

I.

BAVLI TRACTATE TAANIT CHAPTER ONE

FOLIOS 2A-15A

1:1-2D

1:1

- A. [2A] From what point in the seasons do they include the mention of “the powers of rain” [in the Prayer]?
- B. R. Eliezer says, “On the first day of the Festival [of Tabernacles].”
- C. R. Joshua says, “On the last day of the Festival.”
- D. Said to him R. Joshua, “Since rain is only a sign of a curse when it comes on the Festival itself, why should one mention it?”
- E. Said to him R. Eliezer, “I too have said so not for the purpose of asking [for rain], but only of mentioning ‘restoring the wind and bringing down the rain,’ [that is,] in its due season.”
- F. He said to him, “If so, one should always make mention of it.”

1:2A-D

- A. They ask for rain only near [the time of] rain.
- B. R. Judah says, “He who goes before the ark [to lead the congregation in reciting the Prayer] on the last day of the Festival [of Tabernacles] —
- C. “the latter person [at the Additional Service] makes mention [of rain]” the former one [at the Morning Service] does not make mention [of rain].
- D. “On the first day of Passover, the former person makes mention of rain, the latter person does not make mention of rain.”
- I.1** A. *On what basis does the Tannaite authority of the passage rest his case [in taking for granted] by using the language, “From what point do they include the mention...” [that it is obligatory to make mention of “the powers of rain” in the Prayer]?*
- B. *The Tannaite authority rests his case on the statement elsewhere, as it is taught on Tannaite authority, They mention the “power of the rain” in [the blessing*

concerning] “the resurrection of the dead,” [the second blessing in the eighteen benedictions]. And they ask for rain in the blessing of the years [the ninth blessing]. And [they insert] Prayer of Division [habdalah, i.e., the blessing which marks the end of the Sabbath or festival] in [the blessing concluding] “who graciously gives knowledge,” [the fourth blessing]. [M. Ber. 5:2A-B]. [The requirement of including the statement in the Prayer is set forth elsewhere, and that is the basis for the statement of the Tannaite authority responsible for the statement here.]

- C. *So on that basis the Tannaite authority has framed the rule, “From what point do they include the mention...” [that it is obligatory to make mention of “the powers of rain” in the Prayer]?*
- D. *But why not encompass the Tannaite teaching wholly within the formulation in that other passage [rather than splitting the statement up and presenting part of the information at Berakhot and the other part at Taanit]? What is the reason that he has left it over for discussion here instead?*
- E. Rather, [there is a different operative consideration, namely] the Tannaite authority has carried the matter forward from tractate Rosh Hashanah [which is in the same division as tractate Taanit, rather than tractate Berakhot, which is in the division of Agriculture], for we have learned in the Mishnah [of that tractate], **At four seasons of the year the world is judged: at Passover through grain; at Pentecost through fruit of the tree; at the New Year all who enter the world pass before Him like troops, since it is said [Psa. 33:15]: “He who fashions the hearts of them and who considers all their works;” and on the Festival [of Tabernacles] they are judged through water [M. R.H. 1:2].** Now, in the context of teaching the Tannaite rule, **on the Festival [of Tabernacles] they are judged through water**, he carries the matter forward [in the very next tractate in the order of Mishnah-tractates before the author] by encompassing the rule, **From what point do they include the mention...?**

- I.2 A.** *And why not formulate the Tannaite rule, They include the mention of rain. Why state matters [more simply] in the language of **the power of rain**?*
- B. Said R. Yohanan, “It is because that rain falls with great force, as it is said, ‘who does great things beyond understanding and marvelous things without number’ (Job. 9: 5). And it is further written, ‘He gives rain upon the earth and sends waters upon the fields’ (Job. 5:10).”
- C. *What then bears the besought implication?*
- D. *Said Rabbah bar Shila, “We draw a verbal analogy based on the usage of the word ‘beyond understanding’ in the present passage and the use of the same word in the context of the creation of the world. Here we find it is written, ‘who does great things beyond understanding,’ and elsewhere we find, ‘Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. he does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable’ (Isa. 40:28). And it is written [concerning creation], ‘Who by your strength sets mountains fast, who are girded about with power’ (Psa. 65: 7).” [The word “beyond understanding” in Job. speaks of rain and in Isaiah of creation: power is displayed through creation and through rain, thus “power of rain” (Rabbinowitz).]*

I.3 A. *And how do we know that [the prayer for rain] is included in the Prayer in particular?*

- B. As it has been taught on Tannaite authority:
- C. “To love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your heart” (Deu. 11:13) — What is the form of service that is carried out with the heart in particular?
- C. One must say, it is the Prayer.
- D. And immediately following it is written, “Then I shall give rain for your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain” (Deu. 11:14).

I.4 A. Said R. Yohanan, “Three keys are in the hand of the Holy One, blessed be he, that are not handed over to the hand of an agent, and these are they: the key to rain, the key to childbirth, and the key to the resurrection of the dead.

- B. “the key to rain: ‘The Lord will open up for you his good treasure, the heaven, to give the rain of your land in its season’ (Deu. 28:12);
- C. “the key to childbirth: ‘God remembered Rachel **[2B]** and God heard her and opened her womb’ (Gen. 30:22).
- D. “and the key to the resurrection of the dead: ‘And you shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves’ (Eze. 37:13).”
- E. *In the West they say*, “Also the key to making a living, as it is said, ‘You open your hand’ (Psa. 165:16).”
- F. *How come R. Yohanan does not take account of this further item?*
- G. He would say to you, “Rain is the same thing as making a living.”

II.1 A. R. Eliezer says, “On the first day of the Festival [of Tabernacles]:”

- B. *The question was raised: Whence [by what analogy] does R. Eliezer derive [the rule that the petition for rain is included in the Prayer from the first day of Tabernacles onward]? Does he derive that rule by analogy to the law governing the shaking of the lulab [the palm-branch, encompassing the four species, Lev. 23:40] [which commences on the first day of the Festival] or does he derive that rule by analogy to the law governing the rite of presenting a water-offering on the Temple altar?*
- C. *He derives the rule for the recitation of the petition for rain in the Prayer from the analogy provided by the waving of the lulab: just as the requirement to wave the lulab pertains from the first day of the Festival onward, so the requirement to mention the rain in the Prayer commences from the first day of the Festival.*
- D. *But perhaps he derives the rule for the recitation of the petition for rain in the Prayer from the analogy provided by the presentation of the water-offering: just as the water offering is carried out on the evening prior to the first day —*
- E. *for a master has said, “And the meal offering thereof and their drink offerings’ (Num. 29:18) — even by night:” —*
- F. *so the petition is inserted into the Prayer from the evening prior to the first day of the Festival.*
- G. *Come and take note of the following statement that R. Abbahu made, “R. Eliezer derived the rule only from the analogy of the lulab.”*

- H. *There are those who say that R. Abbahu derived that ruling from an argument by analogy, and there are those that say that he had heard a Tannaite formulation of the rule.*
- I. *What might the latter be?*
- J. *It is as has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- K. From what point do they make mention of the power of rain?
- L. R. Eliezer says, "From the time of taking up the lulab [at the commencement of the Festival]."
- M. R. Joshua says, "From the time that it is put away [at the end of the Festival, the Seventh Day]."
- N. Said R. Eliezer, "Since these four species [of the lulab] are presented only to intercede for water [through the provision of the autumn rains], therefore, just as these four species cannot survive without water, so the world cannot survive without water, [and in delivering that message through the symbol, the liturgy encompasses also the petition for rain should accompany the waving of the lulab]."
- O. Said to him R. Joshua, "But is it not the fact that rain on the Festival is solely a sign of a curse?"
- P. Said to him R. Eliezer, "But for my part, I ruled not that rain should be besought but only that it should be brought to mind.
- Q. And, moreover, just as throughout the year one makes mention of the resurrection of the dead [in the Prayer], even though the resurrection comes about only at its proper time, so people make mention of the power of rain throughout the year, even though it comes about only at its proper time. Therefore, if someone should come to make mention of the power of rain throughout the entire year, he may do so.
- R. Rabbi says, "I say, 'From the moment that one ceases to petition for rain, one should also cease to make mention of it.'"
- S. R. Judah b. Beterah says, "On the second day of the Festival is when one makes mention of it."
- T. R. Aqiba says, "On the sixth day of the Festival is when one makes mention of it."
- U. R. Judah in the name of R. Joshua says, "He who goes before the ark [to lead the congregation in the Prayer] on the last festival day of the Festival [of Tabernacles] makes mention of the petition for rain, but on the first day he does not make mention of it. And, correspondingly, on the first day of the festival of Passover he makes mention of it, but on the last day of the festival of Passover he does not make mention of it."
- V. *Did R. Eliezer give a solid reply to R. Joshua?*
- W. *R. Joshua will respond to you, "There is no problem explaining why one makes mention of the resurrection of the dead in the Prayer every day, for*

any and every day is the proper time for the event to take place. But can one say that as to rain, any time they come is their proper time? And lo, we have learned in the Mishnah: [Once] Nisan has ended, if it then rains, it is a sign of a curse, since it says, “Is it not wheat harvest today? [I will call unto the Lord, that he send thunder and rain, and you shall know and see that great is your wickedness which you have done in the sight of God to ask a king for yourself]” (1Sa. 12:17) [M. 1:8D-E]?

X. R. Judah in the name of R. Joshua says, “He who goes before the ark [to lead the congregation in the Prayer] on the last festival day of the Festival [of Tabernacles] makes mention of the petition for rain, but on the first day he does not make mention of it. And, correspondingly, on the first day of the festival of Passover he makes mention of it, but on the last day of the festival of Passover he does not make mention of it.” *what is the scriptural basis for the position of R. Judah b. Beterah?*

Y. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

Z. R. Judah b. Beterah says, “With reference to the second day, it is said, ‘and their drink-offerings,’ and in reference to the sixth day, ‘and the drink-offerings thereof’ while with reference to the seventh day it is said, ‘after the ordinance’ (Num. 29:19, 31, 33) — this yields a mem, a yod, and a mem, thus, water, on the strength of which we find an indication in Scripture for the water libation.”

AA. *Then what differentiates the second day [as the point at which the rite commences, given the availability of proof for the other specified days]?*

BB. *Because when Scripture alludes to the water offering, it begins with the second day, and that explains why in the Prayer the petition for rain takes place, to begin with, on the second day.*

CC. R. Aqiba says, “On the sixth day of the Festival is when one makes mention of it.”

DD. For it is said, “And its drink-offerings” so Scripture, using the plural form, implies [an

occasion on which there are] at least two drink offerings, the water offering and the wine offering being encompassed.

EE. *Might I imagine that both of them are to consist of wine offerings [excluding water offerings altogether]?*

FF. *[Aqiba] concurs in the reasoning of R. Judah b. Betera, who has said, "There are allusions to the water offering."*

GG. **[3A]** *Well, if he concurs with the view of R. Judah b. Betera, then let him also accept his view [that the petition for rain commences in the Prayer on the second day of the Festival]!*

HH. *R. Aqiba takes the position that when Scripture makes reference to an additional liquid offering, it is in the context of the sixth, not the second, day.*

II.2 A. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

B. *R. Nathan says, "In the holy place you shall by pouring pour out a drink offering of strong drink to the Lord' (Num. 28: 7) — Scripture speaks of two libations, one a libation of water, the other a libation of wine."*

C. *Might one suppose that Scripture speaks of two libations of wine?*

D. *If so, Scripture should have said either "by pouring" (HSK) two times, or "pour" (NSK) two times. Why vary the usage in the language of by pouring, pour (HSK/NSK)? The variation in the usage means to say, one pours a libation of water,*

the other pours a libation of wine.

II.3 A. *Now as to that which we have learned in the Mishnah: [The requirement of dwelling in the] sukkah and the water libation are for seven days [M. Suk. 4:1], in accord with what particular authority is that ruling?*

B. *It cannot be in accord with R. Joshua, for in line with his position, it should be for one day, and it cannot accord with R. Judah b. Beterah, who would require the rite to be carried on for six days!*

C. *In point of fact, it accords with R. Judah b. Beterah, and he takes the position of R. Judah in our Mishnah, for we have learned in the Mishnah: R. Judah says, “A log [of water] would one pour out as the water libation all eight days” [M. Suk. 4:9L]. [Judah b. Beterah, however] excludes the first day and includes the eighth day. [Rabbinowitz: he agrees with Judah that the water libation is done on the eighth day but differs as to the first, since he holds that it begins on the second, thus it lasts seven days].*

D. *What differentiates the first day, that on that day the water libation is not offered?*

E. *When we find an allusion in Scripture to the water libation, the allusion is to the second, not the first day.*

F. *Well, then, the same may be said for the water libation of the eighth day — when we find an allusion in Scripture to the water libation, it is to the seventh day, not to the eighth day, that reference is made!*

G. *[Having eliminated Judah b. Beterah from consideration, we are*

left with Joshua, so] it must be in accord with R. Joshua, and as to the water libation, it is held for all seven days, and that is based on a received law [given by God to Moses at Sinai as an oral tradition], in line with what which R. Ammi said R. Yohanan said in the name of R. Nehunya of the Valley of Bet Hawartan: “The laws concerning the Ten Young Trees [M. Shebiit 1:6], the Willow of the Brook and the Water Libation constitute laws revealed by God to Moses at Sinai [and handed on through oral tradition].”

II.4 A. R. Judah in the name of R. Joshua says, “He who goes before the ark [to lead the congregation in the Prayer] on the last festival day of the Festival [of Tabernacles] makes mention of the petition for rain, but on the first day he does not make mention of it. And, correspondingly, on the first day of the festival of Passover he makes mention of it, but on the last day of the festival of Passover he does not make mention of it.”

B. *To which R. Joshua does he make reference? Should I say, to the R. Joshua who is represented in our Mishnah-paragraph, lo, he has stated in so many words, “On the last day of the Festival.” Rather, it must be the R. Joshua of the cited Tannaite formulation,, lo, has he not stated there, “From the time that it is put away [at the end of the Festival, the Seventh Day].”*

C. *And furthermore, lo, that which has been taught on Tannaite authority, R. Judah in the name of R. Joshua says, “He who goes before the ark [to lead the congregation in the Prayer] on the last festival day of*

the Festival [of Tabernacles] makes mention of the petition for rain, but on the first day he does not make mention of it. And, correspondingly, on the first day of the festival of Passover he makes mention of it, but on the last day of the festival of Passover he does not make mention of it.” — *which Ben Beterah can this possibly be? Might I say it is R. Judah b. Beterah? Lo, he has said, “On the second day of the Festival he makes mention of [rain]”!*

C. *Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, “It is R. Joshua b. Betera. Sometimes he is called by his own name, and sometimes he is called by the name of his father. The one is prior to when he was ordained, the other, after he was ordained.”*

II.5 A. *A Tannaite statement:*

- B. In respect to the petition for dew and winds [“who restores the wind and brings down the dew,”] sages did not make it obligatory to make mention of the matter [even in the rainy season], but if one has come to do so, he may indeed do so.
- C. *What is the operative consideration?*
- D. Said R. Hanina, “The reason is that they are never held back [but come whether or not Israel petitions for them in prayer].”
- E. *How do we know that dew is never held back?*
- F. “And Elijah the Tishbite one of the inhabitants of Gilead said to Ahab, ‘As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years except when I say so’” (1Ki. 17: 1). And further, “Go, show yourself to Ahab and I will send rain upon the land” (1Ki. 18: 1). *But note, he does not make reference to dew! That is because [3B] it is not held back [under any circumstances].*
- G. *So if it is not held back, then how come Elijah the Tishbite take an oath in that connection at all?*
- H. *This is the sense of what he said to him, “Even the dew that is a blessing also will not come down.”*
- I. *Then how come the dew of blessing was not restored?*
- J. *Because it is not something that would have been perceived.*
- K. *How do we know that the winds are never held back?*
- L. Said R. Joshua b. Levi, “Said Scripture, ‘For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the Heaven’ (Zec. 2:10). *Now what is the meaning of that verse? If I say that this is what the Holy One, blessed be he, said to Israel, Israel was to be scattered to the four corners of the world, then*

instead of saying, 'as the four winds,' the verse should read, 'to the four winds.' So the sense can only be, just as the world cannot exist without winds, so the world cannot exist without Israel."

- M. Said R. Hanina, "Therefore, if, in the summer season, one said, 'who restores the winds,' they do not require him to go back and repeat the phrase correctly, but if he said, 'he brings down the rain,' he is required to go back and repeat the phrase properly [without the stated language]. If, in the rainy season, one did not say, 'who restores the winds,' they do not require him to go back and repeat the phrase correctly, but if he did not say, 'who brings down the rain,' they do require him to go back and repeat the phrase properly.
- N. "And not only so, but even if he said, 'Who takes away the winds and dries up the dew,' he is not required to go back and repeat the prayer correctly."

Thematic Composite on Clouds and Rains

II.6 A. A Tannaite statement:

- B. With regard to clouds and winds, sages did not make it obligatory to make mention of the matter, but if one has come to do so, he may indeed do so.
- C. *What is the operative consideration? Can it be because they are never held back?*
- D. *But are they not held back? Did not R. Joseph teach as a Tannaite statement, "'And he will shut up the heaven' (Deu. 11:17) — this means, with regard to clouds and winds.*
- E. "You say that this refers to holding back clouds and winds, but perhaps it refers only to holding back dew?
- F. "When Scripture says, 'So that there will be no rain' (Deu. 11:17), we find a reference to rain in hand, so what is the reference-point of the language, 'And he will shut up the heaven' (Deu. 11:17) — this means, with regard to clouds and winds."
- G. *Then there is a contradiction between the two references to "winds" and the two references to "clouds"!*
- H. *There is no contradiction between the two rules in regard to "winds," the one pertains to early clouds, the other to late clouds. [Rabbinowitz: clouds that depend on rain are withheld, clouds as a whole are never withheld, so one need not refer to them].*
- I. *There is no contradiction between the two rules in regard to "winds," the one refers to ordinary winds, the other to extraordinary ones.*
- J. *But are not extraordinary winds suitable for winnowing in the barn?*
- K. *It is possible to do the same processing with sieves.*

II.7 A. A Tannaite statement:

- B. Clouds and winds are derivatives of rain [and as important as rain].
- C. *How is that so?*
- D. *Said Ulla, and some say, R. Judah, "They are the ones that come after the rain."*
- E. *Is that to imply that they are beneficial? And lo, it is written, "The Lord will make the rain of your land into powder and dust" (Deu. 28:24), and in this*

connection said Ulla, and some say, R. Judah, "This is the wind that comes after the rain."

F. No, there is no contradiction, the one refers to wind that comes gently, the other to wind that comes harshly, the latter raises dust, the former does not raise up dust.

G. And said R. Judah, "Wind that comes after the rain is like rain itself, clouds that come after the rain are as beneficial as rain, sunshine that comes after rain is as beneficial as twice as much rain."

H. Excluding what?

I. The glow after sunset and sunshine between clouds.]

II.8 A. Said Raba, "Snow is as beneficial to the mountains as five times the same volume of rain to the earth, as it is said, 'For he says to the snow, fall on the earth, likewise to the shower of rain and to the showers of his mighty rain' (Job. 37: 6).

B. And said Raba, "Snow is beneficial to the mountain, heavy rain to the orchards, light rain to the produce of the field [4A] drizzling rain even to the seeds under a hard clod."

C. What is the sense of the word translated "drizzling rain"?

D. It is formed of clauses that yield the sense, "Wake up, you cracks" [following Rabinowitz].

E. And said Raba, "A novice of the rabbis is comparable to seeds under a hard clod. Once he has sprouted, he has sprouted."

F. And said Raba, "A novice of the rabbis who gets agitated — it is the Torah that agitates him, as it is said, 'Is not my word like fire?' says the Lord' (Jer. 23:29).

G. And said R. Ashi, "Any disciple of a sage who is not as durable as iron is no disciple of a sage, as it is said, 'And like a hammer that breaks the rock into pieces' (Jer. 23:29)."

H. Said R. Abba to R. Ashi, "You derive that lesson from the verse that you have said, and we derive it from the following: 'A land whose stones are iron' (Deu. 8: 9). Do not read the letters that spell out 'whose stones' in the established way, but rather as though they bore the vowels to yield, 'whose builders' [are iron]."

I. Said Rabina, "Nonetheless, a man should educate his soul in gentleness, as it is said, 'Therefore remove vexation from your heart' (Qoh. 11:10)."

II.9 A. Said R. Samuel bar Nahmani said R. Jonathan, "Three men put forward their petition improperly, two were answered, nonetheless, in a proper way, and one they answered not in a proper way, and these are they: Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, Saul son of Qish, and Jephtha of Gilead.

- B. “Eliezer, the servant of Abraham: ‘So let it come to pass that the girl to whom I shall say, Let down your pitcher that I may drink, and who shall say, Drink and I will provide water for your camels — let her be the one whom you have chosen for your servant, Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown trustworthy love to my master’ (Gen. 24:14) — now it is possible that she might have been lame or blind. Nonetheless, he was answered in a proper way, and Rebecca was chosen for him.
- C. “Saul son of Qish: ‘And it shall be that the man who kills him — the king will enrich him with great wealth and will give him his daughter’ (1Sa. 17:25) — [the successful warrior] might have been inappropriate as a slave or a mamzer, but he too was answered properly, and David was chosen for him.
- D. “and Jephtha of Gilead: ‘If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the Lord’s, and I will offer him up for a burnt offering’ (Jud. 11:31) — now it is possible that what he said would apply even to an unclean thing [which cannot be offered up], but he was answered not in an appropriate way. His daughter was chosen for him!”
- E. *That is in line with what the prophet said to Israel, “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there” (Jer. 8:22) [why was there no solution to Jephtha’s situation? A sage could have remitted the vow.]*
- F. And it is written, “Which I did not command nor of which I ever spoke, nor which ever entered my mind” (Jer. 19: 5):
- G. “Which I did not command: this refers to the sacrifice of the son of Mesha, king of Moab: ‘Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his place and offered him for a burnt offering’ (2Ki. 3:27).
- H. “nor of which I ever spoke:” this refers to the daughter of Jephtha.
- I. “nor which ever entered my mind:” this refers to Isaac, the son of Abraham.
- J. Said R. Berekhiah, “So too the community of Israel asked in an inappropriate manner, but the Holy One, blessed be he, responded in an appropriate manner, as it is said, ‘And let us know, really try to know the Lord, his going forth is sure as the morning, and he will come to us as the rain’ (Hos. 6: 3). Said to her the Holy One, blessed be he, ‘My daughter, you have petitioned for something that sometimes is besought and sometimes is not besought, but I, I shall be for you something that is besought at all times, as it is said, “I shall be as dew to Israel” (Hos. 14: 6).’
- K. “And further she asked in an inappropriate manner. She said before him, ‘Lord of the world, “Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm” (Song 8: 6). Said to her the Holy One, blessed be he, ‘My daughter, you have petitioned for something that sometimes can be seen and sometimes cannot be seen. But I will make of you something that can be seen all the time: “Behold, I have graven you upon the palms of my hands”’ (Isa. 49:16).”

III.1 A. They ask for rain only near [the time of] rain:

- B. *[Sages] theorized that [in the wording of the Mishnah-paragraph, the word-choices] “ask” and “make mention” are really one and the same thing.*

- C. *Then who is the Tannaite authority who holds that in close proximity to the rainy season they make mention of rain in the Prayer but not earlier]??*
- D. *Said Raba, "It is R. Joshua, for he has said, '[From what point do they make mention of the power of rain? R. Eliezer says, "From the time of taking up the lulab [at the commencement of the Festival]."' R. Joshua says,] "From the time that it is put away [at the end of the Festival, the Seventh Day]."'"*
- E. *Said to him Abbaye, "You may even maintain that it is R. Eliezer. 'Petitioning' [asking] is one thing, and 'making mention' is another."*
- F. **[4B]** *There are those who say, "It is R. Joshua, for he has said, '[From what point do they make mention of the power of rain? R. Eliezer says, "From the time of taking up the lulab [at the commencement of the Festival]."' R. Joshua says,] "From the time that it is put away [at the end of the Festival, the Seventh Day]."'"*
- G. *Said Raba, "You may even maintain that it is R. Eliezer. 'Petitioning' [asking] is one thing, and 'making mention' is another."*

- IV.1 A. R. Judah says, "He who goes before the ark [to lead the congregation in reciting the Prayer] on the last day of the Festival [of Tabernacles] — the latter person [at the Additional Service] makes mention [of rain]" the former one [at the Morning Service] does not make mention [of rain]. On the first day of Passover, the former person makes mention of rain, the latter person does not make mention of rain:"**
- B. *A contradiction was proposed as follows: Up to what time do they ask for rain? R. Judah says, "Until Passover is passed." R. Meir says, "To the end of Nisan" [M. 1:2E-F]. [Here, by contrast, it is only until the beginning of Passover.]*
 - C. *Said R. Hisda, "There is no contradiction. As to petitioning for rain, one continues to ask for it, but as to making mention of it, on the first day of the festival of Passover one actually stops making mention of it."*
 - D. *Said Ulla, "This solution of R. Hisda's is as difficult as 'vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes' (Pro. 10:26). Now if in a case in which one does not petition for rain, one makes mention of it, in a case in which one does petition for rain, is it not reasonable that he should make mention of it?!"*
 - E. *Rather, said Ulla, "We are dealing with two Tannaite statements attributed to R. Judah."*
 - F. *[Resolving the contradiction of A-B in a different way,] R. Joseph said, "What is the meaning of **Until Passover is passed?** Until the first reader of the prayers in behalf of the congregation has completed reciting the prayers on the first day of Passover."*
 - G. *Said to him Abbaye, "Is there an appropriate spot for the insertion of a petition on the festival day?"*
 - H. *He said to him, "Indeed there is, The translator does offer a petition."*
 - I. *"But does the translator ever offer a petition for something that the congregation does not need? Rather, a better solution is proposed by Ulla."*
 - J. *Rabbah said, "What is the meaning of **Until Passover is passed?** Until the time for slaughtering the Passover offering has passed, [noon on the eve of the fifteenth of Nisan]. And just as at the beginning one makes mention of rain even though he*

has not yet begun to pray, so at the end of the rainy season he makes mention of rain even though he no longer has to petition for it.”

- K. *Said to him Abbayye, “Now there is no problem understanding why that should be the case since making mention of it is tantamount to an act of appeal [prefatory to the prayer], but at the end of the season, what’s the point of an act of appeal? Rather, a better solution is proposed by Ulla.”*

IV.2 A. Said R. Assi said R. Yohanan, “The decided law accords with the position of R. Judah.”

- B. Said R. Zira to R. Assi, “Now did R. Yohanan ever make any such statement? And have we not learned in the Mishnah, **On the third of Marheshvan they pray for rain. Rabban Gamaliel says, “On the seventh day of that month, the fifteenth day after the Festival, so that the last Israelite [returning home] may reach the Euphrates river.”** And said R. Eleazar, ‘The decided law is in accord with Rabban Gamaliel.’”
- C. *He said to him, “Are you simply setting up the opinion of one authority against the opinion of another authority [in an ad hominem argument, Yohanan against Eleazar]?”*
- D. *If you want, I shall say, [there is no contradiction in any case], the one speaks of petitioning, the other of making mention [petitioning begins on the seventh, making mention is when Judah says].*
- E. But did R. Yohanan not say, “In a case in which one petitions for rain, one makes mention of it”?
- F. *That is stated with reference to when one stops praying, meaning, when one ceases to petition, he also stops making mention of the matter.*
- G. And did not R. Yohanan say, “If one has begun to make mention of the matter, he begins also to petition. If one has ceased to petition for the matter, he also ceases to make mention of it.”
- H. *Rather, there is no contradiction in any event. The one statement pertains to us Babylonians, the other to them [who live in the Land of Israel]. [In Babylonia the prayer for rain commences later on.]*
- I. *And why should we be different from them? Is it because [as implied] we have produce in the field? They too have a special consideration, namely, the pilgrims of the festival [who want to get home before the rains come, so the prayer should be postponed as long as possible to let them get home in good time; so there are special considerations that would lead to a later timetable for the Israelites in both countries].*
- J. *When R. Yohanan made that statement, it pertained to the age in which the house of the sanctuary was no longer standing [so there is no reason to concern ourselves for pilgrims to Jerusalem; hence the prayer would start later in Babylonia than in the Land of Israel].*
- K. *Well, if you are willing to go that far, then I might say, both teachings pertain as much to them [in the Land of Israel] and still there is no contradiction; the one speaks of the Land of Israel in Temple times, the other, after Temple times.*
- L. Now as to us, who have two festival days to celebrate, how should we conduct ourselves?

- M. Said Rab, “One begins to make mention of rain in the Additional Service of the Eighth Day of the Festival, stops in the Afternoon Service and in the Evening Service and in the Morning Service, then resumes in the Additional Service of the second day.”
- N. *Said to them Samuel, “Go, say to Abba, ‘After you have treated it as holy are you going to treat it as profane once again!’”*
- O. Rather, said Samuel, “One makes mention of it in the Additional Service and in the Afternoon Service, then he skips over the Evening and Morning Services and goes and begins again in the Additional Service [of the second day].”
- P. **[5A]** Raba said, “Once he has begun to recite it, he does not again cease to recite it.”
- Q. And so said R. Sheshet, “Once he has begun to recite it, he does not again cease to recite it.”
- R. *And so Rab retracted his opinion, for said R. Hananel said Rab, “He counts out twenty-one days, just as he counts out ten days between the New Year and the Day of Atonement, and then he begins to recite it, and once he has begun to recite it, he does not then interrupt the practice.”*
- S. And the decided law is, once he has begun to recite it, he does not then interrupt the practice.

1:2E-H

- E. **Up to what time do they ask for rain?**
- F. **R. Judah says, “Until Passover is passed.”**
- G. **R. Meir says, “Until the end of Nisan,**
- H. **“since it says, ‘And he causes to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first [month]’” (Joe. 2:23).**
- I.1 A.** [Since the prophet refers to “former rain,” ordinarily identified with the rainfall after the Festival of Sukkot, the aptness of the proof-text is addressed:] Said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, “Does the former rain fall in Nisan? Surely the former rain falls in Marheshvan, *for we have learned in a Tannaite statement, The former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan [T. Taaniyot 1:1B].*”
- B. *He said to him, “This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘In the time of the prophet Joel b. Petuel was fulfilled this verse of Scripture: “What the cutting locust left the swarming locust has eaten, what the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten” (Joe. 1: 4). In that year, Adar ended without rain; on the first of Nisan [following], the first rain fell. On the first of Nisan the prophet said to Israel, “Go, sow seed.” They said to him, “He who has a qab of wheat seed or two qabs of barley — should he eat them and live, or should he saw them and die?” He said to them, “Nonetheless, go, sow seed.” A miracle was done for them, and to them was revealed what was hidden in the walls and in the ant holes. They went and sowed on the second, third, and fourth, and the latter rain fell for them on the fifth of Nisan, and they offered the ‘omer-sheaf of first barley on the sixteenth [as required in any normal year]. It turned out that a crop that ordinarily ripens in six months ripened in eleven days. It turned out that the ‘omer-sheaf that is ordinarily offered*

of barley that has grown for six months was offered of barley that had grown for all of eleven days. And concerning that generation, Scripture says, “Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy; though he goes on his way weeping, bearing the measure of seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy, bearing his sheaves of grain with him” (Psa. 126: 5-6).”

- C. *What is the meaning of* “Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy; though he goes on his way weeping, bearing the measure of seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy...” (Psa. 126: 5-6)”
- D. Said R. Judah, “When an ox is ploughing, as it goes along it weeps, but when it comes back, it nibbles on the young green in the furrows, and that is the sense of, “shall come home with shouts of joy.”
- E. *And what is the meaning of*, “bearing his sheaves of grain with him”?
- F. Said R. Hisda, and there are those that say that it was taught by a Tannaite authority, “The stalk was one span, and the ear of grain, two.”

Appended Block of Nahman to Isaac compositions

- I.2 A.** *Said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, “What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, ‘For the Lord has called for a famine, and it shall also come upon the land for seven years’ (2Ki. 8: 1)? During those seven years what did they eat?”*
- B. *He said to him, “This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘In the first year they ate what was in the houses, in the second they ate what was in the fields, in the third they ate the meat of clean beasts, in the fourth the meat of unclean beasts, in the fifth they ate the flesh of abominations and creeping things, in the sixth the flesh of their sons and daughters, and in the seventh they ate the flesh of their own limbs, so to fulfill that which is stated, “They eat every man the meat of his own arm” (Isa. 9:19).”*
- I.3 A.** *And said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, “What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, ‘The Holy One is in your midst, and I will not come into the city’ (Hos. 11: 9). [Can it possibly mean,] because the Holy One is in your midst, I shall not come into the city?!”*
- B. *He said to him, “This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘Said the Holy One, blessed be he, “I shall not come into the heavenly Jerusalem until I enter the earthly Jerusalem.””*
- C. *And is there really a heavenly Jerusalem?*
- D. *Indeed there is, for it is written, “Jerusalem that is built up like a city that is well-joined all together [above and below]” (Psa. 122: 3).*
- I.4 A.** *And said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, “What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, ‘But they are completely brutish and foolish; the vanities by which they are instructed are nothing but a piece of wood’ (Jer. 10: 8)?”*
- B. *He said to him, “This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘There is one thing that brings a burning to the wicked in Gehenna, and what is that? It is idolatry. Here it is written, “the vanities by which they are instructed are nothing but a piece of wood,” and elsewhere: “They are a vanity, a work of delusion” (Jer. 10:15).”*
- I.5 A.** *And said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, “What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, ‘For my people have committed two evils’ (Jer. 2:13)? Were they only two? Has he neglected the twenty-four [Rabbinowitz: sins enumerated in Ezekiel 22]?”*

- B. *He said to him, "This is what R. Yohanan said, 'There was one [5B] that is weighed against two, and what is that? It is idolatry, as it is written, 'For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and they have dug out cisterns, broken cisterns that hold no water' (Jer. 2:10-11). And concerning them it is written, 'For go over to the islands of the Kittites and see, send to Kedar and look closely — has a nation changed its gods, which are no-gods? But my people has exchanged its glory for something that is worthless' (Jer. 2:10-11).'"*
- C. *A Tannaite statement:*
- D. *The Kittites worship fire, the Kedarites worship water.*
- E. *And even though they know full well that water puts out fire, they have not changed their gods, "But my people has exchanged its glory for something that is worthless" (Jer. 2:10-11)*
- I.6 A.** *And said R. Nahman to R. Isaac, "What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, 'And it came to pass, when Samuel got old' (1Sa. 8: 1). But did Samuel ever get that old? Lo, he reached only fifty-two, for said a master, 'If someone died at the age of fifty-two, that is the death of Samuel the Ramatite.'"*
- B. *He said to him, "This is what R. Yohanan said, 'Samuel aged prematurely, for it is written, "I am sorry that I set up Saul to be king" (1Sa. 15:11). He said before Him, "Lord of the world, you have treated me as equivalent to Moses and Aaron, for it is written, 'Moses and Aaron are among his priests and Samuel among those who call upon his name' (Psa. 99: 6). Then, just as in the case of Moses and Aaron, nothing that they ever did came to nought in their lifetimes, so let nothing that I have ever done come to nothing in my lifetime." Said the Holy One, blessed me he, "So what am I supposed to do? Should Saul die? Samuel would never permit it. Should Samuel die young? People will draw the wrong conclusions about him [thinking he has died by extirpation by reason of sins]. Should neither Saul nor Samuel die? But the time has come for the reign of David to commence, and one reign cannot impinge upon another even by so much as a hair's breadth." Said the Holy One, blessed be he, I will make him prematurely old." And that is in line with what is written, "Now Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the tamarisk tree in Ramah" (1Sa. 22: 6). And what has Gibeah to do with Ramah? But it is to say to you, what caused Saul to sit in Gibeah for two and a half years? It was the prayer of Samuel of Ramah.'"*
- C. *So then does one man get shunted aside on account of another?*
- D. *Indeed so, for said R. Samuel bar Nahmani said R. Jonathan, "What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, 'Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth' (Hos. 6: 5)? What is said is not, by their deeds," but rather, "by the words of my mouth," which proves that one man get shunted aside on account of another.*
- I.7 A.** *R. Nahman and R. Isaac were sitting together for a meal, and R. Nahman said to R. Isaac, "Let the master say something [of learning]."*
- B. *He said to him, "This is what R. Yohanan said, 'People do not converse at meals, lest the windpipe come before the gullet and endanger life.'"*

- C. *After they finished eating, he said to him, ““This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘Jacob our father never died.’”*
 - D. *He said to him, “Then was it for nothing that they mourned for him and embalmed and buried him?”*
 - E. *He said to him, “I am expounding a verse of Scripture, as it is said, ‘No do not fear, Jacob, my servant, says the Lord, nor be afraid, Israel, for lo, I will save you from afar and your children from the land of their captivity’ (Jer. 30:10). [The prophet] therefore compares him and his descendants. Just as his descendants yet live, so he is yet alive.”*
- I.8 A.** *Said R. Isaac, “Whoever repeats the name of the courtesan, Rahab, two times, on the spot ejaculates.”*
- B. *Said to him R. Nahman, “I said it and it made no difference to me.”*
 - C. *He said to him, “When I made that statement, it was of someone who actually knows her and is well acquainted with her.”*
 - D. *When they were parting company, he [Nahman] said to him, “Would the master give us his blessing?”*
 - E. *He said to him, “Let me tell you a parable. To what may the situation be compared? It is like the case of a man who was going through the wilderness and was hungry and tired and thirsty. Then he came upon a tree, the fruit of which was sweet, the shade balmy, with a stream of water flowing by. He ate the fruit, drank the water, and rested in the shade. When he got ready to go, he said, ‘Tree, O tree, with what sort of blessing should I bless you? Should I say to you that your fruit be sweet, lo, your fruit is sweet; that your shade be balmy, lo, your shade is balmy, that a stream of water flow by you, lo, a stream of water flows by you! But may it be pleasing to God that all of the shoots that they will take and plant from you [6A] be exactly like you!’ So it is with you — with what sort of blessing should I bless you? Should it be with Torah? Lo, there is plenty of Torah. Should it be with wealth? Lo, there is ample wealth. Should it be with children? Lo, children. But may it be pleasing to God that those that come forth from your loins be just like you.”*

Composite on the Theme of the Former Rain and the Latter Rain

- I.9 A.** *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- B. *The former rain is called yoreh because it teaches [moreh] people to plaster their roofs, bring in their produce, and do all their needs [before the rainy season hits full-force].*
 - C. *Another matter: It is called called yoreh [using the letters RWH] because it saturates the ground RWH. and penetrates to the depths, as it is said, “Watering her ridges abundantly, settling down the furrows thereof, you make her soft with showers, you bless the growth thereof” (Psa. 65:11).*
 - D. *Another matter: It is called called yoreh [using the letters RWH] because it descends gently and does not descend with fury.*

- E. Or perhaps it is called *yoreh* because it makes the fruit fall [referring to the word *yoreh*, to throw] and washes away seed and washes away trees?
- F. To exclude that interpretation, the word “latter rain” [*malqosh*] is introduced: just as latter rain is for a blessing, so the former rain is only for a blessing.
- G. But might the word for latter rain [*malqosh*, using the letters LQSH, Amo. 7:1, grasshopper] bear the meaning, it knocks over houses and breaks trees and brings up crickets?
- H. To exclude that interpretation, the word “former rain” is introduced: just as the former rain is only for a blessing, so the latter rain is only for a blessing.
- I. *But how do we know that the former rain itself is only for a blessing?*
- J. As it is written, “Be glad then you children of Zion and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he gives you the former rain in just measure and he brings down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, as at the first” (Joe. 2:21).

I.10 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. **The former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan** [T. **Taaniyot 1:1B**].
- C. You say that **the former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan**. But perhaps the fact is only that the former rain falls in Tishri and the latter rain in Iyyar?
- D. Scripture says, “In its right time” (Deu. 11:14).
- E. As to latter rain [*malqosh*] —
- F. Said R. Nehilai bar Idi said Samuel, “It is something that circumcises Israel of its stiff-neckedness.”
- G. A Tannaite authority of the household of R. Ishmael: “It is something that fills stalks with grain.”
- H. In a Tannaite formulation it was taught: “It is something that descends upon the ears and the stalks.”

I.11 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. **The former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan** [T. **Taaniyot 1:1B**].
- C. You say that **the former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan**. But perhaps the fact is only that it is in the month of Kislev?
- D. Scripture says, “In its right time” (Deu. 11:14).
- E. The former rain and the latter rain — just as the latter rain must come in its due season, for the former rain must come in its season.

I.12 A. *A further Tannaite statement:*

- B. “The former rain in Marheshvan, and the latter rain in Nisan,” the words of R. Meir
- C. And sages say, “The former rain is in Kislev.”
- D. *Who are the sages cited here?*
- E. Said R. Hisda, “It is R. Yosé, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority.”
- F. **What is the first rainfall** [cf. M. **Ta. 1:2H**]?

- G. “The first of it falls on the third [of Marheshvan], the intermediate on the seventh, and even so late as the seventeenth,” the words of R. Meir.
- H. R. Judah says, “The first of it falls on the seventh, the intermediate on :he seventeenth, and the last on the twenty-third.”
- I. R. Yosé says, “The first of it falls on the seventeenth, the intermediate on the twenty-third, and the last on the new moon of Kislev.”
- J. And so did R. Yosé say, “Individuals do not begin to fast before the new moon [of Kislev]” [cf. M. **Ta. 1:4A**] [T. **Ta. 1:3A-E**, revised to conform to Bavli’s readings].

G. *Said R. Hisda, “The decided law conforms to the view of R. Yosé.”*

H. *Amemar repeated as a Tannaite formulation this teaching of R. Hisda in the following language:*

I. On the third of Marheshvan they petition for rain.

J. Rabban Gamaliel says, “On the seventh.”

K. Said R. Hisda, “The decided law accords with the view of Rabban Gamaliel.

I.13 A. *In accord with what authority is the following statement that has been set forth as a Tannaite tradition:*

B. **Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, “Rains which fall on seven successive days without ceasing constitute the first, and second, and third rainfall” [T. **Ta. 1:4F**].**

C. In accord with whom? In accord with R. Yosé.

D. *Said R. Hisda, “The decided law conforms to the view of R. Yosé.”*

E. *Now there is no problem explaining why we require a date for the first rainfall, for that is the time at which petitioning for rain commences, and there is no problem understanding why the third rainfall is designated, since that marks the point at which, should rain fail, fasting begins. But what’s the point in specifying a date for the second rainfall?*

F. *Said R. Zira, “This has to do with vows, in line with that which we have learned in the Mishnah: [6B] [If he said,] “Until the rains,” “Until the rains will come,” it applies until the second shower has fallen [in November] [M. **Ned. 8:5A**].*

G. *R. Zebid said, “It has to do with olive-growing, as we have learned in the Mishnah:*

H. A. [After what time [of year] are all people, [rich and poor alike], permitted [to gather] gleanings [that the poor have not yet taken]?

I. [All are permitted] after the aged-poor [hannamoshot] go [through the field in order to collect this produce, for by this time, we may

assume that all poor people have had a chance to gather their share of the gleanings].

J. With regard to separated [grapes] and defective clusters, [when is any person, rich or poor, permitted to take the food]?

K. [All are permitted] after the poor go through the vineyard [to collect the produce designated for them], and have come [a second time to gather the grapes they earlier passed over].

L. And with regard to olive trees, [when is any person permitted to collect the fruit left behind as forgotten produce]?

M. [All are permitted] after the time of the second rainfall [M. **Pe. 8:1** (trans. Roger L. Brooks)].

N. *What is the definition of the aged-poor?*

O. Said R. Yohanan, “Old folk wh lean on a cane.”

P. R. Simeon b. Laqish said, “They are those who glean after the gleaners.”

Q. R. Pappa said, “The date of the second rain is required so that people will know whether they may walk on private paths [across private property].”

R. For a master has said, “It is permitted to use paths in private fields until the time that the second rains are anticipated.”

R. Nahman bar Isaac said, “The date of the second rain is required for the removal of produce grown during the Sabbatical Year.”

S. *For we have learned in the Mishnah: And likewise [the time of the second rainfall is determinative in the following cases]: One who leases a house to his fellow, “Until the rains,” — [The renter retains possession of the house] until the second rainfall. One who has vowed [not to] benefit from his fellow, “Until the rains,” — [the vow remains in force] until the second rainfall. Until when may the poor enter the orchards [to glean the corner of the field]? Until the second rainfall.] After what time may they derive benefit from or burn straw and stubble [of the Sabbatical year]? After the second rainfall [M. **Sheb. 9:7**].*

T. *What is the pertinent verse of Scripture?*

U. “And for your cattle and for the beasts that are in your field” (Lev. 25: 7) — So long as

the beast in the field finds food, you may feed your cattle in the household, but when there is no more food in the field for the beasts to eat, you must withhold from the cattle the food that is in your house.

- I.14** A. Said R. Abbahu, "What is the meaning of the word *rebi 'ah* [former rain]? It is that which fructifies the ground."
- B. *That is in accord with R. Judah, for said R. Judah, "Rain is the husband of the earth, as it is said, 'For as the rain falls and the snow from heaven and does not return there except as it waters the earth and makes it bring forth and bud' (Isa. 55:10)."*
- C. And said R. Abbahu, "As to the first rain, it should fall hard enough to penetrate a handbreadth deep into the soil, and the second should be enough to water the earth so that it can be shaped into a stopper for a cask."
- D. Said R. Hisda, "Rain that has fallen hard enough to water the earth so that it can be shaped into a stopper for a cask is not subject to the consideration, 'He will shut up the heavens' (Deu. 11:17)."
- E. And said R. Hisda, "If rain came down prior [to the time for reciting, in the *Shema*, the words,] 'And he will shut up,' signifies that that consideration does not apply."
- F. Said Abbayye, "We have made such a statement only in the case in which the rain has come down prior to the reference in the language of the *Shema* to 'he will shut up' in the evening recitation of the *Shema*, but if it fell before the time for reciting those words in the *Shema* of the morning, then the curse may still pertain."
- G. *For said R. Judah bar Isaac, "Morning clouds have no substance, as it is written, 'O Ephraim, what shall I do to you, for your goodness is as the morning cloud' (Hos. 6: 4)."*
- H. *Said R. Pappa to Abbayye, "But people say, 'If it rains when the gates are opened, put down your sack, ass driver, and go to sleep'" [there will be plenty of rain and the crops will be abundant and prices will fall, so moving food from place to place will bring no profit]."*
- I. *There is no contradiction between the two allegations, the one case speaks of heavens that are overcast with thick clouds, the other, light ones [which are insubstantial].*
- J. *Said R. Judah, "Fortunate is the year in which the month of Tebet is a widow [without rain]."*
- K. *There are those that say, it is because the gardens don't lie waste, and there are those that say, because the grain will not become blasted.*
- L. *Is that so now? And did not R. Hisda say, "Fortunate is the year in which the month of Tebet is muddy [from the rain]"?*
- M. *There is no contradiction, the one speaks of a case in which rain had already fallen earlier in the year, the latter, in a case in which rain had not yet fallen.*

- M. And said R. Hisda, "Rains that fell on part of the country but on part of the country did not fall are not classified in the category, 'And he will shut up.'"
- N. *Is that so now? And has it not been written*, "And I also have withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest, and I made it rain on one city and not on another, one piece was rained upon and not another" (Amo. 4: 7), in which connection said R. Judah said Rab, "Both of them represent a curse"!
- O. *There is no contradiction here. In the one case Scripture speaks of rain that comes in excess, in the other, rain that comes as required.*"
- P. Said R. Ashi, "A careful reading of the matter yields that conclusion also, for the word 'it will rain' is used, made up of the three letters that stand for the words, let it be a place of rain, thus meaning, a place flooded by rain."
- q. *That proves the point.*

- I.15** A. Said R. Abbahu, "From what point in the year do people say a blessing for rain? From the time at which the husband goes forth to greet the bride [which is to say, when the drops of rain fall so hard that they rebound from the earth (Simon, p. 371, n. 8)]."
- B. *What is the blessing that people say?*
- C. Said R. Judah said Rab, "We give thanks to you for every drop of rain that you bring down for us."
- D. *And R. Yohanan concludes the blessing in the following way*, "'Were our mouths as full of song as the sea..., we could not suffice to give thanks to you, Lord our God,' up to, 'shall prostrate itself before you. Blessed are you, to whom many words of thanksgiving are due.'"
- F. Many words of thanksgiving and not all words of thanksgiving?
- G. Said Raba, "Phrase it, 'God who is to be thanked.'"
- H. *Said R. Pappa, "Therefore let us say both versions. [7A] 'Many words of thanksgiving and God who is to be thanked.'"*

Composite on the Theme of the Greatness of a Rainy Day, the Great Days to which a Rainy Day is Comparable

- I.16** A. Said R. Abbahu, "Greater is the rainy day than the resurrection of the dead, for while the resurrection of the dead encompasses only the righteous, rain serves both the righteous and the wicked."
- B. *Now he differs from the view of R. Joseph, for* said R. Joseph, "Since rain is equivalent to the resurrection of the dead, sages assigned to rain a place in the paragraph concerning the resurrection of the dead [in the Prayer]."
- I.17** A. Said R. Judah, "A rainy day is as great as the day on which the Torah was given, as it is said, 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain' (Deu. 32: 2), and 'doctrine' refers only to the Torah, as it is said, 'I give you a good doctrine, forsake not my Torah' (Pro. 4: 2)."
- B. Raba said, "It is even greater than the day on which the Torah was given, as it is said, 'My doctrine shall drop as the rain' (Deu. 32: 2) — now what

depends on what? You must say, the lesser upon the greater [and the Torah is compared to rain].”

I.18 A. *Raba contrasted these verses, “It is written, ‘My doctrine shall drop as the rain’ (Deu. 32: 2), followed by, ‘My speech shall distil as dew’ (Deu. 32: 2) — if a disciple of the sages is mannerly, then he is like dew, and if not, then drop him like rain” [following Rabbino-witz].*

I.19 A. *It has been taught in Tannaite authority:*

B. R. Bena’ah would say, “Whoever engages in Torah-study for its own sake — his Torah-study is turned for him into a healing medicine, as it is said, ‘It is a tree of life to those that hold onto it’ (Pro. 3:18), and, further, ‘It shall be as health to your belly’ (Pro. 3: 8), and, ‘For whoever finds me finds life’ (Pro. 8:35). But whoever engages in Torah-study not for its own sake — his Torah-study is turned for him into a poisonous medicine, as it is written, ‘My doctrine shall drop as the rain’ (Deu. 32: 2), and the word for ‘drop’ uses letters that can yield, also, the word ‘death,’ in line with the usage, ‘And they shall break the heifer’s neck there in the valley’ (Deu. 21: 4) [the word for ‘break the neck’ being formed of the same consonants as the word for drop].”

I.20 A. *Said R. Jeremiah to R. Sira, “May the master come and teach a Tannaite statement.”*

B. *He said to him, “I’m not feeling so well today and I can’t.”*

C. *“Then let the master teach a matter of aggadah?”*

D. *He said to him, “This is what R. Yohanan said, ‘What is meant by the verse, “For is the tree of the field man” (Deu. 20:19) — so is man a tree of the field?! But since it is written, “For you may eat of them but you shall not cut them down [for is the tree of the field man]” (Deu. 20:19), followed by, “That is what you shall destroy and cut down” (Pro. 20:20), [we must ask,] how are these verses to be interpreted? If a disciple of sages is mannerly, “of him you may eat and you shall not cut him down,” but if not, “That is what you shall destroy and cut down.””*

I.21 A. *Said R. Hama bar Hanina, “What is the meaning of the verse, ‘Iron sharpens iron’ (Pro. 27:17)? It is to tell you, just as iron sharpens its fellow, so two disciples of sages sharpen one another in halakhic study.”*

I.22 A. *Said Rabbah bar bar Hanah, “Who are words of Torah likened to fire, as it is said, ‘Is not my word like fire, says the Lord’ (Jer. 23:29)? It is to tell you, just as fire does not ignite on its own, so words*

of Torah do not last on their own [but are best exchanged with other disciples of the Torah].”

B. *And that accords with what R. Yosé bar Hanina said, “What is the meaning of ‘A sword is upon the boasters and they shall become fools’ (Jer. 50:36)? A sword smite the (enemies of) disciples of sages, who go into session, each by himself, while studying Torah! And not only so, but they grow stupid. Here it is written, ‘And they shall become fools’ (Jer. 50:36), and elsewhere it is written, ‘And we have done foolishly’ (Num. 12:11) [using the same verb]. Not only so, but they sin, for it is said, ‘And we have sinned’ (Num. 12:11). If you wish, I shall prove the proposition from the following: ‘The princes of Zoan have become fools’ (Isa. 19:13).”*

I.23 A. Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, “Why are words of Torah compared with a tree, as it is said, ‘It is a tree of life to those who hold on to it’ (Pro. 3:18)? It is to say to you, just as in the case of a tree, small pieces of wood kindle large ones, so in the case of disciples of sages, the lesser ones sharpen the greater ones.”

B. And that is in line with what R. Hanina said, “Much have I learned from my masters, more from my colleagues, but from my disciples, most of all.”

I.24 A. R. Hanina bar Papa contrasted these verses: “*It is written*, ‘Unto him who is thirsty bring water’ (Isa. 21:14), and also, ‘Lo, everyone who thirsts, come for water’ (Isa. 55: 1). If he is a mannerly disciple, ‘To him who is thirsty, bring water,’ but if not, then ‘All who thirst, come for water.’”

I.25 A.R. Hanina bar Hama contrasted these verses, “*It is written*, ‘Let your springs be dispersed abroad’ (Pro. 5:16), and also, ‘Let them be only your own’ (Pro. 5:17). If he is a mannerly disciple, ‘Let your springs be dispersed abroad,’ but if not, ‘Let them be only your own.’”

I.26 A. Said R. Hanina bar Idda, “Why are words of Torah compared to water, as it is written, ‘Lo, everyone who thirsts, come for water’ (Isa. 55: 1). It is to say to you, just as water leaves a higher spot and flows to a lower spot, so words of Torah endure only for him who is humble in his knowledge.”

- B. Said R. Oshaia, “Why are words of Torah compared to these three liquids, water, wine, and milk, in line with the verses, ‘Lo, everyone who thirsts, come for water’ (Isa. 55: 1), ‘Come, buy and eat, yes, come buy wine and milk without money and without price’ (Jer. 23:29)? It is to say to you, just as these three liquids last only when kept in the least costly jugs [clay ones, but not silver], so words of Torah endure only for him who is humble in his knowledge.”
- C. *That is in line with what the daughter of Caesar said to R. Joshua b. Hananiah, “*
- D. Said Caesar’s daughter to R. Joshua b. Hananiah, “Beautiful Torah in an ugly vessel!”
- E. He said to her, “Learn from your father’s household. In what do they store wine?”
- F. *She said to him, “In clay utensils.”*
- G. *He said to her, “Well, everybody stores wine in clay utensils, and you store wine in clay utensils too! You who are nobles should keep it in vessels of gold and silver.”*
- H. *She went and told this to her father, and he stored wine in gold and silver utensils, and it turned sour.*
- I. *They went and told him. He said to his daughter, ‘Who told you this?’*
- J. *She said to him, “R. Joshua b. Hananiah.”*
- K. *They summoned him. He said to him, “Why did you say this to her?”*
- L. *He said to him, “Because this is what she said to me, so I answered her in the same way.”*
- M. *“But lo, aren’t there good-looking men who study?”*
- N. **[7b]** *“If they were ugly, they would learn still more.”*
- O. Another matter: Just as these three liquids spoil only through neglect, so words of Torah are forgotten only through neglect.

I.27 A. Said R. Hama bar Hanina, “The day on which rain falls is as great as the day on which heaven and earth were made, as it is said, ‘Drop down, heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness, let the earth open that they may bring forth salvation and let her cause righteousness to spring up together, I the Lord have created it’ (Isa. 45: 8). What is said is not, ‘I created them,’ but ‘I created it [rain].’”

I.28 A. Said R. Oshaia, “Said R. Oshaia, “Great is the day on which rain falls, for on it even salvation springs up and grows, ‘Let the earth open, that they may bring forth salvation’ (Isa. 45: 8).

Composite on the Theme of Why Rain is Withheld

I.29 A. Said R. Tanhum bar Hanilai, “Rain falls only if the sins of Israel are forgiven, as it is said, ‘Lord, you have been favorable to your land, you have turned the captivity of Jacob, you have forgiven the

iniquity of your people, you have pardoned all their sins' (Psa. 85: 2-3)."

- B. *Said Zeiri of Dihabat to Rabina, "You derive the lesson from that verse, it is from the following verse that we derive the same lesson: 'Then hear in heaven and forgive the sin' (1Ki. 8:36)."*

I.30 A. Said R. Tanhum bar Hiyya of Kefar Akko, "Rain is withheld only when (the enemies of) Israel merit destruction: 'Drought and heat consume the snow water, so does the nether world consume those that have sinned' (Job. 24:19).

- B. *Said Zeiri of Dihabat to Rabina, "You derive the lesson from that verse, it is from the following verse that we derive the same lesson: 'He will shut up heaven and you will perish quickly' (Deu. 11:17)."*

I.31 A. Said R. Hisda, "Rain is withheld only because of the nullification of the separation of priestly rations and tithes, as it is said, 'Drought and heat consume the snow waters' (Job. 24:19)."

C. *How is the lesson derived from that verse?*

D. A Tannaite authority of the household of R. Ishmael: "On account of the things concerning which I commanded you in the dry season which you have not done, you are denied the snow waters in the winter."

- E. Said R. Simeon b. Pazzi, "Rain is withheld only because of those that retail gossip: 'The north wind brings rain and a backbiting tongue an angry face' (Pro. 25:23)."

- F. Said R. Salla in the name of R. Hamnuna, "Rain is withheld only because of insolent people: 'Therefore the showers have been withheld and there has been no latter rain, yet you had a harlot's forehead' (Jer. 3: 3)."

G. Further said R. Salla in the name of R. Hamnuna, "Anyone who is insolent in the end stumbles through transgression: 'Therefore the showers have been withheld and there has been no latter rain, yet you had a harlot's forehead' (Jer. 3: 3)."

H. R. Nahman said, "It is certain that such a one stumbles in transgression. What is said is not, 'you had' but 'you will have.'"

I. Said Rabbah bar R. Huna, "Whoever is insolent — it is permitted to call him wicked: 'A wicked man hardens his face' (Pro. 21:29)."

J. R. Nahman bar Isaac said, “It is permitted even to hate him: ‘And the boldness of his face is changed’ (Qoh. 8: 1) — read the consonants rendered as changed as though they yielded the word ‘hated.’”

I.32 A. Said R. Qattina, “Rain is withheld only because of nullification of Torah-study: ‘By slothfulness the rafters sink in’ YMK. (Qoh. 10:18). On account of the sloth that overtook Israel so that they did not engage in Torah-study, (the enemy of) the Holy One, blessed be he, becomes poor.

B. “For the consonants rendered as ‘sink in’ yield the word ‘poor’ as well, in line with the usage: ‘But if he be too poor for your valuation’ (Lev. 27: 8).

C. “The consonants of the word rendered rafters yield a reference to God: ‘Who lays the beams of your upper chambers in the waters’ (Psa. 104: 3) [the consonants of ‘lays the beams’ being the same as those for ‘rafters’].”

D. R. Joseph said, “Proof derives from the following: ‘And now men see not the light that is bright in the skies, but the wind passes and cleans them’ (Job. 37:21) — and ‘light’ yields only the word ‘Torah:’ ‘for the commandment is a lamp and the Torah is light’ (Pro. 6:23).”

E. “Which is bright in the skies:” A Tannaite statement of the household of R. Ishmael, “Even when the heaven is full of white spotted clouds, ready to cause dew and rain to fall, a wind passes and cleans them [so rain does not fall].”

I.33 A. Said R. Ammi, “Rain is withheld only because of the sin of violent robbery: ‘He covers his hands with lightning’ (Job. 36:32) —on account of the sin of violent robbery done by their hands, he covers the light.

B. “‘Hands’ refers to violent robbery: ‘And from the violence that is in their hands’ (Jon. 3: 8).

C. “‘Light’ stands for rain: ‘He spreads about the cloud of his lightning’ (Job. 37:11).” [Rabbinowitz: “On account of hands (violence) he covers lightning (withholds rain).]

D. *What is the remedy for the situation?*

E. Let him say many prayers: “And give it a charge that it strike the mark” (Job. 36:32), and the consonants that yield “the mark” yield also “prayer:” “Therefore do not pray for this people nor make intercession to

me” (Jer. 7:16) [the letters for “intercession” being the same as those for “the mark”].

I.34 A. R. Ammi further said, “What is the meaning of that which is written, ‘If the iron is blunt and one does not whet the edge’ (Qoh. 10:10)? If you see the sky as hard as iron, so neither dew nor rain falls, it is on account of a generation that is utterly corrupt: ‘And one does not whet the edge.’”

B. *What is the remedy for the situation?*

C. Let them vastly strengthen their acts of mercy: “Then must he put to more strength, but wisdom is profitable to direct” (Qoh. 10:10) — all the more so if their deeds to begin with had been proper ones.

I.35 A. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “If you see a disciple [8A] whose studies are as hard for him as iron, it is because his learning in the Mishnah is not well ordered for him [he is not mastering the memorization of the traditions], for it is written, ‘And one does not whet the edge’ (Qoh. 10:10).

B. “*What is his remedy?* Let him spend more time at the session: ‘Then he must put in more effort, but wisdom helps one to succeed’ (Qoh. 10:10). All the more so if his Mishnah-learning is well ordered right from the outset.”

C. *That is in line with what R. Simeon b. Laqish [would do, he would] review his Mishnah-passage forty times, corresponding to the forty days during which the Torah was given. Then he would come before R. Yohanan.*

D. R. Adda bar Ahbah would review his Mishnah-teaching twenty-four times corresponding to the books of the Torah, Prophets, and Writings, and then he would come before Raba.

I.36 A. Raba said, “If you see a disciple [8A] whose studies are as hard for him as iron, it is because of his master, who does not encourage him: ‘and one do not whet the edge’ (Qoh. 10:10).”

B. “*What is his remedy?* Let him make many friends [who will intercede in his behalf]:

‘Then he must put in more effort, but wisdom helps one to succeed’ (Qoh. 10:10). All the more so if his deeds before his master to begin with are deemed proper.”

I.37 A. *And said R. Ammi, “What is the meaning of that which is written: ‘If the snake bites before it is charmed, then the snake-charmer has no advantage’ (Qoh. 10:11)? If you see a generation for which the heavens turn rust color like copper so neither dew nor rain falls, that is on account of those who whisper their prayers, who are lacking in that generation.*

B. *“What is their remedy? Let them go to someone who knows how to whisper prayers: ‘The noise thereof tells concerning it’ (Job. 36:33).*

C. *“then the snake-charmer has no advantage’ (Qoh. 10:11): And someone who has the possibility of whispering prayers and does not whisper them — what advantage does he have.*

D. *“But if he whispers and is not answered, what is his remedy? Let him go to the most pious man of the generation that he say many prayers in his behalf: ‘And give it a charge that it strike the mark’ (Job. 36:33), and ‘strike the mark’ means only, ‘prayer,’ as it is said, ‘And therefore do not pray for this people nor lift up cry nor prayer for them nor make intercession to me’ (Jer. 7:16).*

E. *“But if he did whisper prayers and succeeded and on that account takes pride, he brings anger to the world: ‘The cattle also concerning the storm that comes up’ (Job. 36:33) [Rabbinowitz: he brings upon the world divine displeasure who is overbearing with pride because his prayer was answered].”*

I.38 A. Raba said, “Two disciples of sages who dwell in the same town and are not forbearing toward one another in matters of law provoke anger and bring it: “The cattle also concerning the storm that comes up’ (Job. 36:33).”

I.39 A. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “*“What is the meaning of that which is written: ‘If the snake bites before it is charmed, then the snake-charmer has no advantage’ (Qoh. 10:11)?*

B. *“And R. Simeon b. Laqish said, “What is the meaning of the following verse of Scripture: ‘If the snake bites before it is charmed, then the charmer has no advantage’ (Qoh. 10:11)?*

C. "In the age to come all the beasts will come together and confront the snake and say to it, 'The lion seizes and eats, the wolf tears and eats, but as for you, what pleasure do you have [in your destruction] since you often kill without eating your prey?'

D. "And the snake will say to them, 'What benefit does he have who [attacks by making use of] the tongue (i.e., a slanderer)?!'"

I.40 A. Said R. Ammi, "A person's prayer is heard only if he puts his soul to the palms of his hands: 'Let us lift up our heart with our hands' (Lam. 3:41)."

B. *Is that so? And lo, Samuel appointed a public speaker to proclaim his words and expounded, "'But they beguiled him with their mouth and lied to him with their tongue, for their heart was not steadfast with him, neither were they faithful in his covenant' (Psa. 78:36), and even so, 'But he being full of compassion forgives iniquity' (Psa. 78:38)"*

C. *There is no contradiction, the one speaks of the individual, the other of the entire community [which are accepted even if not at the high level required by R. Ammi].*

I.41 A. Said R. Ammi, "Rain falls only on account of people of integrity: 'Truth springs out of the earth and righteousness has looked down from heaven' (Psa. 85:12)."

I.42 A. Further said R. Ammi, "Come and see how great are persons of integrity. How do we know? From the story of the Weasel and the Well [Rabbinowitz: a man extracted a promise of marriage from a maiden who fell into a well if he rescued her. The well and a weasel were witnesses to the undertaking. They avenged the maiden for the man's breach of promise.]

B. "Now if that is so for one who believes in the weasel and the well, all the more so one who believes in the Holy One, blessed be he."

I.43 A. Said R. Yohanan, "Whoever adheres to a high standard of justice down below do they justify on high: 'Truth springs out of the earth and righteousness has looked down from heaven' (Psa. 85:12)."

B. R. Hiyya bar Abin said R. Huna, "Proof derives from here: 'And your wrath according to the fear that is due to you' (Psa. 90:11)."

C. R. Simeon b. Laqish said, "Proof derives from here: 'You have taken away him who joyfully worked righteousness, those who remember you in your ways, behold you were angry and we sinned, upon

them have we stayed of old, that we might be saved' (Isa. 64: 4)."

I.44 A. Said R. Joshua b. Levi, "Whoever rejoices when suffering comes upon him brings salvation to the world: 'upon them have we stayed of old, that we might be saved' (Isa. 64: 4)"

I.45 A. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "*What is the meaning of the verse, 'And he will shut up the heaven' (Deu. 11:17)? When the heaven is shut up and does not bring down dew or rain, it is like a woman who is in labor but cannot give birth.*"

B. *That is in line with what R. Simeon b. Laqish said in the name of Bar Qappara, "The word 'shut up' is used in connection with the heaven, and the word 'shut up' is used in connection with a woman.*

C. **[8B]** "The word 'shut up' is used in connection with a woman: 'For the Lord has completely closed up all wombs' (Gen. 20:18).

D. "The word 'shut up' is used in connection with rain: 'And he will shut up the heaven.'

E. "'Bearing' is stated with reference to a woman, and 'bearing' is stated with reference to rain.

F. "'Bearing' is stated with reference to a woman: 'And she conceived and bore a son' (Gen. 30:23).

G. "and 'bearing' is stated with reference to rain: 'And make it bear and bud' (Isa. 55:10).

H. "'Remembering' is stated with reference to a woman and 'remembering' is stated with reference to rain.

I. "'Remembering' is stated with reference to a woman: 'And the Lord remembered Sarah' (Gen. 21: 1).

J. "and 'remembering' is stated with reference to rain: 'You have remembered the earth and watered her, greatly enriching her, with the river of God that is full of water' (Psa. 65:10)."

K. What is the sense of, "with the river of God that is full of water"?

L. *A Tannaite statement:* In the firmament there is a kind of chamber from which rain issues.

I.46 A. Said R. Samuel bar Nahmani, "*What is the meaning of the verse of Scripture, 'Whether for correction or for his earth or for mercy that he cause it to come' (Job. 37:13)?*"

B. "'Whether for correction:' he will make it rain on the mountains and the hills.

C. "'for mercy:' he will make it rain on the earth, on the fields and vineyards.

D. "'Whether for correction:' he makes it rain on the trees;

E. "'whether for his earth: on the seeds in the ground;

F. "'if it is for mercy:' he makes it rain in cisterns, pits and caves."

I.47 A. *In the time of R. Samuel bar Nahmani there was famine and pestilence. People said, "What should we do? Should we ask for mercy on two*

counts? That is not possible. So let's ask for mercy on the count of the pestilence, and we will bear with the famine."

- B. *Said to them R. Samuel bar Nahmani, "Let us pray for mercy on the count of the famine, for when the All-Merciful gives plenty, it is for the living that he gives it: 'You open your hand and satisfy every living thing with favor' (Psa. 145:16)."*
- C. *And how do we know that we do not pray on two counts?*
- D. *As it is written, "So we fasted and besought our God for this" (Ezr. 8:23) — implying that there were two considerations [and they had one in mind].*
- E. *In the West they said in the name of R. Haggai, "It derives from the following verse: 'That they might ask mercy of the God of heaven concerning this secret' (Dan. 2:18) — implying that there were two considerations [and they had one in mind]."*

I.48 A. *In the time of R. Zira there was a decree, and it was forbidden by decree to sit in a fast. Said to them R. Zira, "Let us take upon our selves the obligation to fast, and when the decree is annulled, we shall observe the fast."*

- B. *They said to him, "How do you know this [is feasible]?"*
- C. *He said to them, "Because it is written, 'Then he said to me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day when you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard' (Dan. 10:12)."*

I.49 A. *Said R. Isaac, "Even though the years were like the years of Elijah [and the land suffered drought], yet if rain fell on a Friday, they represent nothing other than the omen of a curse."*

- B. *For said Rabbah bar Shila, "A rainy day is as hard as the day of judgment."*
- C. *Said Amemar, "If it were not that it is necessary for people, we should seek mercy and abolish rain."*

I.50 A. *Further said R. Isaac, "Sun on the Sabbath is an act of righteousness to the poor: 'But to you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings' (Mal. 3:20)."*

I.51 A. *Further said R. Isaac, "Great is a rainy day, for even a penny in the pocket is blessed: 'To give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands' (Deu. 28:12)."*

I.52 A. *Further said R. Isaac, "A blessing is located only in what is hidden away from sight, as it is said, 'The Lord shall command the blessing upon you in your hidden things' (Deu. 28: 8)."*

- B. *A Tannaite authority of the household of R. Ishmael taught, "A blessing is located only in what the eye cannot reach [that is, in what is carefully hidden away], as it is said, 'The Lord shall command the blessing upon you in your hidden things' (Deu. 28: 8)."*

C. Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:

- D. He who goes to measure his grain in his granary should say the following: “May it please you, Lord our God, to send a blessing on the works of our hands.”
- E. When he has begun to take the measure of the grain, he says, “Blessed is the One who sends a blessing on this crop.”
- F. But if he took the measure and then said the blessing, lo, this is a vain prayer, since a blessing is common not in what is already weighed, measured, or counted out, but only in what is hidden from sight, as it is said, “The Lord shall command the blessing upon you in your hidden things” (Deu. 28: 8).

I.53 A. Said R. Yohanan, “Said R. Yohanan, “A rainy day is as great as the day on which the exiles are gathered in to the land, as it is said, ‘Turn our captivity, Lord, as the streams in the dry land’ (Psa. 126: 4). ‘Streams’ refers to rain: ‘And the channels of the sea appeared’ (2Sa. 22:16).”

B. And said R. Yohanan, “A rainy day is great, for even armies stop fighting on it: ‘Watering her ridges abundantly, settling down the furrows thereof’ (Psa. 65:11).”

C. And said R. Yohanan, “Rain is withheld only on account of those who publicly pledge to give to charity and do not pay up: ‘As vapors and wind without rain, so is he who boasts himself of a false gift’ (Pro. 25:14).”

D. And said R. Yohanan, “*What is the sense of the verse [9A]: ‘You shall surely tithe’ (Deu. 14:22)? Tithe so you may get rich.*”

E. *R. Yohanan came across the boy of R. Simeon b. Laqish [his nephew]. He said to him, “Tell me the verse of Scripture you are studying today.”*

F. He said to him, “‘You shall surely tithe’ (Deu. 14:22).”

G. *And the boy said to him, “So what is the meaning of, ‘You shall surely tithe’?”*

H. He said to him, “Tithe so you may get rich.”

I. *[The boy] said to him, “How do you know?”*

J. *He said to him, “Go, test it out.”*

K. *He said to him, “And is it permitted to test the Holy One, blessed be he? And is it not written, ‘You shall not test the Lord’ (Deu. 6:16)?”*

L. *He said to him, “This is what R. Hoshai said, ‘Except for this matter [of tithing]: ‘Bring you the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house and try me now herewith, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing that shall be more than enough’ (Mal. 3:10).”*

M. What is the meaning of “that shall be more than enough”?

N. Said R. Ammi bar Hama said Rab, “Until your lips get tired of saying, ‘Enough.’”

O. *The boy said, “If I had come to this verse, I should not have needed either you or R. Oshaia, your teacher.”*

- P. *R. Yohanan once again came across the boy of R. Simeon b. Laqish [his nephew], who was in session and reciting the following verse, “The foolishness of man perverts his way and his heart frets against the Lord” (Pro. 19: 3).*
- Q. *R. Yohanan went into session and expressed his amazement: “Is there something written in the Writings to which in the Torah there is no hint?”*
- R. *He said to him, “But isn’t this matter not hinted at? And isn’t it written, ‘And their heart failed them and they turned trembling one to another, saying, what is this that God has done to us’ (Gen. 42:28)?”*
- S. *[Yohanan] raised his eyes and stared at him. His mother [R. Simeon b. Laqish’s sister] came along and swept him away. She said to him, “Go away from him, that he not do to you what he did to your father.”*

Reference is made to the following passage.

BAVLI BABA MESIA 3:10 I.12/84A

I.12. A. *One day there was a dispute in the school house [on the following matter]: As to a sword, knife, dagger, spear, hand-saw, and scythe — at what point in making them do they become susceptible to become unclean? It is when the process of manufacturing them has been completed [at which point they are deemed useful and therefore susceptible]. And when is the process of manufacturing them completed?*

- B. *R. Yohanan said, “When one has tempered them in the crucible.”*
- C. *R. Simeon b. Laqish said, “When one has furbished them in water.”*
- D. *[R. Yohanan] said to him, “Never con a con-man” [lit.: a robber is an expert at robbery].*
- E. *He said to him, “So what good did you ever do for me? When I was a robber, people called me, ‘my lord’ [lit.: rabbi], and now people call me ‘my lord.’”*
- F. *He said to him, “I’ll tell you what good I’ve done for you, I brought you under the wings of the Presence of God.”*
- G. *R. Yohanan was offended, and R. Simeon b. Laqish fell ill. His [Yohanan’s] sister [Simeon b. Laqish’s wife] came to him weeping, saying to him, “[Heal my husband,] do it for my children’s sake!”*
- H. *He said to her, “‘Leave your fatherless children. I will preserve them alive’ (Jer. 49:11).”*
- I. *“Then do it on account of my widowhood!”*
- J. *He said to her, “‘and let your widows trust in me’ (Jer. 49:11).”*
- K. *R. Simeon b. Laqish died, and R. Yohanan was much distressed afterward. Rabbis said, “Who will go and restore his spirits? Let R. Eleazar b. Pedat go, because his traditions are well-honed.”*
- L. *He went and took a seat before him. At every statement that R. Yohanan made, he comments, “There is a Tannaite teaching that sustains your view.”*
- M. *He said to him, “Are you like the son of Laqisha? When I would state something, the son of Laqisha would raise questions against my position on twenty-four grounds,*

and I would find twenty-four solutions, and it naturally followed that the tradition was broadened, but you say to me merely, 'There is a Tannaite teaching that sustains your view.' Don't I know that what I say is sound?"

N. *So he went on tearing his clothes and weeping, "Where are you, the son of Laqisha, where are you, the son of Laqisha," and he cried until his mind turned from him. Rabbis asked mercy for him, and he died.*

- I.54** A. Further said R. Yohanan, "Rain is for an individual, but sustenance is for the community.
- B. "Rain is for an individual: 'The Lord will open to you his good treasure, the heaven to give rain for your [sing.] land' (Deu. 28:12).
- C. "but sustenance is for the community: 'Behold, I will cause bread to rain for you [pl.]' (Exo. 16: 4)."
- D. *An objection was raised on the basis of the following, conflicting statement: R. Yosé b. R. Judah says, "Three good providers arose for Israel, and these are they: Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Through good gifts were given through them, and these are they: the well, the cloud, and mana. The well was on account of the grace owing to Miriam, the cloud, Aaron, and mana, Moses. When Miriam died, the well departed: 'And Miriam died there' (Num. 20: 1), followed by, 'And there was no water for the congregation' (Num. 20: 2), but it returned by reason of the grace owing to the two survivors. When Aaron died, the clouds of glory departed: 'And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, heard' (Num. 21: 1)."*
- E. What rumor did he hear? He heard that Aaron had died and the clouds of glory had departed, so he drew the conclusion that he was given authorization to conduct a war against Israel, and that is in line with the statement, "And all the congregation saw that Aaron had died" (Num. 20:29).
- F. Said R. Abbahu, "Do not read the consonants before us to yield 'they saw' but rather 'they were seen.'" [Rabbinowitz: the pillar of cloud disappeared, so Israel was now visible.]
- G. *That is in line with the interpretation of R. Simeon b. Laqish, for said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "The word 'ki' yields four different meanings: if, perhaps, but, and because" [and Abbahu reads it as "because"].*
- H. "But both of them [the well and the cloud] returned by reason of the gracing owing to Moses. When Moses died, all of them departed: 'And I cut off the three shepherds in one month' (Zec. 11: 8).
- I. "Now had they all died in a single month? Is it not the fact that Miriam died in Nisan, Aaron in Ab, and Moses in Adar? But it teaches that the three good gifts that were given through them were taken away, and all of them in one month." *Therefore we find that sustenance can come about because of a single individual!*
- J. *Moses is a special case: just as he prayed in behalf of the community, he was regarded as equivalent to the community.*

I.55 A. *R. Huna bar Manoah and R. Samuel bar Iddi and R. Hiyya of Vestania would frequent [the sessions of] Raba. When Raba died, they came before R. Pappa. Whenever he said to them a tradition that made no sense to*

them, they would make derogatory gestures to one another. He lost confidence in himself. **[9B]** In a dream this verse was declaimed: “And I cut off the three shepherds in one month” (Zec. 11: 8). When they [next] took their leave of him, he said to them, “May the rabbis go in peace” [the greeting to the dead; to the living, it is, “To go peace.”]

I.56 A. *R. Shimi bar Ashi would frequent [the sessions of] R. Pappa. They would give him a hard time. One day he saw that R. Pappa fell on his face [reciting the Supplication, Tahanun]. He heard him saying, “May the All-Merciful save me from the insolence of Shimi.” He took on him the obligation of silence and did not give him a hard time any further.*

I.57 A. *So too R. Simeon b. Laqish took the view that rain is for an individual, for said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “How on the basis of Scripture do we know that rain is for an individual? Because it is written, ‘Ask of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, even of the Lord who makes lightnings, and he will give them showers of rain, to every single one grass in the field’ (Zec. 10: 1). Might one suppose that that is when all [need the rain]? Scripture says, ‘to every single one.’”*

- B. *And it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. Might one say that that is when all of his fields require rain? Scripture says, “the field.”
- D. In line with “the field,” might one say that that is so only when the whole field needs rain?
- E. Scripture says, “grass.”
- F. *That is in line with the case involving R. Daniel bar Qattina. He had a certain garden that he would go and inspect every day. He said, “This bed needs water, and that bed doesn’t need water.” And it would rain on the beds that required water.*

I.58 A. *[“Ask of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, even of the Lord who makes lightnings, and he will give them showers of rain, to every single one grass in the field” (Zec. 10: 1):] What is the meaning of “Lord who makes lightnings.”*

- B. Said R. Yosé bar Hanina, “This teaches that for every single righteous person the Holy One, blessed be he, makes a flash of lightning for him in particular.”
- C. *What is the meaning of lightnings?*
- D. Said R. Judah, “Flashes.”
- E. Said R. Yohanan, “Flashes are a sign of rain to come.”
- F. *What are flashes?*
- G. Said R. Pappa, “A thin cloud under a thick cloud.”
- H. Said R. Judah, “If fine rain falls before heavy rain, then the rain will continue; should fine rain follow a heavy rain, then

the rain will stop. If it is before rain, the rain will continue, and the sieve is your reminder; if after heavy rain, the rain will stop, and goats' shit is your reminder."

I. *Ulla happened to come to Babylonia. He saw light clouds and exclaimed, "Take in the utensils, for it's going to rain." But it didn't rain. So he commented, "Just as Babylonians are a bunch of liars, so their clouds deceive."*

J. *Ulla happened to come to Babylonia. He saw that a whole basket of dates went for a zuz and exclaimed, "A whole basket of honey for a zuz and the Babylonians don't spend their time in Torah study." At night the [dates] gave him a belly-ache. He said, "A whole basket of knives for a zuz, and yet the Babylonians spend their time in Torah study!"*

I.59 A. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. R. Eliezer says, "The entire world draws water from the ocean: 'But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole of the ground' (Gen. 2: 6)."
- C. Said to him R. Joshua, "But aren't the waters of the ocean salty?"
- D. He said to him, "They are sweetened in the clouds."
- E. R. Joshua says, "The entire world draws water from the upper water: 'And drinks water as the rain of heaven comes down' (Deu. 11:11).
- F. "Then how do I interpret, 'But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole of the ground' (Gen. 2: 6)?"
- G. "This teaches that the clouds grow stronger as they go up to the firmament. They open their mouth like a jug and catch the rain water: 'Which distil rain from his vapor' (Job. 36:27). They are perforated like a sieve, and they slowly drop water on the ground: 'Dropping waters, thick clouds of the skies' (2Sa. 22:12).
- H. "Between one drop and another is only a hair's breath of space.
- I. "This teaches you that the day on which it rains is as great as the day on which heaven and earth were created: 'Who does great things past finding out' (Job. 5: 9). 'Who gives rain upon the earth' (Job. 5:10). 'Have you not known?

have you not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord ...his discernment is past finding out' (Isa. 40:28)."

- J. *In accord with the position of which of the two authorities is the following verse: "Who waters the mountains from your upper chambers" (Psa. 104:13), concerning which said R. Yohanan, "From the upper chambers of the Holy One blessed be he"?*
- K. *In accord with whose view? Obviously, in accord with that of R. Joshua!*
- L. *And R. Eliezer?*
- M. *[He explains the cited verse in this way:] Since the water ultimately finds its way above, it is described as coming "from your upper chambers." For if you don't take that position, then how are you going to explain the language, "Powder and dust from heaven" (Deu. 28:24)? But it must follow, since the [powder and dirt] ultimately finds their way above, they are described as coming "from your upper chambers." And here too, since the water ultimately finds its way above, it is described as coming "from your upper chambers."*
- N. *In accord with the position of which of the two authorities is the following statement that R. Hanina made, "'He gathers the water of the sea together as a heap, he lays up the deeps in storehouses' (Psa. 33: 7) — who caused the storehouses to be filled up? It was the deeps"?*
- O. *In accord with whom? It accords with the view of R. Eliezer.*
- P. *And R. Joshua?*
- Q. *That [10A] verse refers to the creation of the world.*

I.60 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. The Land of Israel was created first, and then the rest of the world was created afterward: "While as yet he had not made the Land nor the fields" (Pro. 8:26).
- C. The Land of Israel the Holy One blessed be he personally waters first, and then the rest of the world through an agent: "who gives rain upon the Land and send water upon the fields" (Job. 5:10).
- D. The Land of Israel drinks rain water, and the rest of the world [suffices with] the residue: "who gives rain upon the Land" (Job. 5:10). The Land of Israel is watered first, and then the rest of the world: "who gives rain upon the Land" (Job. 5:10).
- E. It is comparable to someone making cheese: first he takes out what is edible, then he leaves the refuse.

I.61 A. The master has said, "They are sweetened in the clouds."

- B. *How does he know this?*
- C. For said R. Isaac bar Joseph said R. Yohanan, "It is written, 'Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies' (Psa. 18:12), and also, 'distilling of waters, thick clouds of the skies' (2Sa. 22:12). Remove the kaf of 'darkness' and replace it with the resh' of

‘distilling’ and you get, ‘making fit’ or ‘drinkable.’”

- D. *Then how does R. Joshua interpret these same verses of Scripture?*
- E. *He interprets them in accord with the following, which R. Dimi said when he came: “They say in the West, ‘If the clouds are bright they have little water, if dark, they have much.’”*

I.62 A. *In accord with the position of which of the two authorities is the following statement that has been made on Tannaite authority:*

- B. *The upper water is suspended by a word, and their fruit is the rain: “The earth is full of the fruit of your works” (Psa. 104:13)?*
- C. *In accord with whom? It is in accord with R. Joshua*
- D. *And R. Eliezer?*
- E. *That verse refers to the works of the hands of God [other than those under discussion here].*

I.64 A. [Reverting to I.60:] Said R. Joshua b. Levi, “The entire world drinks from the residue of the water of the Garden of Eden, as it is said, ‘And a river went out of Eden and from there it divided into four parts’ (Gen. 2:10).”

- B. *A Tannaite statement:*
- C. *The residue of a kor [30 seahs] suffices for a tarqab [a half seah]. [Rabbinowitz: with the residue of water used for watering a space sown with a qab of seed one can water a space sown with a tarqab.]*

I.65 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. *Egypt was four hundred parasangs square. Egypt is a sixtieth of Ethiopia, Ethiopia is a sixtieth of the world, the world is a sixtieth of the Garden, the Garden is a sixtieth of Eden, Eden is a sixtieth of Gehenna. So the whole world is comparable to a pot lid in respect to Gehenna.*
- C. *And there are those who say, “Gehenna has no limit in size,” and there are those who say, ‘Eden has no limit in size.’”*
- D. *Said R. Oshaia, “What is the meaning of the verse, ‘O you who dwells on many waters, abundant in treasures’ (Jer. 51:13)?*
- E. *What causes Babylonia’s granaries to be full of grain? It is because it dwells by many waters.”*
- F. *Said Rab, “Babylonia is rich because it harvests without depending on rain.”*
- G. *Said Abbayye, “We hold a tradition: ‘better a flooded land than an arid land.’”*

1:3

- A. On the third of Marheshvan they pray for rain.
- B. Rabban Gamaliel says, “On the seventh day of that month, the fifteenth day after the Festival,
- C. “so that the last Israelite [returning home] may reach the Euphrates river.”

I.1 A. Said R. Eleazar, “The decided law accords with the position of Rabban Gamaliel.”

I.2 A. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. Hananiah says, “In the exile, [they begin to pray for rain] from the sixtieth day after the autumnal equinox [the cycle of Tishri].”
- C. Said R. Huna bar Hiyya said Samuel, “The decided law is in accord with the position of Hananiah.”
 - D. *Is that so? And lo, they inquired of Samuel, “From what point do they make mention in the Prayer of ‘bestow dew and rain’?” He said to them, “When they bring wood into the house of Tabut the fowler [who gathers wood when the rainy season starts].”*
 - E. *Well, maybe the one and the other refer to exactly the same point in time?*

I.3 A. *The question was raised:* Does the sixtieth day count within the period prior to the sixty days from the autumnal equinox, or is it counted with the days that follow [what is the status of November 21]?

- B. Come and take note of the following:
- C. Rab said, “The sixtieth day is counted with the days that follow.”
- D. And Samuel said, “The sixtieth day is counted within the period prior to the sixty days from the autumnal equinox.”
 - E. *Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, “And your mnemonic is, ‘the highlands need water but the lowlands do not’ [Rab came from the Land of Israel, highlands, and Samuel from Babylonia, lowlands and irrigated].”*
 - F. Said R. Pappa, “The decided law is as follows: The sixtieth day is counted with the days that follow.”

1:4-5

1:4

- A. If the seventeenth day of Marheshvan came and rain did not fall, individuals began to fast a sequence of three fasts [Monday, Thursday, Monday].
- B. They eat and drink once it gets dark.
- C. And they are permitted to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations.

1:5

- A. [Once] the new moon of Kislev has come and rain has not fallen, the court decrees a sequence of three fasts for the community.
- B. They eat and drink once it gets dark.

C. **And they are permitted to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations.**

I.1 A. *What is the definition of individuals?*

B. Said R. Huna, "These are the rabbis."

C. And said R. Huna, "Individuals fast for three fasts, on Monday, Thursday, and Monday."

D. *So of what does he propose to inform us!? We have learned as a Tannaite rule, **They do not decree a fast for the community in the first instance for a Thursday, so as not to disturb market prices. But the first three fasts are on Monday, Thursday, and Monday. And the second set of three fast days are on Thursday, Monday, and Thursday [M. 2:13]!***

E. *What might you have imagined — that is the rule for the community at large, but as to the individual, that is not the case? Thus we are informed that that is not so [but the same rule pertains even to individual actions].*

F. *So too it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

G. When individuals begin to fast, they fast on Monday, Thursday, and Monday. They suspend the procedure for the New Moon and **[10b]** for festival days that are listed in the Fasting-Scroll.

I.2 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

B. A person should not say, "I am merely a disciple, I am unworthy to be deemed 'an individual.'" But all disciples of sages fall into the category of "individuals."

C. Who [then] falls into the category of an "individual" and who falls into the category of a disciple?

D. An "individual" is anyone who is suitable for appointment as a responsible authority over the community. A disciple is anyone whom one may ask a rule of law in his learning and who can give the ruling, and even in the tractate of Kallah.

I.3 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

B. Not everyone who wants to set himself up as "an individual" may do so, but anyone who wants to set himself up as a disciple may do so," the words of R. Meir.

C. R. Yosé says, "Indeed, anyone may do so, and his memory is a blessing, for it is not self-aggrandizement for him but it is a cause of distress for him."

D. *A further Tannaite statement:*

E. **"Not everyone who wants to declare himself an 'individual' [for the present purpose] or. a disciple of a sage may do so, [unless a court has appointed him as an authority for the public],"** the words of R. Simeon b. Eleazar.

F. **R. Simeon b. Gamaliel says, "Under what circumstances? In a matter of self-aggrandizement. But in a matter involving anguish, he who wants to declare himself an 'individual' may do so, and his memory is a blessing, for it is not a matter of aggrandizement to him but a matter of distress" [T. 1:7B-C].**

Miscellany on Fasting

I.4 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. Lo, if one was fasting for a person who was sick, and the person got better,
- C. for a trouble, which passed away,
- D. lo, this one should complete his fasting [on that day] [cf. M. Ta. 3:9].
- E. He who goes from a place where people are not fasting to a place where they are fasting, lo, he should fast with them. If he goes from a place in which people are fasting to a place in which they are not fasting — lo, this one should complete his fast [T. 2:15-16].
 - F. If he forgot and ate and drank, he should not make an appearance in public nor should he treat himself to favorite foods.
 - G. “And Jacob said to his sons, Why should you show yourself” Gen. 42: 1)”
 - H. Jacob said to his sons, “Do not show yourself when you are sated either to Esau or to Ishmael so that they will not be jealous of you.”
 - I. “And do not have a fight on the road” (Gen. 45:24):
 - J. Said R. Eleazar, “Said Joseph to his brothers, ‘Don’t get involved in study of the law, lest you quarrel on the road!’”
 - K. *Is that so?* Didn’t R. Ilai bar Berekhiah say, “Two disciples of sages who went along the way and did not share teachings of the Torah are worthy of being consumed by fire: ‘And it came to pass, as they still went on and talked, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which parted them asunder’ (2Ki. 2:11)”? *The operative consideration was that they were talking of Torah, but if they were not talking of Torah they would have been worthy of being consumed by fire!*
 - L. *There is no contradiction. The latter case concerns repeating traditions, the former, Mishnah-study.*

I.5 A. A Tannaitic statement:

- B. [Joseph told the brothers in addition:] “Don’t take big strides and bring the sun into the city” [coming before dawn].
- C. “Don’t take big strides:” for a master has said, “Taking big strides robs someone of one five-hundredth of his eyesight.”
- D. “and bring the sun into the city” [coming before dawn].” That is in line with what R. Judah said Rab said, “A person should always go forth at the moment that God said, ‘that it is good,’ and enter at the moment that God said, ‘that it is good’ [Gen. 1: 4], as

it is said, 'As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away' (Gen. 44: 3)."

E. Said R. Judah said R. Hiyya, "He who makes a trip should not eat more than he does in years of famine."

F. *How come?*

G. *Here [in Babylonia] they explain, on account of digestion. In the West [in the Land of Israel], they say, because of preserving provisions [for the whole trip].*

H. *What is the practical difference between them?*

I. **[11A]** *A case in which a man is on board a ship [where digestive problems will not arise] or someone traveling from station to station [where he can get food].*

J. *R. Papa ate a piece of bread for every parasang, therefore he took the view that the operative consideration is, to prevent digestive problems."*

I.6 A. Said R. Judah said Rab, "Whoever starves himself in years of famine is saved from a bizarre death, as it is said, 'In famine he will redeem you from death' (Job. 5:20). *What it should have said is, 'from hunger.'* But this is the sense of the passage: 'As a reward for starving himself in times of famine, he is saved from a bizarre death.'"

B. Said R. Simeon b. Laqish, "It is forbidden for a person to have sexual relations in times of famine, as it is said, 'And to Joseph were born two sons before the year of famine came' (Gen. 41:50)."

C. *A Tannaite statement:* Childless couples have sexual relations in years of famine.

Miscellaneous Points

- I.7 A.** When the Israelites are in trouble, and one of them takes his leave [of the community], the two ministering angels who accompany a person put their hands on his head and say to him, ‘Mr. So-and-so, may this one who has abandoned the community never see the consolation [that is coming to] the community.’”
- B. *A further Tannaite statement:*
- C. When the community is in trouble, a person should not say, “I’m going home and I’m going to eat and drink and ‘well and good for you, o my soul!’” And if he does so, concerning him Scripture says, “And behold joy and gladness, the slaughter of oxen and the killing of sheep, the eating of meat and the drinking of wine — ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die’” (Isa. 22:13). And what follows? “And the Lord of Hosts has revealed himself in my ears, surely this iniquity shall not be expiated by you until you die” (Isa. 22:14).
- D. To this point we deal with the characteristics of ordinary people. But what about the characteristics of genuinely wicked people, concerning them what does Scripture say? “Come, I will bring wine, and we will fill up with strong drink, and tomorrow will be like today” (Isa. 56:12). And what follows? “The righteous perishes and nobody carries...that the righteous is taken away from the evil that is coming” (Isa. 57: 1).
- E. Rather, a person should suffering right along with the community, for so we find concerning our lord, Moses, that he shared in suffering with the community: “But Moses’ hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it” (Exo. 17:12) — Now didn’t Moses have a single cushion or stool on which to sit? But this is what Moses said, “Since the Israelites are in trouble, so I will be with them in trouble.”
- F. And whoever shares in the troubles of the community gains merit to see the consolation [that is coming] to the community.
- G. Now perhaps a person might say, “Who will testify against me?” Well, the very stones of the house and the beams of the house of a person are the witnesses against him, as it is said, “For the stone shall cry out of the wall and the beam out of the timber shall answer it” (Hab. 2:11).”
- H. The household of R. Shila say, “Two ministering angels who keep someone company are the ones who will testify against him: ‘For he will give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways’ (Psa. 91:11).”
- I. R. Hideqa says, “A man’s own soul testifies against him: ‘Keep the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom’ (Mic. 7: 5). Now what is that which lies in a man’s bosom? You have to say, it is the spirit.”

- J. And there are those that say, “A man’s own limbs will testify against him: ‘Therefore you are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God’ (Isa. 43:12).”

I.8 A. “A God of faithfulness and without iniquity” (Deu. 32: 4) —

- B. “A God of faithfulness: just as they exact punishment from the wicked in the world to come even for the slightest transgression that they do, so they exact punishment from the righteous in this world for the slightest transgression that they do.
- C. “...and without iniquity:” just as they pay a just recompense to the righteous in the world to come for even the most minor religious duty that they carry out, so they pay recompense to the wicked in this world for even the slightest religious duty that they do.
- D. “Just and right is he:” When a man departs this life for the eternal house, all his deeds are tallied up before him, and they say to him, “Thus and so did you do in such and such a place on such and such a day,” and he says, “Yes.” And they say to him, “Seal.” And he seals.” Thus it is said, “He seals up the hand of every man” (Job. 37: 7).
- E. And not only so, but he accepts the justice of the verdict issued for him, saying, “You have judged me fairly,” fulfilling the following statement: “That you may be justified when you speak” (Psa. 51: 6).

I.9 A. Said Samuel, “Whoever sits in a fast [for self-affliction] is called a sinner.”

- B. *He concurs with the thinking of the following Tannaite authority, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. R. Eleazar Haqqappar beRibbi says, “Why does Scripture says, ‘and make atonement for him for he has sinned by reason of the soul’ (Num. 6:11)? Now, against what soul has this one sinned? But he has caused himself distress by abstaining from wine. And does that not yield an argument a fortiori: if this one, who has caused himself only the distress that comes from giving up wine is called a sinner, he who causes himself distress by abstaining from anything whatsoever — all the more so does he sin!”
- D. R. Eleazar says, “He is called ‘holy,’ as it is said, ‘He shall be holy, he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long’ (Num. 6: 5). Now if this one, who has caused himself distress only in one matter, is called holy, he who causes himself distress in any matter whatsoever — how much the more so!”
- E. *Now facing Samuel is the contradictory fact, then, that he is called a holy!*
- F. That refers to the matter of growing the hair long.
- G. *And from the perspective of R. Eleazar, lo, he is called a sinner [and not holy]!*
- H. *That refers to the fact that he contracts corpse uncleanness.*

- I. But has not R. Eleazar said, “One should always weigh himself **[11B]** as though the Holy One is dwelling within him: ‘The Holy One in the midst of you and I will not come in fury’ (Hos. 11: 9)” [Rabbinowitz: Eleazar holds the view that the divine is ever present in man. How then could a man who fasts be called holy, seeing that he humiliates God through his fasting.]
- J. *There is no contradiction. The one speaks of a person who can endure self-affliction, the other, one who cannot.*
- K. R. Simeon b. Laqish said, “He is called pious: ‘The pious man weans his own soul but he who is cruel’ (Pro. 11:17).”
- L. *Said R. Sheshet, “The neophyte disciple who sits in fasts — let the dog eat his supper.”*
- I.10** A. Said R. Jeremiah bar Abba, “Public fasts are not held in Babylonia except for the ninth of Ab alone.”
- B. R. Jeremiah bar Abba said R. Simeon b. Laqish: “A disciple of a sage does not have the right to sit in fasts because he diminishes the work of heaven [that he is assigned to do].”
- II.1** A. **They eat and drink once it gets dark. [And they are permitted to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations]:**
- B. Said R. Zeira said R. Huna, “An individual who took upon himself to observe a fast — even though he ate and drink the entire prior night, in the morning he says the prayer for fast days. If he spent the prior night fasting, however, he does not recite the prayer for fast days [on the next morning].” [Rabbinowitz: a fast must be explicitly undertaken on the preceding day. In the case where he merges one day’s fast into another for which he has failed to make that undertaking, he is not entitled to recite the prayer for fasting, since the second day’s fast in the absence of the undertaking is considered no fast and can be broken at all.]
- C. *Said R. Joseph, “What is R. Huna’s theory of the matter? Does he hold the theory that people may not undertake to fast for a span only of hours? Or perhaps he maintains that people may undertake to fast for a span only of hours, but one who undertakes to fast for a span of hours does not then recite the prayer for fasting [Rabbinowitz: does he hold that a fast not undertaken on the preceding day is considered no fast, so it may be broken at will, or though the fast prayer is not provided for such a fast, it is nonetheless considered a fast in so far that once begun it has to be continued to the end of the stipulated time]?”*
- D. *Said to him Abbaye, “In point of fact R. Huna holds the theory that people may not undertake to fast for a span only of hours, and furthermore, one who undertakes to fast for a span of hours does recite the prayer for fasting. But the present case is exceptional, for here there is the consideration of the hours of the night, concerning which to begin with he did not undertake to fast.” [Rabbinowitz: the question of whether fasting by hours is considered a fast has no bearing on Huna’s case, where the individual incidentally merged one day’s fast into another without at all intending the second day to be a fast; where a man vows to fast for a number of hours, the fast is valid in every respect].*

- II.2** A. Mar Uqba R. Aqiba visited Ginzaq. He was asked, “Are fasts to take place only for a specified number of hours valid or not?” He did not know the answer.
- B. “Are bottles belonging to gentiles forbidden or permitted?” He did not know the answer.
- C. “In what kind of garments did Moses minister at the altar on the seven days of consecration of the priesthood [Lev. 8:33]?” He did not know the answer.
- D. He came and asked at the house of study. They said, “The decided law is as follows: People are permitted to fast only for a specified period of hours [and not for the whole day], so if one has completed such a day, he may say the prayer for a fast; as to bottles belonging to gentiles, the decided law is that after twelve months of desuetude, they are permitted. As to the garment in which Moses ministered at the altar during the seven days of consecration, it was a white cloak.”
- E. R. Kahana repeated as the Tannaite version: “It was a white cloak without a border.”

- II.3** A. Said R. Hisda [12A] “With regard to what you have said, People are permitted to fast only for a specified period of hours [and not for the whole day], that is the case only if the person has not tasted a thing until evening.”
- B. Said to him Abbaye, “Well, then, that is a fully-executed fast!”
- C. Not at all, it was required to state that ruling to deal with a case in which he changed his mind [and undertook the fast as an afterthought.] [Rabbinowitz: The man was preoccupied for the first half of the day and did not eat, and then decided that he would end the day without eating so as to make it into a fast. In such a case the fast is valid, though he did not undertake the fast from the prior day.]

- II.4** A. And said R. Hisda, “Any fast on which the sun has not set is not classified as a fast.”
- B. An objection was raised on the basis of the following law: **On the first set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch [on duty that week] fast but do not complete the entire day [in fasting], and the members of the father’s house [on duty that particular day] did not fast at all [M. 2:11A].**
- C. In that case, [it was not an official fast], but it was merely to accept distress along with the community [that the members of the priestly watch undertook to fast].
- D. Come and take note, for said R. Eleazar b. R. Sadoq, “I am of the descendents of Sena’ah of the tribe of Benjamin. Once the ninth of Ab coincided with the Sabbath, and we postponed it for after the Sabbath, and we fasted on that day, but we didn’t complete the fast because that day was the festival of our [family].” [They kept the tenth of Ab as a family holiday.]
- E. In that case, too, [it was not an official fast], but it was merely to accept distress along with the community [that the members of the family undertook to fast].

- F. *Come and take note, for said R. Yohanan, "I shall fast until I get home."*
- G. *In that case he made that statement only to avoid having to get involved with the household of the patriarch.*

II.5 A. [Reverting to the issue of II:1.] said Samuel, "Any fast that before sunset on the prior day one has not [already] undertaken to observe is not classified as a fast."

- B. *And if he sat in a fast nonetheless, what is the law?*
- C. *Said Rabbah bar Shila, "It is like a bellows filled with wind [just hot air]."*
- D. *When on the preceding day does he undertake the obligation to fast the next day?*
- E. Rab said, "At the time of day that the Afternoon Prayer is recited."
- F. And Samuel said, "In the Afternoon Prayer."
- G. *Said R. Joseph, "The position in accord with Samuel's view is the more reasonable, for it is written in the Fasting Scroll: 'Therefore anyone who has been subject to a fast previous to this [the festival days listed in the scroll] should bind himself.' Does this not mean, 'should bind himself [to do so] in the course of his prayer'?"*
- H. No, it only means, he is forbidden [to break his fast by reason of his prior commitment to fast].
 - I. *On this matter [of the reading of the word translated "should bind himself"] there was a dispute between R. Hiyya and R. Simeon beRibbi. One said, "He should bind himself by his undertaking," and the other said, "He is forbidden [to break his fast]."*
 - J. *As to the one who said, "He should bind himself by his undertaking," matters are as we have just explained.*
 - K. *But as to the one who said, "He is forbidden," what is the sense of the statement?*
 - L. *It is in line with that which has been taught on Tannaite authority in the Fasting-Scroll: Therefore anyone who has been subject to a fast previous to this [the festival days listed in the scroll] is forbidden [to break his fast]. How so? An individual who undertook to fast on Mondays and on Thursdays through the entire year, but among those days there fell festival days that are inscribed in the Fasting-Scroll — then if his vow was taken prior to our decree, his vow nullifies our decree, but if our decree was made before his vow, our decree nullifies his vow.*

II.6 A. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. On the night preceding a fast, to what time may one eat and drink?
- C. "Until the morning star comes up," the words of Abbi.
- D. R. Eleazar bar Simeon says, "Until the cock crows."
- E. Said Raba, "That rule pertains only if he has not completed his meal, but if he has completed eating his meal, he does not eat further."
- F. *An objection was presented by Abbayye, "If he had completed the meal and had arisen from the table, he nonetheless may eat later on"!*

- G. *That is a case in which the food had not been removed along with the table.*
- H. *There are those who repeat the matter as follows:*
- I. Said Raba, "That rule pertains only if he has not gone to sleep. But if he has gone to sleep, he does not eat further."
- J. *An objection was presented by Abbaye, "If he went to sleep and got up, lo, this one eats further.*
- K. *That is a case in which he was merely dozing [but not really sleeping].*
- L. *What is the definition of dozing?*
- M. Said R. Ashi, [12B], *"Sleeping but not sleeping, awake but not awake, for instance, if they call him and he answers but he doesn't know how to respond but if reminded remembers."*

- II.7** A. Said R. Kahana said Rab, "An individual who undertook to fast is forbidden to put on sandals. We take account of the possibility that he has undertaken to observe the restrictions of a public fast [and not merely those pertaining to a private one]."
- B. *What should someone do [in order to fast privately but to be able to wear shoes]?*
 - C. Said Rabbah bar R. Shila, "This is what he should say: 'Tomorrow I shall observe before you a private fast.'"
 - D. Rabbis said to R. Sheshet, "We've seen rabbis who put on their shoes and come to an assembly [on a fast day]."
 - E. *He got mad and said to them, "Maybe they're also eating their regular meals on the fast day!"*
 - F. *Abbaye and Raba would come wearing shoes lacking soles.*
 - G. *Amemar and Mar Zutra would change the right to the left and the left to the right.*
 - H. *The rabbis of the household of R. Ashi would go about in their normal manner, for they concurred with what Samuel said, "There are no public fasts in Babylonia besides the ninth of Ab alone."*

- II.8** A. Said R. Judah said Rab, "A person may 'borrow' a fast and pay it back on another day. *When I repeated this statement before Samuel, he said to me, 'Now did he take upon himself a vow that he has to pay it back? He merely undertook the obligation to suffer distress. If he can, he suffers distress, and if not, he doesn't do it.'*"
- B. *There are those who say, said R. Judah said Rab, "'A person may 'borrow' a fast and pay it back on another day. When I repeated this statement before Samuel, he said to me, 'Now that is obvious! even if it is merely a vow, in the case of a vow if he cannot do it, he has to pay it back the next day or perhaps some other day.'"*

- II.9** A. R. Joshua b. R. Iddi visited the household of R. Assi. They prepared for him a third-grown calf and said to him, "Will the master taste something?"
- B. *He said to them, "I am observing a fast."*
 - C. *They said to him, "But why should the master not borrow and pay the fast back later, for doesn't the master concur with what R. Judah said, for said R. Judah, 'A person may borrow against his fast and pay it back'?"*

- D. He said to him, “It is a fast on account of a dream, and said Raba bar Mehasayya said R. Hama bar Guria said Rab, ‘Fasting is as good for dreams as fire for tow.’ And said R. Hisda, ‘But that is for that very day.’ And said R. Joseph, ‘Even on the Sabbath.’”
- E. *And how does one remedy having fasted on the Sabbath?!*
- F. *Let him sit in yet another fast [for his fast].*

1:6-8

1:6

- A. **Once these [fasts] have gone by and they have not been answered, the court decrees a sequence of three more fasts for the community.**
- B. **They eat and drink [only] while it is still day [on the day prior to the fast].**
- C. **And they are forbidden [on the fast] to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations.**
- D. **And they lock the bathhouses.**

1:7

- A. **If these [further fasts] have passed and they have not been answered, the court decrees a sequence of seven more fasts for them,**
- B. **which then add up to thirteen fasts for the community.**
- C. **How are these [further fasts] still more stringent than the first ones?**
- D. **It is that on these they sound the shofar, and they lock up the stores.**
- E. **On Mondays they partially open [the stores] after dark.**
- F. **And on Thursday they are permitted [to open them all day long] because of the honor owing to the Sabbath.**

1:8

- A. **If. these two have passed and they have not been answered, they cut down on commerce, building, planting, the making of betrothals and marriages, and on greeting one another,**
- B. **like people subject to divine displeasure.**
- C. **Individuals go back and fast until the end of Nisan.**
- D. **[Once] Nisan has ended, if it then rains, it is a sign of a curse,**
- E. **since it says, “Is it not wheat harvest today? [I will call unto the Lord, that he send thunder and rain, and you shall know and see that great is your wickedness which you have done in the sight of God to ask a king for yourself]” (1Sa. 12:17).**

- I.1 A. [And they are forbidden [on the fast] to work, bathe, anoint, put on sandals, and have sexual relations:]** *Now there is no difficulty with understanding the prohibition of these other items — bathing, anointing, putting on sandals, sexual relationships — all involve pleasure [to be abstained from]. But as to work, that is a source of stress [and not pleasure, so why forbid it on the specified fast days]?*
- B. Said R. Hisda said R. Jeremiah bar Abba, “Said Scripture, ‘Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders’ (Joe. 1:14) — so it is comparable to a solemn

assembly: just as on a solemn assembly it is forbidden to perform acts of labor, so on a fast it is forbidden to perform acts of labor.”

- C. *What about the following argument: Just as on a solemn assembly, the prohibitions take effect from the preceding evening, so in the case of a fast day the prohibitions take effect from the preceding evening?*
- D. *Said R. Zira, “To me the matter was explained by R. Jeremiah bar Abba, ‘Said Scripture, “gather the elders” (Joe. 1:14) — just as a gathering of the elders takes place by day, so the fast also takes place by day.’”*
 - E. *Might one say further: that it begins at noon?*
 - F. *Said R. Shisha b. R. Iddi, “That supports the view of R. Huna who said, ‘The assembly [for the fast day] takes place in the morning.’”*
 - G. *What do people do during the day?*
 - H. *Said Abbaye, “From morning to noon people look into the affairs of the place, from that point they spend a quarter of the day reading in the Torah and in the Prophets, and the rest of the day they spend in praying for mercy: ‘And they stood up in their place and read in the book of the Torah of the Lord their God a fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed and prostrated themselves to the Lord their God’ (Neh. 9: 3).”*
 - I. **[13A]** *Might I reverse the order of the day?*
 - J. *Don’t let it enter your mind, for it is written, “Then were assembled to me everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel because of the faithlessness of those of the captivity” (Ezr. 9:45), then, “And at the evening offering I arose from my fasting and spread out my hands to the Lord” (Ezr. 9: 5).*

- II:1 A. [And they lock the bathhouses:]** Said Rafram bar Pappa said R. Hisda, “In connection with any fast that is called by reason of mourning, for example, the ninth of Ab and for a mourner, it is forbidden to bathe whether in hot or cold water. But in connection with anything forbidden by reason of pleasure [to be avoided on a fast day], for example, [prohibitions connected with] a communal fast, it is forbidden to use hot water but permitted to use cold water.”
- B. *Said R. Iddi bar Abin, “So we too have learned as a Tannaite tradition: **And they lock the bathhouses.**”*
 - C. *Said to him Abbaye, “If the prohibition extended to cold water, then the Mishnah-formulation should have read, ‘and the stop up the rivers’!”*
 - D. *Said R. Shisha b. R. Iddi, “This is what was bothering father [Iddi bar Abin]: since we have learned in the Mishnah, **And they are forbidden...to bathe**, why bother to add the clause, **And they lock the bathhouses?** Does that not bear the implication, it is forbidden to use hot water but permitted to use cold water.”*
 - E. *May we say that the following supports his [Hisda’s] view: All who are obligated to immerse immerse in the usual way whether on the ninth of Ab or on the Day of Atonement? Now in what sort of water is the immersion contemplated? Should we say it is in hot water? But is there the possibility of valid immersion in hot water? Such water [having been collected in a utensil for heating] would fall into*

the category of drawn water [which is invalid for immersion]! But is it not in cold water, and the result is, those who are obligated to immerse do so, but other people do not [just as Hisda has said]!

- F. *Said R. Hana bar Qattina, “No, the passage is required only in connection with the hot springs of Tiberias [which are naturally heated and valid for immersion].” [This therefore does not support Hisda’s position.]*
- G. *Then let me cite the continuation of the same passage: Said R. Hanina, Prefect of the Priests, “The House of our God is worth that one should for its sake give up an immersion one time a year” [on the ninth of Ab]. Nor if you maintain that it is permitted to immerse in cold water, then let him immerse in cold water!*
- H. *Said R. Pappa, “It refers to a locale in which cold water is not readily found.”*
- I. *Come and take note: **When they said that it is forbidden to work, they made that statement only to indicate that by day it is prohibited to work, but by night it is permitted, and when they said that it is forbidden to put on a sandal, they made that statement only in the context of a town, but as to one who is on the road, it is permitted. So how to do it? He goes out to the road and puts on his sandal, then when he enters a town, he removes it. And when they said it is forbidden to bathe, they made that statement only in connection with bathing one’s entire body. But as to washing one’s hands and face, it is permitted. And so you find the rule covering the person who has been excommunicated and the person in mourning [T. Ta. 1:5C, E, F]. Now does that final statement not apply to all of the actions under discussion, and with what situation do we deal? If we deal with hot water, then is it permitted to wash his hands and face with hot water? But has not R. Sheshet said, “A mourner is forbidden to put his fingers in hot water”? But is it not then in cold water [and the rest follows].***
- J. *Not at all, at issue is the use of hot water, and as to your question based on the phrase, **And so you find the rule covering the person who has been excommunicated and the person in mourning, that pertains to the other actions under discussion.***
- K. *Come and take note: Said R. Abba the Priest in the name of R. Yosé the Priest, “There is the case that follows: the sons of R. Yosé b. R. Hanina died, and he washed in cold water all seven days.”*
- L. *In that case, his periods of mourning followed closely one upon the other, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority: If there were immediately sequential bereavements, so that one’s hair got very heavy, he may trim it with a razor and wash his clothing in water.*
- M. *Said R. Hisda, “That means he may do so with a razor and not with scissors, with water and not with soap or lye.”*

II.2 A. *Said Raba, “A mourner is permitted to wash in cold water all seven days, as he may eat meat and drink wine.”*

- B. *An objection was raised: [13B] A girl who has reached the age of twelve years and six months and a day has not got the right to disfigure herself during her father’s mourning period. Lo, a girl who has reached twelve years and one day has the right to do so! Now what is the point? It would have to do with washing. And in*

what would she be washing? Should we say in hot water? A girl at twelve years six months and a day has not got the right to do so, for did not R. Hisda say, "A mourner is forbidden to put his fingers in hot water"? But is it not then in cold water [and the rest follows].

- C. *No, the statement pertains to painting the eyelids and dyeing the hair.*
- D. *May one say that the following supports the proposition of Raba: Said R. Abba the Priest in the name of R. Yosé the Priest, "There is the case that follows: the sons of R. Yosé b. R. Hanina died, and he washed in cold water all seven days."*
- E. *In that case, his periods of mourning followed closely one upon the other, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority: If there were immediately sequential bereavements, so that one's hair got very heavy, he may trim it with a razor and wash his clothing in water.*
- F. Said R. Hisda, "That means he may do so with a razor and not with scissors, with water and not with soap or lye."

II.3 A. *There are those who say, said Raba, "A mourner is forbidden to wash in cold water all seven days."*

- B. *How does this differ from the matter of meat and wine [for he may eat meat and drink wine]?*
- C. In those matters, he acts in order to diminish his fear [at the time of death].
- D. *May we say that the following supports his position: A girl who has reached the age of twelve years and six months and a day has not got the right to disfigure herself during her father's mourning period. Lo, a girl who has reached twelve years and one day has the right to do so! Now what is the point? It would have to do with washing. And in what would she be washing? Should we say in hot water? A girl at twelve years six months and a day has not got the right to do so, for did not R. Hisda say, "A mourner is forbidden to put his fingers in hot water"? But is it not then in cold water [and the rest follows].*
- E. *No, the statement pertains to painting the eyelids and dyeing the hair.*
- F. Said R. Hisda, "That is to say, a mourner is forbidden to launder his clothes all seven days."

G. The decided law is as follows: A mourner is forbidden to wash his entire body, whether in hot or cold water, all seven days. But as to his face, hands and feet, in hot water it is forbidden to wash, but in cold it is permitted. And as to anointing with oil, even any small amount, it is forbidden. But if it is to remove body-odor, it is permitted.

Where in the Liturgy is the Prayer for the Fast Day Inserted?

II.4 A. *The Prayer for the Fast Day — where in the liturgy do we make mention of it?*

- B. *R. Judah appointed as speaker R. Isaac, his son, and expounded as follows: "An individual who has taken upon himself the observance of a fast should recite the Prayer for the Fast Day. And where does he say it? Between the blessing in the Prayer, 'redeems Israel,' and the blessing, 'heals.'"*

- C. *Objected R. Isaac*, “Now can an individual set up a blessing [within the Prayer] on his own account?”
- D. Rather, said R. Isaac, “He says it in the paragraph, ‘...who hears prayer.’”
- E. And so said R. Sheshet, “He says it in the paragraph, ‘...who hears prayer.’”
- F. *An objection was raised to this entire line of thought*: On a fast day the only difference in the Prayer between an individual and the community is that the individual recites eighteen blessings and the community, nineteen. *Now in this context, what is meant by “an individual” and what is meant by “the community”?* Should we say that “an individual” is meant literally, and “the community” refers to the leader of the communal prayer? In that case, the blessings recited by the representative of the community in reciting the Prayer are not nineteen, they are twenty-four! [Thus M. **2:2C-J**: **And he says before them twenty-four blessings: the eighteen said every day, and he adds six more to them. And these are they: Remembrance verses, Shofar verses, “In my distress I cried to the Lord and he answered me...” (Psa. 120), and, “I will lift up my eyes to the hills...” (Psa. 121), and, “Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Lord...” (Psa. 130), and “A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed” (Psa. 102)]].**
- G. *But is this not the sense of the statement at hand*: On a fast day the only difference in the Prayer between an individual who has undertaken upon himself a personal fast and an individual who has undertaken upon himself a communal fast is that the individual recites eighteen blessings and the community, nineteen. *And that proves, as a matter of fact, that an individual can set up a blessing [within the Prayer] on his own account!*
- H. *Not at all. On all accounts I shall say to you, [“community” refers to] the representative of the community, and as to the objection that you raise, that the representative of the community recites twenty-four benedictions [not nineteen], that pertains to the first three fasts in the sequence, when the twenty-four are not recited at all.*
- I. *But are they not recited? And lo, the language of the Tannaite formulation is*, the only difference...: the only difference between the first three fasts in the sequences and the middle three is that on these it is permitted to perform acts of labor and on those it is forbidden to perform acts of labor. Lo, as to the twenty-four blessings, the one and the other are the same.
- J. *The Tannaite formulation [is imprecise, for the Tannaite authority] has omitted [other items from his catalogue, besides the one that is blatant, that is, the difference in the number of blessings, as specified, eighteen or nineteen].* [Rabbinowitz translates: The Tannaite authority of the Baraitha has stated only one difference and has left out others.]
- K. *What other differences has he omitted, in line with the theory that he has omitted the difference at hand [and hence has not intended a complete catalogue]? And, furthermore, note that he has used the precise language, The only difference!*
- L. *Rather, the Tannaite framer of the passage focuses upon acts that are forbidden on the specified occasions, but he does not focus on the matter of the Prayer at all.*

- M. *And if you prefer, I shall respond: On the middle group of fasting days as well, twenty-four benedictions are not recited.*
- N. *So they're not, are they? Has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: The only difference between the three intermediate fast days and the last seven is that on these they sound on the shofar a wavering note and the shops are closed? Lo, in all other aspects affecting them, this group and that group are equivalent. And should you say, here too the Tannaite formulation [is imprecise, for the Tannaite authority] has omitted [other items from his catalogue, besides the one that is specified, note that he has used the precise language, The only difference!*
- O. *But do you hold the theory that the usage, "the only difference," is meant as a precise statement? [14A] Lo, he also has omitted the bringing of the ark out into the marketplace!*
- P. *If the consideration is that matter of the ark, that does not constitute a blatant omission at all, for what is subject to the Tannaite formulation is matters that are carried out in private, but matters that are carried out in public are not subject to the Tannaite formulation.*
- Q. *"[That twenty-four blessings are recited on the intermediate fast days]," said R. Ashi, "is to be deduced from a close reading of the language, for the exact formulation is, **How are these [further fasts] still more stringent than the first ones? It is that on these they sound the shofar, and they lock up the stores [M. 1:7C-D].** [That bears the implication,] but in all other matters having to do with them, this and that sets of fast days are otherwise equivalent. And should you say, here too, here too the Tannaite formulation [is imprecise, for the Tannaite authority] has omitted [other items from his catalogue, besides the one that is specified, note that he has used the precise language, **How are these [further fasts] still more stringent than the first ones?**"*
- R. *But do you really suppose that the phrase, **How are these [further fasts] still more stringent than the first ones** bears the implication that we are being given a precise catalogue? And lo, he has left off his list the taking out of the ark!*
- S. *If the consideration is that matter of the ark, that does not constitute a blatant omission at all, for since the Tannaite formulation encompasses the ark in the next chapter, [it is not to be deemed an omission at all].*
- T. *Well, if you've come that far, then the matter of the twenty-four benedictions itself cannot be regarded as an omission, for it too is encompassed in the next chapter!*
- U. *What is the upshot in this matter?*
- V. *Said R. Samuel bar Sasartai, and so too said R. Hiyya bar Ashi said Rab, "[He inserts it] between 'Redemption' and 'Healing.'"*
- W. *And R. Ashi said in the name of R. Yannai b. R. Ishmael, "It is in 'who hears prayer.'"*
- X. *And the decided law is, It is in "who hears prayer."*

II.5 A. *One Tannaite statement: pregnant women and nursing mothers fast on the first set of fasts but not on the later ones.*

B. *Another Tannaite statement: pregnant women and nursing mothers fast on the last set of fasts but not on the first.*

- C. *And yet another Tannaite statement: they do not fast either on the first or on the last set of fasts.*
- D. *Said R. Ashi, "Grasp in hand that they fast on the middle set of fasts, and in that way all three formulations will be satisfied."*

III.1 A. How are these [further fasts] still more stringent than the first ones? It is that on these they sound the alarm [shofar], and they lock up the stores [M. 1:7C-D]:

- B. How do they sound the alarm?
- C. R. Judah said, "With shofars."
- D. And R. Judah b. R. Samuel bar Shilat in the name of Rab said, "With the recitation of the prayer, 'Answer us'" [the Prayer for the fast].
- E. *In the premise that the one who said, "With the recitation of the prayer, 'Answer us,'" would not say, with Shofars, and the one who said, "With shofars," would not say, "With the recitation of the prayer, 'Answer us'" — has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: They do not declare less than seven fasts for the community to observe, on which there are eighteen soundings of the shofar, and a mnemonic for the matter is Jericho. And at Jericho involved the sounding of the shofar. So this refutes the position of him who said, "With the recitation of the prayer, 'Answer us'" [the Prayer for the fast]. Rather, all parties concur that it is with shofars.*
- F. *Indeed, all parties concur that it is with the shofar-alarm. Where there is a point of disagreement, it concerns whether it also is with the recitation of the prayer, "Answer us." One authority takes the view that that too is classified as "an alarm," and the other authority maintains that it is not classified as "an alarm."*
- G. *The authority who maintains that it is with the prayer, "Answer us," all the more so maintains that it is done with the shofar-soundings, but the one who says that it is done with shofar-soundings will hold that it is not done through the recitation of the prayer, "Answer us."*
- H. *And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: On account of all other misfortunes that may come upon the community, for example, itching, locusts, flies, hornets, mosquitoes, a plague of serpents or scorpions, they would not sound the shofar alarm, but they would cry out. Now, since crying out can only be done by mouth, the sounding of the alarm [by contrast] must be done with the shofar.*
- I. *It is a matter of dispute between Tannaite formulations of the law, for we have learned in the Mishnah: **On account of these do they sound the shofar [even] on the Sabbath. On account of a town which gentiles have besieged, or a river, and because of a ship which is foundering in the sea. R. Yosé says."They sound the shofar on the Sabbath] for help, not for supplication" [M. 3:8] — now how is this to be done? With shofar-blasts? But is it permitted to sound the Shofar on the Sabbath? But is it not through reciting the prayer, "Answer us," and that is classified as "sounding the alarm"?***
- J. *That is the only possible result.*

III.2 A. *In the time of R. Judah the Patriarch there was some sort of trouble. [14B] He decreed thirteen fasts and they were not answered. He considered decreeing another set. Said to him R.*

Ammi, “Lo, sages have said, ‘They do not burden the community too much.’”

- B. *Said R. Abba b. R. Hiyya bar Abba, “R. Ammi in acting as he has has acted in his own behalf! [For he did not want to fast.] But this is what R. Hiyya bar Abba said R. Yohanan said, ‘They made that statement [Ammi just now cited] only in connection with rain [that they not overburden the community], but as to other forms of calamity, people go on fasting until they are answered from Heaven.’*
- C. *“So too it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- D. *“When [sages] spoke of a sequence of three or a sequence of seven fasts, that was only in connection with rain [that they not overburden the community], but as to other forms of calamity, people go on fasting until they are answered from Heaven.”*
- E. *May we say that that [Tannaite formulation of the law] represents a refutation of the position of R. Ammi?*
- F. *R. Ammi may respond to you, “It represents a conflict of Tannaite formulations of the law, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- G. *““They do not decree more than thirteen fasts for the community, since they do not burden the community too much,’ the words of Rabbi.*
- H. *“Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, ‘That is not the governing consideration. But it is because from that point onward the time for the rain has passed.’”*

III.3 A. *The men of Nineveh sent the question to Rabbi, “What about us, for example, who need rain even in the time of the autumnal equinox? How should we behave? Are we in the category of individuals, or are we in the category of a community? If we are in the category of individuals, it is said in ‘who hears prayer,’ or if we are in the category of the community, then it is inserted into the blessing of the years.”*

- B. *He sent word: “You are in the category of individuals and insert the blessing in the prayer, ‘who hears prayer.’”*
- C. *By way of objection: said R. Judah, “When does the program of fasting pertain? [B. Megillah 2A: when is the Megillah read from Adar 11 to 15]? When the seasons of the year are normal [Rabbinowitz: sowing in Marheshvan and reaping in Nisan]. But at this time, everything is in accord with the character of the years, the locales, and the season.” [B. Megillah 2A: When the years (i.e., the calendar) are as they should be, and Israel is settled on its land. [B. Megillah 2A continues: But, now, since the masses of Jews take note of it in order to determine the date of Passover, which falls 30 days after Purim, one should not read it other than at its proper time “]*
- D. *To refute Rabbi do you propose to cite a Tannaite teaching? But Rabbi himself is a Tannaite authority and has every right to differ from another such authority!*
- E. *So what’s the upshot?*

- F. R. Nahman said, "They include the Fasting Prayer in the blessing of the years."
- G. R. Sheshet said, "In '...who hears prayer.'"
- H. And the decided law is, it is in "who hears prayer."

IV.1 A. [On Mondays they partially open [the stores] after dark. And on Thursday they are permitted [to open them all day long] because of the honor owing to the Sabbath:

- B. *The question was raised: what is the sense of the Tannaite formulation? On Mondays the stores are partially open at dusk, and on Thursdays they are partially open during the whole day on account of the honor owing to the Sabbath, or perhaps the sense is, on Mondays they are open partially and on Thursdays they are open wide the entire day?*
- C. *Come and take note of that which has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- D. On Monday they partially open at dusk, and on Thursday they open fully for the entire day on account of the honor owing to the Sabbath. If the store had two doors, he opens one and locks the other. If there is a stand in front of the door, he may open in the usual way and need not scruple.

V.1 A. If. these two have passed and they have not been answered, they cut down on commerce, building, planting, the making of betrothals and marriages:

- B. *A Tannaite statement:*
- C. **building** — for happy reasons.
- D. **planting** — for happy reasons.
- E. What is building for happy reasons? Building a house for the marriage-feast of one's son.
- F. What is planting for happy reasons? That pertains to one who plants a royal banquet-tent.

VI.1 A. and on greeting one another, like people subject to divine displeasure:

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. Associates [of sages] do not greet one another. Ordinary folk who offer a greeting — they answer, but in a low voice, and in a dignified way.
- D. And people cloak themselves and go into session like mourners or those who have been excommunicated —
- E. **like people subject to divine displeasure** — until mercy is shown to them by Heaven.

VI.2 A. Said R. Eleazar, "A prominent authority is not allowed to fall on his face [in reciting the Supplication-Prayer (Tahanun)], unless he is answered like Joshua bin Nun, as is written, 'And the Lord said to Joshua, Arise; [why are you falling on you face]' (Jos. 7:10)."

- B. And said R. Eleazar, "A prominent authority is not allowed to put on sackcloth unless he is answered like Jehoram, son of Ahab: 'And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes — now he was passing

by upon the wall — and the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth within, upon his flesh' (2Ki. 6:30)."

- C. And said R. Eleazar, "Not everyone is responded to for having torn his garments, and not everyone is responded to through falling on his face. Moses and Aaron, through falling on their face, Joshua and Caleb, through tearing their garments.
- D. "...Moses and Aaron, through falling on their face: 'Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces' (Num. 15: 5).
- E. "...Joshua and Caleb, through tearing their garments: 'And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Yephuneh tore their clothes' (Num. 14: 6)."
- F. *Objected R. Zira, and some say, R. Samuel bar Nahmani, "If it were written 'Joshua,' it would have been as you say, but now that it is written, 'And Joshua,' lo, the sense is, he did both this and that."*
- G. And said R. Eleazar, "[In the world to come] not all will rise [before Israel] or prostrate themselves [before Israel]: kings will rise, princes will prostrate themselves.
- H. "...kings will rise: 'Thus says the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, his holy one **[15A]** to him who is of men, to him who is abhorred of nations, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise' (Isa. 49: 7).
- I. "...princes will prostrate themselves: 'Princes and they shall prostrate themselves' (Isa. 49: 7).
- J. *Objected R. Zira, and some say, R. Samuel bar Nahmani, "If it were written, 'And princes shall prostrate themselves,' it would have been as you say, but now that it is written, 'Princes and they shall prostrate themselves,' they will do both this and that."*
- K. Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, "I too say, 'Not all are destined for the light nor all for the gladness. Light shall be for the righteous, gladness for the upright.
- L. "'Light shall be for the righteous: 'Light is sown for the righteous' (Psa. 97:11).
- M. "'gladness for the upright: 'And gladness for the upright in heart' (Psa. 97:11)."