, and it was a large hall.

¹⁹ The Gemara asks: But was there only one watchman in the Chamber of the Hearth? And the Gemara raises a contradiction from a mishna (Middot 1:7): The Chamber of the Hearth had two gates; one, on the north side, was open to the rampart, and one, on the south side, was open to the courtyard. Rabbi Yehuda said: This gate that was open to the courtyard had a small wicket in the door

of the gate, through which the priests would enter in order to examine the courtyard and ensure that everything was in order. The Chamber of the Hearth had two gates, and therefore there should have been two watchmen there. Abaye said: Since the two gates stood next to each other, i.e., directly opposite one another, it was sufficient for them to be watched by one watchman, who could look here and look there.

²⁰ § The mishna teaches that the Chamber of the Hearth was surrounded by rows of stone that protruded from the walls and that served as benches. The Gemara asks: What are these rows of stone? They are rows of chiseled stones by which the priests ascend to another row of stone, where they could lie down. The Gemara asks: And would they split the stones in the process of building the Temple? But isn't it written: "For the Temple, when it was being built, was built of whole stone made ready at the quarry; and there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the Temple, while it was being built" (I Kings 6:7)?

²¹ Abaye said: It was prohibited to use iron implements to cut the stones only inside the Temple area. In this case it was permitted to have chiseled stones, as the builders prepared the stones in another location. And the builders initially brought small stones and large stones with which to build the Temple, as it is written: "And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits" (I Kings 7:10). Accordingly, the larger stones were used for the lower tier, while the smaller stones were for the higher tier, forming protruding benches upon which the priests could sleep.

²² The mishna teaches that the elders of the patrilineal family that would serve in the Temple the following day would sleep there, on the rows of stone. The Gemara asks: But why did the priests sleep on the stones? Let them bring beds into the Chamber of the Hearth. Abaye said: It is not proper conduct to bring beds into the Temple.

²³ The mishna further teaches that with regard to the young men of the priesthood, each of them would sleep with his garment on the ground. The Gemara asks: Why is it that there, in the earlier mishna, the tanna calls them young [rovim] priests, whereas here, the tanna calls them

²⁴ the young men of the priesthood [pirḥei khehunna]? Is there a distinction between these different terms? The Sages say: Yes, there is a distinction. There, with regard to the priests who keep watch in the Chamber of Avtinas and in the Chamber of the Spark, the mishna is referring to priests who have not reached the age at which they are eligible to perform the Temple service, and therefore the tanna calls them young priests. The older priests would not keep watch, as they preferred to perform the Temple service. Here, with regard to the priests who sleep in the Chamber of the Hearth in order to be ready to perform the morning rites, the mishna is referring to priests who have reached the age at which they are eligible to perform the Temple service, and consequently the tanna calls them the young men of the priesthood.

²⁵ § We learned in a mishna elsewhere (Middot 1:1): The priests would keep watch in three places in the Temple courtyard: In the Chamber of Avtinas, and in the Chamber of the Spark, and in the Chamber of the Hearth.

²⁶ And the Levites would keep watch in twenty-one places, as follows: Five upon the five gates of the Temple Mount; four upon the four corners of the Temple Mount, within the wall surrounding the Temple Mount; five upon the five gates of the Temple courtyard, and four upon the four corners of the Temple courtyard outside the courtyard wall, surrounding the Temple courtyard. One watch is

observed in the Chamber of the Offering, where animals that had been checked for blemishes were held in readiness for sacrifice; one watch is kept in the Chamber of the Curtain, where the Curtain separating the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies was woven; and finally, one watch is kept behind the Chamber of the Ark Cover, in the area between the Holy of Holies and the western wall of the Temple Mount.

²⁷ With regard to these twenty-one places where the Levites keep watch, the Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived? Rav Yehuda of Sura said, and some say that it was taught in a baraita: This is derived as it is written with regard to the Levites assigned by David to serve as gatekeepers upon the future construction of the Temple: Eastward were six Levites, northward four Levites, southward four Levites, and for the Asuppim two and two. For the Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at the Parbar (see I Chronicles 26:17–18).

²⁸ The Sages say that if these verses are the source for the twenty-one places in which the Levites keep watch, that is difficult, as these watches enumerated in the verse are twenty-four in total. Abaye said: This is what the verse is saying: “For the Asuppim two,” and they are always only two. It is not uncommon for a verse to repeat a word for emphasis in this manner, especially at the end of a verse.

²⁹ The Gemara objects: Even if two locations are removed from the list, according to the verse there are still twenty-two watches, rather than twenty-one. The Gemara explains: That watch, which was situated at the Parbar, was composed of only one watchman, and as for the other Levite mentioned in the verse, it was merely to serve as company that he went and sat with the watchman, due to the fact that the Parbar was situated on the outer side and was isolated from the other watches.

³⁰ The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of the term “at the Parbar [laParbar]” (I Chronicles 26:18)? Rabba bar Rav Sheila said: This term is a contraction of two Aramaic words, and it is like one who says: Toward the outside [kelapei bar].

³¹ The Gemara presents an alternative answer to the question with regard to the verse: And if you wish, say instead that actually there are twenty-four watches, and the verse may be interpreted literally as it is written. Three of them are the watches kept by the priests, and the remaining twenty-one are the watches kept by the Levites.

³² The Gemara asks: But isn’t it written here in the verse that all twenty-four watches are kept by the Levites? The Gemara answers: This interpretation is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: In twenty-four places in the Bible the priests are called Levites, and this is one of them: “But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of My Sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me to serve Me” (Ezekiel 44:15).

³³ The mishna (Middot 1:1) teaches that five watches are kept upon the five gates of the Temple Mount, and four watches are kept upon the four corners of the Temple Mount within the Temple Mount wall. Five watches are kept upon the five gates of the Temple courtyard, and four are kept upon the four corners of the Temple courtyard outside the courtyard wall, on the Temple Mount. The Gemara asks: What is different with regard to the Temple Mount that we perform the watch within the walls, and what is different with regard to the Temple courtyard that we perform the watch outside its walls?

³⁴ The Sages say: With regard to the watches on the Temple Mount, if the watchman tires and wants to sit down, he may sit down, as it is permitted to sit on the Temple Mount. Therefore, we say that the watch is kept within the Temple Mount. By contrast, if a watch is observed in the Temple courtyard, even if the watchman tires and wants to sit down, he may not sit down, as the Master said: Sitting in the Temple courtyard is permitted only for kings of the house of David. Therefore, we say that the watch is kept outside the walls of the Temple courtyard, so that the watchman may sit down if he wishes.

³⁵ The Master said above that five watches are kept upon the five gates of the Temple courtyard. The Gemara asks: But was it only five gates that were constructed in the walls of the Temple courtyard? And the Gemara raises a contradiction from a mishna (Middot 1:4): There were seven gates in the Temple courtyard: Three in the north, and three in the south, and one in the east.

³⁶ Abaye said: Although there were seven gates, two of them, the gate to the Chamber of the Spark and the gate to the Chamber of the Hearth, did not require a watch of the Levites, as the priests kept watch there. Rava said: The number of gates is a dispute between tanna'im, as it is taught in a baraita: There must be no fewer than thirteen treasurers and seven trustees appointed over the Temple administration. Rabbi Natan says: There must be no fewer than thirteen treasurers, corresponding to the thirteen gates. Remove from the total of thirteen gates the five gates of the Temple Mount, and there remain eight gates to the Temple courtyard. Evidently, there is a tanna who said that there were eight gates, and there is a tanna who said that there were seven gates, and there is also a tanna who said that there were five gates.

³⁷ § The mishna (25b) teaches that the priests would not sleep dressed in the sacred vestments; rather, they would remove them and place them beneath their heads. The Gemara infers from here that it is only sleep that is not permitted while a priest is dressed in the sacred vestments, lest he pass wind during his sleep. But with regard to wearing such vestments while the priests are awake and engaged in various activities, e.g., walking, they may walk about dressed in the vestments, even when they do not need to wear them for the Temple service. You may therefore conclude from the mishna that it is permitted to derive benefit from priestly vestments.

³⁸ The Sages say that this inference is incorrect. The same is true of walking, as even walking while wearing the vestments is not permitted, and the reason that the tanna teaches specifically that the priests would not sleep dressed in the vestments is due to the fact that the tanna wanted to teach the latter clause: Rather, they would remove them and fold them, and then they would place them beneath their heads. Since the latter clause is referring specifically to sleeping, the tanna teaches in the former clause as well that the priests would not sleep dressed in the vestments.

³⁹ The Gemara objects: But according to this interpretation, the mishna itself is difficult, as the mishna states: And they would place the priestly vestments beneath their heads, as a cushion. One may conclude from this statement that it is permitted to derive benefit from priestly vestments. The Gemara rejects this interpretation: Say that the mishna means that they would place the vestments next to their heads, not literally beneath them.

⁴⁰ Rav Pappa said: One may conclude from this interpretation of the mishna that if one places phylacteries by the side of his head while he sleeps, they are in a permitted place. And we are not concerned that perhaps he will roll over in his sleep and fall upon them, which would degrade the phylacteries.

⁴¹ The Gemara comments: So too, it is reasonable to say that the mishna permits the vestments to be placed only next to their heads. As, if you say that the mishna permits the vestments to be placed literally beneath their heads, this is difficult. Granted that it is permitted to derive benefit from them, but one could derive that it is prohibited to sleep upon them due to the prohibition of diverse kinds of wool and linen. The priestly vestments contain both wool and linen, which is a prohibited mixture in every other context. The Torah specifically permits the priests to wear them while they are performing the Temple service, but this does not extend to using the vestments as a cushion while sleeping.

⁴² The Gemara explains the difficulty: If one maintains that the mishna permits the priests to place the vestments beneath their heads, this works out well according to the one who said that the belt of the High Priest is not the same as the belt of an ordinary priest. Although the belt of the High Priest was made of both wool and linen, the belt of ordinary priests, like the rest of their vestments, were made entirely of linen and did not contain diverse kinds. But according to the one who said that the belt of an ordinary priest is the same as the belt of the High Priest, what is there to say? Since the belt contained diverse kinds, how could the mishna possibly permit the priests to sleep upon their vestments?

⁴³ And if you would say that with regard to diverse kinds it is only placing the garment upon oneself or wearing it that is prohibited, but as for spreading it beneath you, it is permitted, this explanation is difficult. But isn't it taught in a baraita: The verse states: "Neither shall there come upon you a garment of diverse kinds" (Leviticus 19:19). One should infer as follows: But you may spread a garment of diverse kinds beneath you, in order to lie upon it. The baraita continues: This is the halakha by Torah law, but the Sages said that it is prohibited to do so, lest a single fiber wrap itself upon his flesh, which would cause him to be in transgression of the Torah prohibition. Accordingly, the priests should not be permitted to place vestments made of diverse kinds beneath their heads.

⁴⁴ And if you would say that the priests could place the vestments beneath their heads in such a manner that something separates between their flesh and the vestments, as the fibers could not wrap themselves upon their flesh, such conduct would still be prohibited. Doesn't Rabbi Shimon say that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says that Rabbi Yosei ben Shaul says in the name of the holy community in Jerusalem: Even if there are ten mattresses piled one atop the other and a garment of diverse kinds is placed beneath all of them, it is prohibited to sleep upon them? This is because the rabbinic decree applies equally to all cases, irrespective of whether the concern that motivated the decree exists. Rather, one may conclude from here that the mishna permits the vestments to be placed only next to their heads.

⁴⁵ The Gemara suggests alternative solutions: And if you wish, say instead that the mishna does permit the priests to place the vestments beneath their heads, as it is referring to those vestments that do not contain diverse kinds. Rav Ashi says: The mishna permits the priests to place even the belt that contains diverse kinds beneath their heads. This is because the priestly vestments, and specifically the belt, are stiff, and therefore it is not prohibited to lie on them. As Rav Huna, son of Rabbi Yehoshua, said: This stiff felt [namta], which is manufactured in the city of Neresh and is made of diverse kinds, is permitted. The prohibition of diverse kinds applies only to items that are similar to garments, which one derives pleasure from wearing. A stiff garment does not provide warmth, and is therefore not included in this prohibition.

⁴⁶ The Gemara returns to discuss the earlier dilemma, of whether it is permitted to derive benefit from priestly vestments. Come and hear a baraita: With regard to the priestly vestments, the act of one who leaves the Temple dressed in them and goes out to the country, i.e., outside the Temple, is prohibited. But in the Temple, both at the time of the Temple service and not at the time of the service, wearing the vestments is permitted, as it is permitted to derive benefit from the priestly vestments. The Gemara concludes: One may conclude from the baraita that it is permitted to derive benefit from the priestly vestments.

⁴⁷ According to the baraita, the priestly vestments may not be worn outside the Temple. The Gemara asks: And is it not permitted to wear the priestly vestments in the rest of the country, outside the Temple? But isn't it taught in a baraita, in connection with a date mentioned in Megillat Ta'anit: On the twenty-first of Tevet, this is the day of Mount Gerizim, which was established as a festive day, and therefore it is not permitted to eulogize. This date was established as a festive day because the Temple was saved from destruction on that day, due to the actions of Shimon HaTzaddik, the High Priest, as it is related in tractate Yoma (69a), in the seventh chapter, which begins: The High Priest came close to read the Torah.

⁴⁸ The baraita relates that Shimon HaTzaddik went to greet Alexander the Macedonian wearing the priestly vestments. The Gemara in Yoma cites the complete baraita, up to the Gemara's explanation as to why Shimon HaTzaddik wore the priestly vestments outside the Temple: If you wish, say that Shimon HaTzaddik did not wear consecrated priestly vestments. Rather, he wore garments that were fit to be priestly vestments, i.e., they were made of the same material and design.

⁴⁹ And if you wish, say instead that he did in fact wear consecrated priestly vestments. Although this is usually prohibited, in this instance it was permitted due to the principle: "It is time to act for the Lord; they have nullified Your Torah" (Psalms 119:126). In times of great need, such as when one seeks to prevent the destruction of the Temple, it is permitted to violate the halakha for the sake of Heaven, and the actions of Shimon HaTzaddik indeed averted the destruction.

⁵⁰ § The mishna teaches (25b): If a seminal emission befell one of the priests and rendered him ritually impure, he would leave the Chamber of the Hearth and he would walk through the circuitous passage that extended beneath the Temple, as he could not pass through the Temple courtyard, due to his impurity.

⁵¹ The Gemara notes that this mishna supports the opinion of Rabbi Yoḥanan, who says: The tunnels beneath the Temple Mount were not sanctified, neither with the sanctity of the Temple courtyard nor with the sanctity of the Temple Mount. The Gemara cites a related statement of Rabbi Yoḥanan: A man who experienced a seminal emission is sent outside of two camps, the camp of the Divine Presence and the camp of the Levites. Accordingly, he may not remain in the Temple courtyard, which has the status of the camp of the Divine Presence, nor on the Temple Mount, which has the status of the camp of the Levites.

⁵² The mishna teaches: And the lamps were burning on this side and on that side of the passage...and there was a bathroom of honor in the Chamber of Immersion. This was its honor: If one found the door closed, he would know that there was a person there, and he would wait for him to exit before entering. The Gemara relates: Rav Safra was sitting in the bathroom when Rabbi Abba came along. Since there was no door, Rabbi Abba coughed outside to alert anyone within of his presence and

thereby inquire whether he could enter. Rav Safra said to Rabbi Abba: Enter, Master, and Rabbi Abba therefore entered the bathroom.

⁵³ When he came out, Rabbi Abba said to Rav Safra: Until now, although you have traveled widely, you have never entered Seir, the land of the Edomites, who behave immodestly. Nevertheless, you have learned the ways of Seir. Didn't we learn this in the mishna: If one found the door closed, it was known that there was a person there, and one would wait for him to exit before entering. This serves to say that a person should not enter the bathroom while another person is inside. Therefore, Rav Safra should not have told Rabbi Abba to enter.

⁵⁴ The Gemara explains that Rav Safra told Rabbi Abba to enter because he thought: Perhaps Rabbi Abba is in danger. Rav Safra was concerned that if Rabbi Abba waited for him to exit, Rabbi Abba might jeopardize his health, as it was taught in a baraita that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A column of feces that is held back, because one refrains from relieving himself, causes a person to suffer from edema [hidrokan]. A stream of urine that is held back causes a person to suffer from jaundice [yerakon].

⁵⁵ Rav said to his son Ḥiyya, and likewise Rav Huna said to his son Rabba: Relieve yourself when it gets dark, and relieve yourself before daybreak, even if you have no particular need to do so. The reason is that the streets are mostly empty at these times, and one can relieve himself near his home without concern that he might be seen. This is important, so that you will not have to relieve yourself during the day, when the streets are full, and you will be compelled to retain your feces while you distance yourself, which is liable to jeopardize your health. Furthermore, when relieving yourself, you should behave modestly. Sit down first and only then uncover yourself; afterward, cover yourself first and only then stand up.

⁵⁶ With regard to drinking, these amora'im instructed their sons: When you drink wine, rinse the cup first and only then drink from it; after you drink, rinse the cup and only then set it back in its place. But when you drink water, it is not necessary to rinse the cup afterward; rather, pour out some of the water to rinse the rim of the cup, and afterward you may give the cup to your student, if he wants to drink.

⁵⁷ As it is taught in a baraita: A person should not drink water and give the remaining water to his student, unless he first poured some of it out. And there was an incident involving a certain individual who drank water and did not pour some of it out, and he gave the cup to his student. And that student was a delicate person [istenis], and due to his sensitivity he did not want to drink from the cup, and he died of thirst. At that time, the Sages said: A person should not drink water and give the remaining water to his student unless he first poured some of it out. Rav Ashi said: Therefore, in the case of this student who pours water from the cup that his teacher drank from first, even if he does so in the presence of his teacher, his actions are not prohibited due to disrespect [afkiruta].

⁵⁸ With regard to eating, these amora'im instructed their sons: In the case of anything that you are eating, if the food causes you to salivate and you need to spit out the saliva, do not spit it out in the presence of your teacher, as it is disrespectful, except in the case of a dish of gourd or porridge. If one is eating gourds or porridge he may spit out the saliva even in the presence of his teacher, as the saliva generated by these items is like a molten bar of lead, and refraining from spitting it out would be dangerous.

⁵⁹ § We learned in a mishna elsewhere (Middot 1:2): The man [ish] in charge of overseeing the watches of the Temple Mount would circulate nightly among each and every watch post, to ascertain that the watchmen were awake and performing their duty properly. And there were lit torches carried before him, so that the watchmen would see him approaching. And at every watch post where the watchman would not stand up, the man would test whether the watchman was sleeping; and the man of the Temple Mount would say to him:

⁶⁰ Peace be upon you. If he would not reply, it was evident that he was sleeping. The man of the Temple Mount would therefore strike him with his staff, and he even had license to burn the watchman's garment, in order to discipline him. And those overhearing the watchman being rebuked would say to one another: What is that sound in the Temple courtyard? It is the sound of a Levite being flogged and having his clothing burned, as he was caught sleeping during his watch. Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov says: Once, the supervisors found my mother's brother sleeping on his watch, and they burned his garment.

⁶¹ Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba says: When Rabbi Yoḥanan would reach this mishna in his studies, he would say this: The early generations were praiseworthy, as they meted out judgment even in the case of an offense caused by unavoidable sleep; and all the more so would they mete out judgment in the case of offenses that were not caused by unavoidable sleep.

⁶² It is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: Which way of life is an upright path that a person should select for himself; what should be his guiding principle? One should love admonition, for as long as statements of admonition from the wise are heard in the world, pleasantness comes into the world, goodness and blessing come into the world, and evil departs from the world, as it is stated: "But to those who admonish shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them" (Proverbs 24:25). And some say: The path one should select is to adhere to utmost faithfulness in business and interpersonal relations, as it is stated: "My eyes are upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with Me; he who walks in a way of integrity, he shall serve Me" (Psalms 101:6).

⁶³ Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani says that Rabbi Yonatan says: Anyone who rebukes another for the sake of Heaven is privileged to dwell in the portion of the Holy One, Blessed be He, as it is stated: "He that rebukes a man shall be behind Me" (Proverbs 28:23), i.e., with Me. Moreover, the heavenly court extends over him a cord of divine grace, as it is stated in the same verse: "He will find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue."

⁶⁴ § The mishna teaches (26a): If one found the bathroom door closed, he would know that there was a person there. The mishna then describes the commencement of the daily service in the Temple: Whoever wants to remove the ashes from the altar rises early and immerses himself before the appointed priest arrives. The Gemara objects: This mishna itself is difficult. You first said: Whoever wants to remove the ashes from the altar rises early and immerses himself before the appointed priest arrives. Evidently, the matter of determining who removes the ashes is not dependent upon a lottery; rather, whoever is ready first is entitled to remove the ashes. Otherwise, only the one selected would then immerse. But afterward, the mishna teaches that the appointed priest says to the other priests: Whoever immersed may come and participate in the lottery. Evidently, the matter is dependent upon a lottery. How can this contradiction be resolved?

⁶⁵ Abaye said: This is not difficult. Here, when the mishna indicates that whoever is ready first is entitled to remove the ashes, it is describing the procedure before the Sages enacted the ordinance of

a lottery. There, when the mishna states that the appointed priest conducts a lottery, it is describing the procedure after they enacted the ordinance.

⁶⁶ As we learned in a mishna (Yoma 22a): Initially, the practice was as follows: Whoever wants to remove the ashes from the altar removes them. When there are many priests who wish to perform that task, the matter is determined by a race: The priests run and ascend on the ramp leading to the top of the altar. Any priest who precedes the other and reaches within four cubits of the top of the altar first is privileged to remove the ashes. If two priests were equal and neither preceded the other, the appointed priest says to them: Raise your fingers, and a lottery is performed.

⁶⁷ And what fingers do they extend for the lottery? They may extend one or two fingers. The lottery was then conducted when the priests chose an arbitrary number, after which the appointee counted the raised fingers of the priests, who stood in a circle. He would go around the circle counting the fingers until he reached the chosen number, and the priest at whom the count ended won the lottery. And the priests do not extend a thumb in the Temple, as using the thumb might enable someone to manipulate the lottery. As the count progressed, a priest could calculate the result and surreptitiously extend his thumb and an additional finger. Since there is separation between the thumb and the forefinger it might appear as though they belonged to two different priests, and in this manner one could cause the lottery to conclude with a different priest.

⁶⁸ The mishna continues: That used to be the procedure, but an incident occurred in which two priests were equal as they were running and ascending on the ramp; and one of them shoved the other and he fell, and his leg was broken. And when the court saw that people were coming to potential danger, they instituted that the priests would remove the ashes from the altar only by means of a lottery.

⁶⁹ Rava said: Both this clause, which states that to remove the ashes the priests must rise early and be prepared, and that clause, which states that a lottery is conducted, are describing the procedure after the ordinance. And this is what the mishna is teaching: Whoever wants to come and to participate in the lottery rises early and immerses before the appointed priest arrives to conduct the lottery among those priests who are ready to participate.

⁷⁰ MISHNA: At some time near dawn the appointed priest took the key that was kept beneath a marble tablet set in the floor of the Chamber of the Hearth and opened with it the wicket [hapishpesh] in the gate of the Chamber of the Hearth. And he entered through the wicket from the Chamber of the Hearth to the Temple courtyard; and the priests of the patrilineal family entered after him, and two torches of fire were in their hands, to light the way.

⁷¹ The priests divided into two groups; these priests would walk along the portico that surrounded the Temple courtyard, starting in the direction of east, and those priests would walk along the portico starting in the direction of west. The priests would ensure that all the service vessels were in place, ready for use in the daily service. Both groups would continue inspecting the vessels until they reached the place where the Chamber of the Preparer of the High Priest's daily Griddle-Cake Offering was located. When they reached that place, these priests and those priests said to each other: It is well; all is well, and all the vessels are in place. They then set the preparer of the griddle-cake offering to prepare the griddle-cake offering.

⁷² The priest who won the lottery to remove the ashes from the altar shall then remove the ashes. And the other priests say to him: Be careful that you do not touch the vessel with which you perform

the rite until you sanctify your hands and your feet from the Basin, as a priest may not perform any service in the Temple before sanctifying his hands and feet. The priests would continue their reminders: The coal pan with which the ashes are removed is placed in the corner between the ramp and the altar, on the western side of the ramp.

⁷³ No person would enter with the priest who was removing the ashes, as it was permitted to enter the area between the Entrance Hall of the Sanctuary and the altar only when performing the Temple service. And there was no lamp in his hand when he went to fetch the coal pan. Rather, he would walk by the light of the arrangement of wood on the altar, upon which the portions of the offerings sacrificed the previous day were burned during the night. The other priests would not see him, as the altar hid him from their sight,

⁷⁴ nor could they hear the sound of his steps. They were therefore unaware of his progress until they heard the sound of the wood that ben Katin crafted into a mechanism [mukhani] of pulleys that was used to sink the Basin into flowing water during the night, so that its water would not be disqualified by remaining overnight. When the priests heard the sound of the pulleys raising the Basin from the water, they said to each other: The time for sanctifying hands and feet has come. The priest sanctified his hands and his feet with water from the Basin after he raised it. He then took the silver coal pan from the corner between the ramp and the altar, and ascended to the top of the altar.

⁷⁵ The priest cleared the upper layer of coals to this side and to that side and scooped into the coal pan the inner coals that were completely consumed. He then descended the ramp. When he reached the floor, in the southeast of the Temple courtyard, he turned his face toward the north. He would walk along the east side of the ramp toward the south side of the altar, walking a distance of about ten cubits from the bottom of the ramp, which was twenty cubits from the altar. He then heaped the coals upon the floor in a location three handbreadths distant from the ramp, in the place where the priests would place the crop of the bird burnt offering, the ashes removed from the inner, golden altar, and the ashes removed from the Candelabrum.

⁷⁶ GEMARA: The mishna teaches that the priests would walk along the portico surrounding the Temple courtyard. Since porticoes were usually made of wood, the Gemara asks: And were there porticoes in the courtyard? But isn't it taught in a baraita that Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov says: From where is it derived that one may not build wooden porticoes in the Temple courtyard? The verse states: "You shall not plant for yourself an ashera of any kind of tree beside the altar of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 16:21).

⁷⁷ The Gemara explains that this is what the verse is saying: You shall not plant for yourself an ashera, i.e., a tree used as part of idolatrous rites. Moreover, you shall not plant or otherwise place for yourself any kind of tree or wood beside the altar of the Lord your God. Rav H̥isda says: The mishna is referring to porticoes made of building materials, i.e., stone, whereas the prohibition of erecting porticoes in the Temple courtyard applies only to porticoes of wood.

⁷⁸ § The mishna teaches: Both groups would continue inspecting the vessels until they reached the place where the Chamber of the Preparer of the Griddle-Cake Offering was located. They would then set the preparer of the Griddle-Cake Offering to prepare the griddle-cake offering. The Gemara asks: Is this to say that the griddle-cake offering was sacrificed before the other rites of the Temple service were performed?

⁷⁹ But isn't it taught in a baraita: From where is it derived that there is nothing that is sacrificed on the altar prior to the daily morning offering? The verse states: "And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it, it shall not be extinguished; and the priest shall kindle wood upon it every morning, and he shall prepare the burnt offering upon it and shall cause the fats of the peace offerings to go up in smoke upon it" (Leviticus 6:5). And Rabba says that the term: The burnt offering, with the definite article, indicates that the burnt offering is important and is the first offering sacrificed each day. Rav Yehuda says: The griddle-cake offering was not burned on the altar at that early hour. Rather, it was necessary to set the preparers of the griddle-cake offering to heat hot water for preparing the parboiled griddle cakes.

Chapter 2

¹ MISHNA: The previous mishna described the performance of the removal of the ashes by the priest who was selected to perform this task. This mishna continues: The brethren of the priest who removed the ashes, i.e., the other members of the patrilineal family, saw that he had descended from the altar with the coal pan, and they would run and come to the Basin. They made haste and sanctified their hands and their feet with the water in the Basin, and then they took the shovels and the forks and ascended with them to the top of the altar. The shovels were for shoveling the ashes to the center of the altar, while the forks were required to remove from the altar those limbs that had not been consumed.

² With regard to the limbs of burnt offerings and the fats of other offerings that had not been consumed and burned to ashes during the time from the previous evening, the priests would clear them to the sides of the altar. If the remaining limbs and fats were so abundant that the sides of the altar were unable to hold them, the priests would arrange them on the ramp, opposite the surrounding ledge of the altar.

³ The priests then began raising the ashes onto the circular heap upon which the ashes were piled. The circular heap was in the middle of the altar. Sometimes there was as much as three hundred kor of ashes upon it. When the heap of ashes became excessively large, the priests would remove the ashes and pour them outside the city. But during the Festivals they would not remove the ashes from the altar, as the ashes were considered an adornment to the altar, since they were a sign of the great number of offerings that were sacrificed on it. In all the days of the altar, even when there was an abundance of ashes upon it,

⁴ the priest tasked with removing the ashes from the circular heap was never indolent in removing the ashes.

⁵ After the ashes were cleared to the middle of the altar, the priests began raising logs onto the altar in order to assemble the arrangement of wood on which the offerings were burned. The tanna asks: And is wood from all the trees fit for the arrangement? The tanna replies: Wood from all the trees is fit for the arrangement, except for wood from the vine and from the olive tree, but the priests were accustomed to assemble the arrangement with wood from these trees: With young branches of the fig tree, of the nut tree, and of pinewood.

⁶ The priest who removed the ashes then assembled the large arrangement of wood upon which the daily offering and the sacrificial portions of the other offerings are burned. It was assembled on the eastern side of the altar, and its opening was on the eastern side of the altar, and the inner end of the logs would touch the circular heap of ashes. And there was space between the logs, in which the priests placed twigs, as they would ignite the kindling [ha'alita] from there, so that the fire would spread to the logs.

⁷ The priests selected from among the logs that were there fine logs from fig trees, as when this type of wood was burned it would become coals rather than ashes. The priest who removed the ashes then assembled the second arrangement of wood, from which the coals were taken to the golden altar in the Sanctuary for the burning of the incense. The second arrangement was assembled next to the southwestern corner of the altar and was removed from the corner toward the north side of the altar by a distance of four cubits.

⁸ The second arrangement was assembled of an amount of wood estimated to produce five se'a of coals. And on Shabbat, it was assembled of an amount of wood estimated to produce eight se'a of coals, as there the priests would place the two bowls of frankincense that accompanied the shewbread and that were burned on the altar on Shabbat. With regard to the limbs and the fats that were not consumed during the time from the previous evening, the priests would return them to the large arrangement to be burned. And the priests kindled those two arrangements with fire and descended from the altar. And they then came to the Chamber of Hewn Stone, where they would conduct the second lottery in order to determine who would perform the subsequent rites.

⁹ GEMARA: The mishna teaches that sometimes there was as much as three hundred kor of ashes upon the circular heap in the middle of the altar. Rava said: This is an exaggeration. The mishna merely means that the heap contained a large quantity of ashes, not that it reached that actual amount. Similarly, the mishna states (30a) that before slaughtering the daily offering the priests gave the lamb selected for the daily offering water to drink in cup of gold, so that it would be easier to flay it after it was slaughtered. With regard to this mishna, Rava said: This is an exaggeration, as the priests would not give the animal to drink from an actual golden vessel.

¹⁰ In this connection, Rabbi Ami says: In certain instances, the Torah spoke employing exaggerated [havai] language, the prophets spoke employing exaggerated language, and the Sages spoke employing exaggerated language.

¹¹ The Gemara cites examples for this statement: The Torah spoke employing exaggerated language, as it is written: "Hear, Israel: You are passing over the Jordan this day, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, cities great and fortified up to heaven" (Deuteronomy 9:1). Does it enter your mind to say that the cities were literally fortified up to heaven? Rather, this is an exaggeration.

¹² Likewise, the Sages spoke employing exaggerated language, as in this example that we stated with regard to the circular heap of ashes, and in the description: The priests gave the lamb selected for the daily offering water to drink in a cup of gold.

¹³ The prophets spoke employing exaggerated language, as it is written with regard to the coronation of King Solomon: "And all the people of the land came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them" (I Kings 1:40). The verse merely means that the sound was very great, not that it actually caused the earth to split.

¹⁴ Rabbi Yannai bar Nahmani says that Shmuel says: In three instances, the Sages spoke in exaggerated language, and these are those instances: With regard to the circular heap of ashes on the altar, with regard to the vine, and with regard to the Curtain that separated the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies, as explained below.

¹⁵ The Gemara notes that Shmuel's statement serves to exclude the opinion of Rava, as we learned in a mishna: The priests gave the lamb selected for the daily offering water to drink in a cup of gold, and Rava said: This is an exaggeration. Shmuel teaches us that in these three instances, yes, the Sages employed exaggerated language, but there, in the case of the golden cup, it is not an exaggeration, as even the cup from which the lamb was given to drink was actually made of gold. This is because there is no poverty in a place of wealth, i.e., the Temple is a place of wealth, where one must act in a lavish manner.

¹⁶ The Gemara details the three instances with regard to which Shmuel states that the Sages employed exaggerated language: The case of the circular heap of ashes is that which we stated above. The case of the vine is as it is taught in a mishna (Middot 3:8): A gold ornament in the form of a vine stood at the entrance to the Sanctuary, and it hung upon posts. And whoever would donate an ornamental gold leaf,

¹⁷ or grape, or cluster of grapes, would bring it to the Temple and a priest would hang it on the vine. Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Tzadok, said: There was once an incident and three hundred priests were enlisted to lift the vine in order to move it, due to its immense weight. This description is an exaggeration, as although the vine was extremely heavy, it did not require three hundred priests to lift it.

¹⁸ With regard to Shmuel's statement that the Sages exaggerated with regard to the weight of the Curtain, it is as we learned in a mishna (Shekalim 21b) that Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says in the name of Rabbi Shimon the deputy High Priest: With regard to the Curtain, its thickness is one handbreadth. It is woven from seventy-two strands of yarn, and each and every strand of those seventy-two strands is made from twenty-four threads. The Curtain is fashioned from four materials: Sky-blue wool, purple wool, scarlet wool, and fine linen, and every strand comprises six threads of each material.

¹⁹ Its length is forty cubits, corresponding to the height of the entrance to the Sanctuary, and its width is twenty cubits, matching the width of the entrance. And it is made at the cost of eighty-two ten-thousands, i.e., 820,000, gold dinars, and two new Curtains are made in each and every year. And the Curtain was so heavy that when it was immersed three hundred priests would immerse it.

²⁰ § The mishna teaches: The priests began raising logs onto the altar to assemble the arrangement of wood. Wood from all the trees is fit for the arrangement, except for wood from the olive tree and from the vine. The Gemara asks: What is the reason that wood from these trees is not fit for the arrangement? Rav Pappa said: It is due to the fact that they have thick knots in their branches, which cause the wood to burn poorly and produce excessive smoke. Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov said: Although these trees are unfit for the arrangement primarily because they burn poorly, there is an additional reason: They are not used because using them would deplete the olive trees and grapevines, which would be detrimental to the settlement of Eretz Yisrael.

²¹ The Gemara raises an objection to the explanation of Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov from a baraita: The verse states with regard to the wood of the arrangement: "And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put

fire upon the altar, and lay wood in order upon the fire. And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall lay the pieces, and the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar" (Leviticus 1:7–8). The verse indicates that the arrangement must be composed of wood that burns completely, until it becomes like the fire itself. And what is that type of wood? This is referring to branches that are as smooth as a skewer [shipud], which do not become knotted from within. Evidently, the primary qualification of the wood is that it does not have knots.

²² The Gemara continues: And is wood from all the trees fit for the arrangement? The baraita explains: Wood from all the trees is fit for the arrangement, except for olive wood and wood from the vine, but the priests were accustomed to assemble the arrangement with wood from these trees: With young branches of the fig tree, of the nut tree, and of pinewood. Rabbi Eliezer adds that the following types of wood are also unfit: The wood of the hackberry tree, of the oak, of the palm tree, of the carob tree, and of the sycamore.

²³ The Gemara explains the difficulty: Granted, according to the one who said that the wood of the olive and of the vine are not used because they have knots, one can explain that the first tanna of the baraita and Rabbi Eliezer disagree with regard to this matter: One Sage, Rabbi Eliezer, holds that although the wood of the trees that he deems unfit for the arrangement, e.g., the hackberry tree and the oak, are not knotted from within, since they are knotted on the outside, we do not bring wood from these trees for the arrangement. And one Sage, the first tanna, holds that since these are not knotted from within, even though they are knotted on the outside, we do bring wood from these trees for the arrangement.

²⁴ But according to the one who said that the wood of the olive and of the vine are not used because it would be detrimental to the settlement of Eretz Yisrael, the palm tree should also be unfit for the arrangement. Isn't it also subject to the consideration that cutting it down would be detrimental to the settlement of Eretz Yisrael? It is also one of the species about which Eretz Yisrael is praised. If so, why does the first tanna deem the palm tree fit for the arrangement?

²⁵ The Gemara explains that Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov could say to you: It is unnecessary to cite the baraita in order to raise this difficulty, as the mishna itself states that the fig tree is a preferred source of firewood. And according to your reasoning, isn't the fig tree subject to the consideration that cutting it down would be detrimental to the settlement of Eretz Yisrael? It is also one of the species about which Eretz Yisrael is praised. Rather, what have you to say? One must say that the mishna is referring to a fig tree that does not bear fruit. With regard to the palm tree as well, the baraita is referring to a variety that does not bear fruit.

²⁶ The Gemara asks: But is there a fig tree that does not bear fruit? The Gemara answers: Yes, there are fig trees that do not bear fruit, and this is in accordance with a statement of Raḥava with regard to a method of cultivating fig trees, as Raḥava said: The growers bring saplings of white figs, which are an inferior variety,

²⁷ and the growers rub them with a rope made of palm fronds, to which the seeds adhere, and they plant the tree in a spot where the sea emits deposits of sediment [sirton]. A tree planted in this manner produces wood that is suitable for a beam, but it does not produce fruit. And as the tree does not divert its resources to yielding fruit, its wood is so robust and heavy that with regard to three of its branches, a bridge cannot support them.

²⁸ § The mishna teaches: The priest assembled the large arrangement on the eastern side of the altar, and its opening was on the eastern side of the altar. The Gemara asks: What is the reason that an opening was formed in the arrangement? This matter is subject to a dispute between Rav Huna and Rav H̥isda: One said that the opening was formed so that the wind would blow into it and fan the flames of the arrangement. And one said that it was formed so that the priests would be able to light from there the kindling that was placed between the logs.

²⁹ The Gemara raises an objection from the mishna: There was space between the logs, as the priests would ignite the kindling from there. Evidently, the kindling was not ignited from the opening. The Gemara explains: The Sage who maintains that the kindling was lit from the opening in the east of the arrangement could say to you that in addition to lighting kindling from the opening, the priests would fashion many spaces within the arrangement, through which they would ignite kindling in order to increase the fire.

Chapter 3

¹ MISHNA: 3:1 Four lotteries were conducted in the Temple each day in order to determine which priests would perform which of the Temple rites. After describing the first of the lotteries, for removal of the ashes, the tanna describes the second lottery. The priest appointed to oversee the lotteries said to the priests: Come and participate in the lottery to determine who is the priest who will slaughter the daily offering; and who is the priest who will sprinkle its blood; and who will remove the ashes from the inner, golden altar; and who will remove the ashes from the Candelabrum; and who will take the limbs of the daily offering up to the ramp to be burned afterward.

² The limbs of the daily offering taken up to the ramp were divided among the priests in the following manner: One priest took the head and the right hind leg up to the altar; and a second took the two forelegs; a third the haunch, including the lower spine and the tail, and the left hind leg; a fourth the breast and the cud, i.e., the neck and appended internal organs, including the windpipe, liver, and heart; and a fifth the two flanks; a sixth the innards; and a seventh the fine flour from the accompanying meal offering; and an eighth the griddle-cake offering; and a ninth the wine for the libation.

³ They conducted the lottery to determine the thirteen tasks, i.e., slaughtering, carrying the nine items or pairs of items, sprinkling the blood, removing the ashes from the inner altar, and removing the ashes from the Candelabrum. And whoever won that lottery won the right to perform the slaughter, and the twelve priests standing to his right won the other privileges.

⁴ MISHNA 3:2 The appointed one said to the priests: Go out and observe if it is day and the time for slaughter has arrived. If the time has arrived, the observer says: There is light. Matya ben Shmuel says that the appointed priest phrased his question differently, saying: Is the entire eastern sky illuminated as far as Hebron? And the observer says: Yes.

⁵ MISHNA 3:3 The appointed priest said to the priests: Go out and bring me a lamb from the Chamber of the Lambs, where lambs that had been examined and found to be unblemished were kept. And the Chamber of the Lambs is located in the northwestern corner of the building of the Chamber of the Hearth. There were four chambers there, in that building: One was the Chamber of

the Lambs; and one was the Chamber of the Seals, located in the northeastern corner, where the priest stored receipts given to those seeking to purchase animal offerings; and one was the Chamber of the Hearth, where there was a fire burning to warm the priests; and the last one was the chamber in which the priests prepared the shewbread.

⁶ MISHNA 3:4 The priests entered the Chamber of the Vessels, where the service vessels required for the daily Temple service were stored. They took out from there ninety-three silver vessels and gold vessels. They then gave the lamb selected for the daily offering water to drink in a cup

⁷ of gold. Although the lamb was examined and deemed unblemished earlier in the evening, the priests examine it now by the light of the torches.

⁸ MISHNA 3:5 The priests who won the privilege of the removal of ash from the inner altar and of the removal of ash from the Candelabrum would precede the other priests and would hold four vessels in their hands: The basket, and the jug, and the two keys. The basket is similar to a large gold vessel with a capacity of three kav [letarkav], but it holds only two and a half kav. And the jug is similar to a large flask [lekitton] of gold. And as for the two keys, with one of them the priest would lower his arm to his armpit through a small opening in the door and open the lock that was at the bottom of the door on the inside, and he would pass through that door into a compartment. And the other one is the key with which the priest opened the lock on the inner door of the compartment, through which he entered the Sanctuary, and that lock he opened directly.

⁹ MISHNA 3:6 The priest came to the northern wicket. There were two wickets for the large gate, one in the northern part of the gate and one in the southern part. Through the wicket that was in the southern part, no person entered. In its regard, the wicket's status is clarified by the prophet Ezekiel, as it is stated: "Then he brought me back the way of the outer gate of the Sanctuary, which looks toward the east; and it was shut. And the Lord said unto me: This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it, for the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered in by it; and it shall be shut" (Ezekiel 44:1–2).

¹⁰ The priest took the key, opened the wicket north of the gate, and entered the compartment. He went from the compartment to the Sanctuary and continued until he would reach the large gate. Once he reached the large gate, which was locked from the inside, he moved the bolt and the locks fixing the bolt in place and opened the gate. The priest who slaughters the daily offering would not slaughter the animal until he would hear that the large gate had been opened.

¹¹ MISHNA 3:7 From Jericho the people would hear the sound indicating that the large gate had been opened. From Jericho the people would hear the sound produced in the Temple by the instrument that had the form of a shovel. From Jericho the people would hear the sound of the song of the Levites in the Temple. From Jericho the people would hear the sound of ben Arza clashing the cymbals in the Temple. From Jericho the people would hear the sound of the flute that was played in the Temple twelve days each year.

¹² From Jericho the people would hear the voice of Gevini the Temple crier, who would proclaim in the Temple each day: Arise, priests, to your service, and Levites to your platform, and Israelites to your non-priestly watch. From Jericho the people would hear the sound of the wood that ben Katin crafted into a mechanism of pulleys for the Basin. From Jericho the people would hear the sound of the song of the Levites in the Temple. From Jericho the people would hear the sound of the shofar that was sounded several times each day in the Temple. And some say that in Jericho the people

would hear even the voice of the High Priest at the moment that he mentioned the ineffable name of God on Yom Kippur.

¹³ From Jericho the people would smell the fragrance emanating from the preparation of the incense in the Temple. Rabbi Elazar ben Diglai said: There were goats belonging to my father that grazed in the cities of Mikhvar, located at a distance from Jerusalem, and they would sneeze from the fragrance of the preparation of the incense that they smelled.

¹⁴ MISHNA 3:8 The priest who won the lottery to slaughter the daily offering pulled the lamb, and he would go to the slaughterhouse to slaughter it as the daily offering. And the priests who won the right to take the limbs up to the ramp would go with him. The slaughterhouse was to the north of the altar. Adjacent to it there were eight low stone pillars. And cedarwood squares were affixed upon them, and iron hooks were fixed in the wooden squares. And there were three rows of hooks on each and every one of those wooden squares, upon which the priests would suspend the animal after it was slaughtered. And they would flay the animal's hide onto marble tables that were positioned between the pillars.

¹⁵ MISHNA 3:9 The priest who won the right of the removal of ash from the inner altar entered through the Sanctuary gate, and he took the basket with him and placed it before him on the floor between him and the altar. And he would take handfuls of ashes from upon the altar and place them in the basket. Ultimately, when only a small amount of ashes remained on the altar, the priest swept the rest into the basket, and placed the basket back on the Sanctuary floor, and emerged from the Sanctuary.

¹⁶ The priest who won the right of the removal of ash from the Candelabrum entered the Sanctuary. And if he found in the Candelabrum the two easternmost lamps, the second of which is called the western lamp, still burning, he would first remove the ashes and the burned wicks from the rest of the lamps and place them in the jug, and place new wicks and oil in those lamps. And he would leave these two lamps burning in their own place. If he found that the two easternmost lamps were extinguished, he would remove the ashes and the burned wicks from them and kindle them from the lamps that were still burning. If none were still burning, he would kindle them from the fire on the outer altar. And afterward, the priest would remove the ashes and the wicks from the rest of the lamps.

¹⁷ And there was a stone in front of the Candelabrum and in it there were three stairs upon which the priest would stand and prepare the lamps for kindling. Since the Candelabrum was eighteen handbreadths high, it was necessary for the priest to stand on an elevated surface to reach the lamps. And after he placed the ashes and the wicks from the five westernmost lamps in the jug, he would place the jug on the second stair of that stone, and then he emerged from the Sanctuary. When the priest later returned to prepare the two easternmost lamps for kindling, he would remove the jug with the ashes from the Candelabrum, and together with the priest removing the basket with the ashes from the inner altar would pour the ashes from the jug and the basket at the side of the altar.

Chapter 4

¹ MISHNA: In preparing the lamb of the daily offering for sacrifice, the priests would not tie the lamb by fastening all four of its legs together; rather, they would bind it by fastening each hind leg to the corresponding foreleg. The priests who won the right to take the limbs up to the ramp would hold the lamb in place while it was being slaughtered. And this was the manner of its binding: The animal would be stood in the northern part of the courtyard while its head would be directed to the south, toward the altar, and its face would be turned to the west, toward the Sanctuary. And the slaughterer would stand to the east of the animal, and his face would be to the west.

² Twenty-four rings were affixed to the courtyard floor north of the altar, designated for placement of the animal's neck during its slaughter. The daily offering of the morning was slaughtered at the northwest corner of the altar, at the second ring. The daily offering of the afternoon was slaughtered at the northeast corner of the altar, at the second ring.

³ After the slaughterer has slaughtered the lamb and the receiver has received its blood in a vessel to sprinkle on the altar, the priest comes to the northeast corner of the altar and places the first sprinkling in such a manner that the blood will reach the eastern and northern sides of the altar. Next, the priest comes to the southwest corner of the altar and places a second sprinkling in a manner such that the blood will reach the western and southern sides of the altar. With regard to the remainder of the blood, the priest would pour it at the southern base of the altar, at its southwest corner.

⁴ When the priest flayed the hide of the daily offering after its slaughter, he would not break the animal's leg in the typical manner of flaying an animal; rather, he punctures the leg from within each knee of the hind leg and suspends the animal by placing these holes on two hooks, in order to flay the animal's hide.

⁵ The priest began flaying from the top of the inverted animal, descending until he would reach the hide of the breast. Once he reached the breast, he severed the lamb's head and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp. Next he severed the four legs below the knee and gave them to the priest who won the right to take them up to the ramp. He completed the flaying of the remaining hide from the breast down, and then the priest cut the heart and drained its blood.

⁶ Next the priest severed the remaining upper parts of the forelegs and gave them to the priest who won the right to take them up to the ramp. Afterward he moved up to the remaining upper part of the right hind leg, severed it, and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp; and the animal's two testicles were cut along with the right leg, leaving the animal suspended by its left hind leg. Then the priest tore open the animal's midsection, resulting in the innards of the entire animal being exposed before him.

⁷ He took the fats and placed them on the place of slaughter on the animal's head above it, to conceal the place where it was severed while the priest would take the head to the altar. Then the priest took the innards and gave them to the priest who won the right to take them up to the ramp, in order to rinse them first. And with regard to the stomach, in which there is a significant amount of waste, the priests would rinse it in the rinsing site located in the south of the courtyard, east of the Gate of the Water, and they rinsed it as much it required. And with regard to the innards, the priests would rinse them three times at a minimum, on the marble tables that were positioned between the pillars in the slaughterhouse.

⁸ The priest then took the knife and separated the lung from the liver, and the finger-like protrusion from the lower edge of the liver, also known as the lobe of the liver, from the liver. And he would not move any one of the organs from its place. He would leave the lung attached to the neck, the lobe attached to the haunch, and the liver attached to the right flank. The priest would puncture around the breast, separating it from the flanks and the ribs, and he gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp.

⁹ He then moved up to the right flank and would cut it and separate it from the animal's body. And he would continue to cut, descending until he would reach the spinal column, and the priest would not touch the spinal column, leaving the spine intact and attached to the left flank. He would continue cutting until he reached the space between the two narrow ribs near the neck, leaving them in place. The priest cut the right flank, separating it from the body of the animal, and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp. And the liver was suspended from it.

¹⁰ The priest then came to the cud. He left attached to it, in their entirety, the two narrow ribs from here, the right side, and the two narrow ribs from there, the left side. He cut the cud and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp; and the windpipe, the heart, and the lung were suspended from it.

¹¹ He came to cut the left flank of the body and left attached to it two narrow ribs above, near the haunch, as the animal was suspended upside down, and two narrow ribs below, near the cud. And he also did that with its counterpart, the right flank, resulting in two narrow ribs in each flank above and two narrow ribs in each flank below.

¹² He cut the left flank and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp, and the spinal column was with it, and the spleen was suspended from it. And the left flank was greater, i.e., the larger of the two, because it included the spine, but they referred to the right flank as the greater one, as in addition to the flank itself, the liver was suspended from it. He came to the haunch, cut it, and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp. And the tail, and the finger-like protrusion of the liver, and the two kidneys were with it. He took the remaining upper part of the left hind leg, cut it, and gave it to the priest who won the right to take it up to the ramp. This resulted in all of the nine priests who won the rights to take the limbs up to the ramp standing in line, and the limbs were in their hands.

¹³ The first priest stood with the head and with the right hind leg of the animal. Since it was more significant, the head was in his right hand, and its nose was turned toward the priest's arm. Its horns were between his fingers, and the place of its slaughter was above, and the fats were placed upon it, to conceal the bloody place of slaughter. The right hind leg was in his left hand, and the outer side of the leg, from which its hide was flayed, rather than the side on which the incision was made, was facing out. The second priest stood with the two forelegs. He held the right foreleg in his right hand and the left foreleg in his left hand, and the outer side of the leg, from which its hide was flayed, was facing out.

¹⁴ The third priest stood with the haunch and the left hind leg. He held the haunch in his right hand, and the tail was hanging between his fingers, and the finger-like protrusion of the liver and the two kidneys were with it. He held the left hind leg in his left hand, and the outer side of the leg, from which its hide was flayed, was facing out. The fourth priest stood with the breast and with the cud, with the breast in his right hand and the cud in his left hand, and its two ribs were attached to the cud

between his two fingers. The fifth priest stood with the two flanks; the right flank was in his right hand and the left flank in his left hand, and the outer side was facing out. The sixth priest stood with the innards, which were placed in a vessel, and the lower legs were placed atop them from above.

¹⁵ The seventh priest stood with the fine flour of the meal offering that accompanies the daily offering. The eighth priest stood with the griddle-cake offering sacrificed daily by the High Priest, half in the morning and half in the evening. The ninth priest stood with the wine for the libations that accompany the daily offering. The nine priests went and placed the items they were carrying on the area from halfway up the ramp and below, in the lower portion of the ramp, on the west side of the ramp, and they salted the limbs and the meal offering. And they descended and came to the Chamber of Hewn Stone to recite the morning Shema and the other texts that they would recite, as explained at the beginning of the next chapter.

¹⁶ GEMARA: The mishna teaches that the priests would bind the lamb for the daily offering. With regard to this procedure, the Sages taught in a baraita: The animal's foreleg and hind leg are bound together, as in the binding of Isaac, son of Abraham.

¹⁷ The mishna teaches that the priests would not tie the lamb by fastening all four of its legs together. The Gemara asks: What is the reason for this? The Gemara answers: This is a matter of dispute between Rav Huna and Rav Hisda. One of these Sages said: The animal is not tied because this would constitute degradation of sacred items; and the other one said that the animal is not tied because that method is the one adopted in pagan worship, and is therefore considered to be walking in the statutes of the nations, and the verse states: "You shall not walk in their statutes" (Leviticus 18:3).

¹⁸ The Gemara asks: What is the practical difference between these opinions? The Gemara answers: There is a difference between them in a case where one ties the animal with silk [beshira'ei], which would be considered to be treating the offering in the manner of the nations, but it is not degrading. Alternatively, these opinions differ with regard to a case where the animal is tied with a thread of gold. As in the case of the silk, tying the animal with gold would be considered to be treating the offering in the manner of the nations, but it is not a degradation.

¹⁹ § The mishna teaches that the innards were rinsed on marble tables in the slaughterhouse in the Temple. With regard to these tables, we learned in a mishna elsewhere (Shekalim 17b) that there were thirteen tables in the Temple. Eight of them were fashioned from marble and were located in the slaughterhouse, north of the altar, where the priests would slaughter the offerings of the most sacred order. Upon these tables they would wash the innards of the offerings, as the cool marble preserved the freshness of the meat.

²⁰ There were two more tables on the western side of the ramp, south of the altar, one of marble and one of silver. On the table of marble the priests would place the limbs before they would bring them up to the altar. And on the table of silver they would place the ninety-three service vessels brought out from the Chamber of Vessels each morning for the services of that day.

²¹ The mishna continues: And in the Entrance Hall there were two tables on its inside, near the opening to the Temple, one of silver and one of gold. On the table of silver the priests would place the shewbread before its entrance to the Sanctuary, after it was baked on Shabbat eve. And on the table of gold they would place the old shewbread upon its exit from the Sanctuary, to be divided among the priests.

²² The shewbread was not placed on a silver table upon its exit from the Sanctuary, as one promotes in matters of sanctity and one does not demote. Since in the interim the shewbread had been placed on the golden Table for the shewbread inside the Sanctuary, upon its removal it was not placed on anything other than a golden table. And lastly, there was one table of gold inside the Sanctuary. This was the Table for the shewbread, upon which the shewbread always rested (see Exodus 25:23–30).

²³ The Gemara asks: Since there is a principle that there may be no poverty in a place of wealth, i.e., the Temple must always be run in a lavish manner, why did they fashion any tables of marble? Let them fashion all the tables of silver, due to the grandeur of the Temple, or let them fashion them all of gold. Rav Ḥinnana says in the name of Rabbi Asi, and Rabbi Asi says in the name of Rabbi Shmuel bar Rav Yitzḥak: Gold and silver tables are unfit for the sacrificial limbs because metal scalds. Unlike marble, metal can become very hot in the sun, and this might cause the sacrificial limbs to deteriorate.

²⁴ § The mishna teaches that the daily offering of the morning was slaughtered at the northwest corner of the altar, in the first ring of the second row from the south, which is called the second ring, whereas the daily offering of the afternoon was slaughtered at the northeast corner of the altar, at the second ring. The Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived? Rav Ḥisda said: As the verse states, with regard to the daily offering: “This is the offering made by fire that you shall bring to the Lord: Lambs of the first year without blemish, two by day, for a continual burnt offering” (Numbers 28:3). The phrase “two by day” indicates that the lamb must be slaughtered opposite the light of the day. Since Eretz Yisrael is north of the equator, the sun is always in the southern part of the sky. The first ring, then, is always in the long shadow of the altar, and only the second ring falls under direct sunlight.

²⁵ This is also taught in a baraita, that the phrase “two by day” teaches that the lamb must be slaughtered opposite the light of the day. The baraita asks: Do you say that this means opposite the light of the day, or does it only mean that two lambs must be sacrificed for the obligation of each day? The baraita answers that when the verse states: “One lamb you shall sacrifice in the morning, and the other lamb you shall sacrifice in the afternoon” (Numbers 28:4), the obligation of each day is thereby stated explicitly. How, then, do I realize the meaning of “two by day”? This teaches that the lamb must be slaughtered opposite the light of the day.

²⁶ The baraita concludes: How so, i.e., how can this principle be applied to both the morning and the afternoon offerings? The daily offering of the morning was slaughtered opposite the northwest corner of the altar, on the second ring, across from the sun, which rises in the east. And the daily offering of the afternoon was slaughtered opposite the northeast corner of the altar, on the fourth ring of the second row, also called the second ring, again across from the sun, which is located in the west in the afternoon.

²⁷ § With regard to the position of the sun, the Gemara relates that Alexander of Macedon asked the Elders of the Negev about ten matters. He said to them:

²⁸ Is the distance from the heavens to the earth further, or is the distance from east to west further? They said to him: From east to west is a greater distance. Know that this is so, as when the sun is in the east, everyone looks at it without hurting their eyes, and when the sun is in the west, everyone looks at it without hurting their eyes. By contrast, when the sun is in the middle of the sky, no one

looks at it, as it would hurt their eyes. This shows that the sun's place in the middle of the sky is not as far from the earth as its remote positions in the extreme east and west.

²⁹ But the Sages say: This distance and that distance are equal, as it is stated: "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His kindness toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalms 103:11–12). The verses compare the extent of God's kindness and His removal of transgressions to vast expanses. And if one of the distances is greater than the other, let the verse write that both of God's enumerated attributes are like the measure that is greater. But if so, with regard to the sun in the middle of the sky, what is the reason that no one looks at it? It is because it stands exposed and nothing covers it, whereas it is partially screened when it is in the east or the west.

³⁰ Alexander continued to ask questions of the Elders of the Negev. He said to them: Were the heavens created first or was the earth created first? They said: The heavens were created first, as it is stated: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

³¹ He said to them: Was the light created first, or was the darkness created first? They said to him: This matter has no solution, as the verses do not indicate an answer. The Gemara asks: But let them say to him that the darkness was created first, as it is written: "Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2), and only then does it state: "And God said: Let there be light. And there was light" (Genesis 1:3). Why did they not say that the darkness was created first?

³² The Gemara answers that the Elders maintained: We must not answer this question, lest he come to ask questions about Creation that may not be discussed, i.e., what is above the firmament and what is below the earth, what was before Creation, and what will be after the end of the world (see Ḥagiga 11b).

³³ The Gemara asks: If so, if the Elders were concerned about such proscribed questions, then with regard to the creation of heaven as well, they should not have said anything to him. Why did they answer the question about heaven, but not the one about darkness? The Gemara answers that initially they assumed: It is merely incidental that he is asking about the creation of the universe, and therefore there is no need for caution. But once they saw that he again asked about the same general matter, they maintained: Let us not tell him an answer, lest he come to ask: What is above the firmament and what is below the earth, what was before Creation, and what will be after the end of the world?

³⁴ Alexander said to the Elders: Who is truly worthy of being called wise? They said to him, citing a tradition (see Avot 2:9): Who is the wise person? The one who sees and anticipates the consequences of his behavior. He said to them: Who is truly worthy of being called mighty? They said to him, again citing a tradition (see Avot 4:1): Who is the mighty person? The one who masters his desire. He said to them: Who is worthy of being called wealthy? They said to him: Who is the wealthy person? The one who is pleased with his own portion (see Avot 4:1).

³⁵ He said to them: What must a man do and thereby ensure that he will live? They said to him: Such a man must figuratively kill himself, by living moderately. Alexander further inquired: What must a man do and ensure that he will die? They said to him: Such a man must keep himself alive, i.e., lead an extravagant and indulgent life. He said to them: What must a man do and ensure that he will be accepted by people? They said to Alexander: He must hate the king and the authorities and avoid

becoming too close to those in power. Alexander rejected their answer and said to them: My advice for gaining people's favor is better than yours. One who wants to be accepted must love the king and the authorities, but he must use his connections to perform beneficial acts for people.

³⁶ He said to them: Is it better for a person to live at sea, or is it better to live on dry land? They said to him: It is better to live on dry land, as all seafarers, their minds are constantly unsettled until they reach the dry land.

³⁷ He said to them: Who among you is wiser than the others? They said to him: We are all equal in wisdom, as every matter that you say to us, we solve for you unanimously. He said to them: What is the substance of this stance, by which you, the Jewish people, oppose me? Since you are my subjects, and my people constitute the majority, you should concede that our lifestyle is superior. They said to him: Your dominance is inconsequential, as sometimes even the Satan is victorious, by convincing people to act in a manner that is clearly incorrect.

³⁸ He said to them: Consequently, due to your insolence, I am executing you by the edict of kings. They said to him: Certainly, the authority is in the hand of the king to execute as you wish; but falsehood is unbecoming for the king, and you have pledged not to harm us. Immediately, Alexander dressed them in garments of purple and placed golden chains [menaykha] upon their necks.

³⁹ When Alexander was preparing to part from the Elders of the Negev, he said to them: I want to go to wage war against the country of Africa [Afriki]; what do you recommend? They said to him: You will be unable to go there, as the Mountains of Darkness block the passes. He said to them: It is not possible for me not to go; and it is due to this reason that I ask you to advise me. Rather than refraining from my campaign, what might I do to cross the Mountains of Darkness?

⁴⁰ They said to him: Bring Libyan donkeys that walk even in the darkness [behavra], and these animals will guide you through those passes. And bring coils of rope, and tie one end of rope on this near side of the mountains, as you are about to enter there, so that when you come to return by the same path, you may take hold of the ropes left from your initial march, and, following them, you will come back to your place.

⁴¹ Alexander did this and went on his campaign. He came to a certain town whose entire population was women, and he wanted to wage battle against them. The women said to him: It is not in your interest to fight us. If you kill us, people will say: Alexander kills women; and if we kill you, people will say: Alexander is the king whom women killed in battle. Instead of fighting them, Alexander said to them: Bring me bread. They brought him bread of gold, upon a table of gold.

⁴² Alexander said to the women: Do people eat bread of gold? They said to him: But if all you wanted was actual bread, didn't you have bread to eat in your own place? It was not for bread that you took up a campaign and toiled and came here. You must have come to increase your wealth. When Alexander left and came back to his land, he wrote upon the gate of the town: I, Alexander of Macedon, was a fool until I came to the country of Africa of women, and I learned sense from women.

⁴³ § With regard to Alexander, the Gemara relates: When he took himself and went on his way, he sat at a certain spring and was eating bread. He had salted fish [guldenei] in his hands, and while he cleansed them of their excessive salt, a particularly pleasant fragrance fell upon them. Alexander said to himself: I may conclude from this event that this spring comes from the Garden of Eden.

⁴⁴ There are those who say: He took from those waters and washed his face. And there are those who say: He ascended along the length of the entire spring until he reached the entrance of the Garden of Eden. He raised a loud voice, calling out: Open the gate for me! The sentry of the Garden of Eden said to him: “This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter into it” (Psalms 118:20). Since you are not righteous, you may not enter. He said to them: I too am worthy, as I am a king; I am very important. If I will not be admitted, at least give me something from inside. They gave him one eyeball. He brought it and he weighed all the gold and silver that he had against the eyeball, and yet the riches did not balance against the eyeball’s greater weight.

⁴⁵ He said to the Sages: What is this? Why does this eyeball outweigh everything? They said: It is the eyeball of a mortal person of flesh and blood, which is not satisfied ever. He said to them: From where do you know that this is the reason for the unbalanced scale? The Sages answered him: Take a small amount of dirt and cover the eye. He did so, and it was immediately balanced by its proper counterweight. The eye is never satisfied while it can see, as it is written: “The netherworld and destruction are never satiated; so the eyes of man are never satiated” (Proverbs 27:20).

⁴⁶ The Gemara cites a statement related to its earlier account of Alexander’s journey. The school of Eliyahu taught: Gehenna is above the heavens, and some say that it is beyond the Mountains of Darkness.

⁴⁷ The chapter, as well as the talmudic portion of the tractate, concludes with words of praise for those who study Torah. Rabbi Ḥiyya taught: With regard to anyone who occupies himself with Torah at night, the Divine Presence is across from him, as it is stated: “Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the watches; pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord, lift up your hands toward Him” (Lamentations 2:19). Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya said: Torah scholars increase peace in the world, as it is stated: “And all your children [banayikh] shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children” (Isaiah 54:13). This can be read as bonayikh, your builders, i.e., scholars build and increase peace for the entire world.

Chapter 5

¹ MISHNA: 5:1 After the priests completed laying the parts of the daily offering on the ramp, they went to the Chamber of Hewn Stone to recite Shema. The appointed priest who oversaw the lotteries in the Temple said to the priests: Recite a single blessing of the blessings that accompany Shema. And the members of the priestly watch recited a blessing, and then they recited the Ten Commandments, Shema (see Deuteronomy 6:4–9), VeHaya im Shamo’a (see Deuteronomy 11:13–21), and VaYomer (see Numbers 15:37–41), the standard formula of Shema.

² Additionally, they blessed with the people three blessings. These blessings were: True and Firm, the blessing of redemption recited after Shema; and the blessing of the Temple service, which is also a blessing recited in the Amidah prayer; and the Priestly Benediction, recited in the form of a prayer, without the lifting of hands that usually accompanies that blessing (Tosafot). And on Shabbat, when the new priestly watch would begin its service, the priests would add one blessing recited by the outgoing priestly watch, that love, fraternity, peace, and friendship should exist among the priests of the incoming watch.

³ MISHNA 5:2 The appointed priest said to them: Let only those priests who are new to burning the incense come and participate in the lottery for the incense. Whoever won that lottery won the privilege to burn the incense. The appointed priest said to them: Those new priests, i.e., those who had never performed the service, together with those old priests, i.e., those who had already performed it, may come and participate in the lottery to determine who takes the limbs from the bottom half of the ramp, where they had been placed earlier, up to the altar. Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov says: The priest who takes the limbs up to the ramp is the one who takes them up from the ramp and places them upon the altar.

⁴ MISHNA 5:3 The priests who did not win a lottery were still dressed in the priestly vestments that they were required to don when entering the lottery, so that if they won they would be prepared for immediate service. The appointed priest handed over these priests to the care of the attendants [laḥazanim]. The attendants would undress these priests and remove their garments, and they would leave only their trousers on them. After the priests donned their non-sacred garments, they would remove the priestly trousers and don their non-sacred trousers. And there were four storage compartments there in the Temple for the storage of priestly vestments for each priestly watch, and on each of them was written the use of the garment stored there: Trousers, tunic, belt, and mitre.

⁵ MISHNA 5:4 The priest who won the lottery to burn the incense would take the spoon used for carrying the incense. And the spoon was similar to a large gold vessel that held three kav, and the smaller vessel was placed inside the spoon.

⁶ The vessel was filled to overflow with incense. And it had a cover to prevent spillage of the incense, and there was a type of cloth placed upon it from above, to preserve the fragrance of the incense.

⁷ MISHNA 5:5 The priest who won the right to bring the coal pan with the coals from the outer altar to the incense altar in the Sanctuary took the silver coal pan, ascended to the top of the outer altar, and cleared the extinguished coals from the perimeter of the flame to here and to there. Then he shoveled four kav from the consumed inner coals, which were burned in the depths of the flame, into the coal pan. He descended from the altar and emptied the coals into the coal pan made of gold. Approximately one kav of coals from it was spilled and scattered on the courtyard floor, as the capacity of the gold pan was only three kav. And a priest would sweep the scattered coals into the Temple courtyard drain that passed through the courtyard to drain the waste outside the Temple.

⁸ And on Shabbat, when it is prohibited to extinguish fire, the priest would not sweep the coals into the canal; rather, he would overturn a pesakhter upon them. And the pesakhter was a large vessel that held a half-kor. And since the pesakhter was a very heavy vessel, there were two chains on it, to facilitate its standard use, removal of ashes from the altar: One chain with which a priest would pull the vessel filled with ashes down the ramp, and one chain that another priest would grasp from above, so that the vessel would not roll down the ramp and the ashes would not spill.

⁹ And the pesakhter would serve three purposes: The priests would overturn it upon the coals that scattered in the Temple during the transfer from the silver to the gold coal pan on Shabbat, and they would overturn it upon the carcass of a creeping animal found in the Temple on Shabbat, and they would take the ashes down from atop the altar in it.

¹⁰ MISHNA 5:6 The priest with the spoonful of incense and the priest with the gold coal pan filled with coals reached the place between the Entrance Hall to the Sanctuary and the outer altar, on their

way to the Sanctuary. One of them took the shovel and threw it between the Entrance Hall and the outer altar. No person could hear the voice of another speaking to him in Jerusalem, due to the sound generated by the shovel.

¹¹ And that sound would serve three purposes: Any priest who hears its sound knows that his brethren the priests are entering to prostrate themselves in the Sanctuary at that time, and he would run and come to prostrate himself with them. And any Levite who hears its sound knows that his brethren the Levites are entering the courtyard to stand on their platform to recite the psalm accompanying the libation, and he would run and come to sing with them. And the head of the non-priestly watch, which stands in the courtyard as the agents of the Jewish people, would position the ritually impure priests and singers at the eastern gate of the courtyard, to make it clear that those priests were not performing the Temple service due to their ritual impurity.

Chapter 6

¹ MISHNA: 6:1 The priest with the panful of incense and the priest with the gold coal pan filled with coals began ascending the twelve stairs of the Entrance Hall. The priests who won the rights of the removal of ash from the inner altar and the removal of ash from the Candelabrum would precede them, to remove the vessels that remained in the Sanctuary. The priest who won the right of the removal of ash from the inner altar entered the Sanctuary and took the basket that he had left there after removing the ashes from the altar. And when he completed his tasks, he prostrated himself with his hands and feet spread and emerged from the Sanctuary.

² The priest who won the right of the removal of ash from the Candelabrum entered the Sanctuary, and if he found the two western lamps, i.e., the easternmost and the one immediately to its west, of the Candelabrum burning, he would remove the ash from the easternmost lamp and prepare it anew. But he would leave burning the lamp immediately west of the easternmost lamp, as from that lamp he would kindle the lamps of the Candelabrum in the afternoon. If he found that the lamp west of the easternmost lamp was extinguished, he would remove the ashes and kindle it from the fire on the altar of the burnt offering. He then took the jug in which he had placed the ashes and wicks of the Candelabrum from the second stair of the stone before the Candelabrum and prostrated himself and emerged from the Sanctuary.

³ MISHNA 6:2 The priest who won the right to bring the coal pan filled with coals to the inner altar for the burning of the incense first piled the coals on the inner altar and then flattened them, distributing them evenly on the altar with the bottom of the coal pan. And when he finished distributing the coals, he prostrated himself and emerged from the Sanctuary.

⁴ MISHNA 6:3 The priest who won the right to burn the incense would take the smaller vessel containing the incense from within the spoon, and would give it to a priest who is his friend or his relative, whom he designated to assist him, and enter the Sanctuary with him. If the incense was scattered from the smaller vessel into the spoon, the priest accompanying him would give the incense to the priest burning the incense in his handfuls. And the experienced priests would teach the priest burning the incense: Be careful, because if you are not careful you might begin scattering the incense

on the side of the altar that is before you; rather, start scattering on the far side of the altar, so that you will not be burned by the burning incense when you are scattering it.

⁵ The priest began flattening it, distributing the incense evenly on the coals on the altar, and when the Sanctuary would become filled with the smoke of the incense, he would emerge from the Sanctuary. The priest burning the incense would not burn it until the appointed priest would say to him: Burn the incense. And if it was the High Priest who was burning the incense, the appointed priest would say to him deferentially: My master, the High Priest, burn the incense.

⁶ It is derived from the verse: “And there shall be no man in the Tent of Meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Sanctuary, until he comes out” (Leviticus 16:17), that no one may be standing between the Entrance Hall and the outer altar when the priest burns the incense. Therefore, the people, i.e., the priests, left that area. And the priest burned the incense on the inner altar and prostrated himself and emerged from the Sanctuary.

Chapter 7

¹ MISHNA: 7:1 After the priests concluded sacrificing the daily morning offering, they would enter the Sanctuary to prostrate themselves. On occasions when the High Priest would enter the Sanctuary to prostrate himself, he would enter before the other priests. When the High Priest enters the Sanctuary, three priests hold him to assist him and support him, in order to distinguish the service of the High Priest from that of the other priests entering the Sanctuary. One priest held his right hand and one priest held his left hand, and one priest stood behind the High Priest, holding onto the two precious onyx stones located on the shoulders of the High Priest, on the ephod.

² And once the appointed priest heard the sound from the feet of the High Priest, produced by the bells attached to the bottom of his robe, he knew that the High Priest was emerging from the Sanctuary, and he lifted the curtain suspended at the opening of the Entrance Hall for him, to facilitate his exit. After the High Priest entered and prostrated himself and emerged from the Sanctuary, his brethren the priests entered, prostrated themselves, and emerged from the Sanctuary.

³ MISHNA 7:2 After the priests emerged from the Sanctuary, they came and stood on the twelve stairs before the Entrance Hall. The first five priests stood to the south of their brethren, the priests, who had taken the limbs of the daily offering up to the altar. And those five priests had five vessels in their hands: The basket with the ashes from the inner altar was in the hands of one priest; and the jug with the ashes from the Candelabrum was in the hands of one priest; and the coal pan was in the hands of one priest; and the smaller vessel, the bowl that held the incense, was in the hands of one priest, who had burned the incense; and the spoon and its cover were in the hands of one priest, the friend or relative of the one who burned the incense.

⁴ The priests placed their vessels on the ground and then blessed the people, reciting one blessing. The Priestly Benediction was recited outside the Temple as well, but in the Temple, it was recited differently, as in the rest of the country the priests would recite it as three blessings, and the listeners would answer amen after each blessing. But in the Temple they would recite it as one blessing, and the listeners would not respond to each blessing. Rather, at the conclusion of the entire Priestly Benediction they would answer: Blessed are You Lord, God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

In the Temple, the priests would recite the name of God as it is written, with the letters yod, heh, vav, heh, whereas in the rest of the country the priests would recite the name of God by His appellation, ales, dalet, nun, yod.

⁵ Furthermore, in the rest of the country, while reciting the Priestly Benediction the priests lift their hands opposite their shoulders, and in the Temple they raise them above their heads. That is the halakha with regard to all priests in the Temple, except for the High Priest, who does not raise his hands above the frontplate on his forehead, as the name of God is written on the frontplate. Rabbi Yehuda says: Even the High Priest would raise his hands above the frontplate while reciting the Priestly Benediction in the Temple, as it is stated with regard to the Priestly Benediction recited by Aaron the High Priest: “And Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them” (Leviticus 9:22).

⁶ MISHNA 7:3 The High Priest is entitled to sacrifice any offering brought to the Temple, at his discretion. When the High Priest wishes to burn the limbs of the daily offering and the accompanying meal offering, he would ascend the ramp to the altar, and the deputy High Priest would walk to his right. When he reached half the height of the ramp, the Deputy would hold his right hand and take him up to the altar at the top of the ramp.

⁷ And the first of the nine priests who took the limbs up to the altar handed the High Priest the head and the hind leg of the offering, and the High Priest placed his hands upon them and then threw them onto the altar fire. Next the second of the nine priests handed the two forelegs of the offering to the first priest. He gave them to the High Priest, who placed his hands upon them and then threw them onto the altar fire. At that point, the second priest slipped away and left. And in that manner the priests would hand the High Priest the rest of all the limbs, and he would place his hands upon them and then throw them onto the altar fire. And when he wishes, he places his hands and others throw the limbs onto the fire.

⁸ When the High Priest, who was at the top of the ramp on the south side of the altar, came to circle the altar to reach the southwestern corner, where he would pour the libation of wine, from where does he begin? He begins from the southeastern corner and continues to the northeastern corner, then to the northwestern corner, and ultimately reaches the southwestern corner. At that point, the priests gave him wine to pour.

⁹ The Deputy stands at the High Priest’s side at the corner of the altar and the cloths are in his hand, so that he can wave them to signal to the Levites to begin singing when the High Priest pours the libation. Two priests stand at the marble table of the fats, where the limbs and fats were placed before being taken to the altar, and there were two silver trumpets in their hands. These two priests sounded a tekia, a long continuous blast; they then sounded a terua, a series of staccato blasts; and lastly they sounded another tekia to alert the Levites to prepare to recite the psalm.

¹⁰ The priests with the trumpets came and stood near ben Arza, the title given to the person who was tasked with striking the cymbals, one to his right and one to his left. Then the High Priest stooped to pour the libation, and the Deputy waved the cloths, and ben Arza struck the cymbals, and the Levites recited the psalm of that day of the week. Each psalm was divided into three sections. Whenever the Levites reached the end of one section of the psalm, the priests sounded a tekia, and the people in the courtyard prostrated themselves. At the end of each section there was a tekia, and for every tekia

there was a prostration. That is the procedure for the sacrifice of the daily offering in the service of the House of our God; may it be His will that it will be speedily rebuilt in our day, amen.

¹¹ MISHNA 7:4 The following is a list of each daily psalm that the Levites would recite in the Temple. On the first day of the week they would recite the psalm beginning: “A psalm of David. The earth is the Lord’s and all it contains, the world and all who live in it” (Psalms, chapter 24). On the second day they would recite the psalm beginning: “A song; a psalm of the sons of Korah. Great is the Lord and highly to be praised in the city of God, on His sacred mountain” (Psalms, chapter 48). On the third day they would recite the psalm beginning: “A psalm of Asaph. God stands in the divine assembly; among the judges He delivers judgment” (Psalms, chapter 82). On the fourth day they would recite the psalm beginning: “O Lord God, to Whom vengeance belongs, God to Whom vengeance belongs, shine forth” (Psalms, chapter 94). On the fifth day they would recite the psalm beginning: “For the leader; upon the Gittith, a psalm of Asaph. Sing for joy to God, our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob” (Psalms, chapter 81). On the sixth day they would recite the psalm beginning: “The Lord reigns: He is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed, girded with strength” (Psalms, chapter 93). On Shabbat they would recite the psalm beginning: “A psalm, a song for Shabbat day” (Psalms, chapter 92). This is interpreted as a psalm, a song for the future, for the day that will be entirely Shabbat and rest for everlasting life.