

I

BAVLI NIDDAH CHAPTER ONE

FOLIOS 2A-12B

1:1-2

1:1

- A. [2A] Shammai says, “[For] all women [it is] sufficient for them [to reckon uncleanness from] their time [of discovering a flow].”
- B. Hillel says, “[They are deemed unclean retroactively] from the [time of examination, at which the flow of blood was discovered] to the [last] examination [she made beforehand].
- C. “And even for many days.”
- D. And sages say not in accord with the opinion of this one nor in accord with the opinion of that one, but:
- E. “[The woman is held to have been unclean only] during [the preceding] twenty-four hours [when] this lessens the period from the examination to the [last] examination,
- F. “[and she is held to have been unclean only] during the period from examination to examination [when] this lessens the period of twenty-four hours.”
- G. Every woman who has a fixed period — sufficient for her is her time.
- H. She who makes use of test rags, lo, this is equivalent to an examination,
- I. which lessens either the period of the twenty-four hours or the period from examination to examination.

1:2

- A. How [is the case in which] her time suffices for her?
- B. [If] she was sitting on the bed and engaged in things requiring cleanness and arose and saw [a drop of blood],
- C. she is unclean,
- D. but all of those [things requiring cleanness] are clean.

- E. Even though they have said, “She renders unclean [whatever she touched during the preceding] twenty-four-hour period,” she takes count [of the days prescribed in the Torah] only from the time that she saw a drop of blood.
- I.1 A. *What is the operative consideration for the position of Shammai [for all women it is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from their time of discovering a flow]?*
- B. He takes the view that one should confirm the woman’s status quo, and a woman’s status quo is clean [not subject to her menstrual period].
- C. And Hillel?
- D. *When we invoke the principle that we should confirm something within its status quo, that principle applies only when the negative condition does not derive from the body of the thing itself. But as to a woman, [2A] since the negative condition that affects her derives from her body itself, we do not say that one should confirm her status quo.*
- E. *But what is the difference between this and the case of the immersion-pool, as we have learned in the Mishnah: An immersion pool that was measured and found lacking the requisite volume of water — all things requiring cleanness that were prepared depending upon it — retroactively — whether involving private or public domain — are unclean [M. Miq. 2:2].*
- F. *From the viewpoint of Shammai, there is a problem with the reference to retroactive contamination [since he would have the contamination applicable only from the point at which the insufficiency was discovered].*
- G. *From the viewpoint of Hillel, there is a problem with the certainty [that everything is unclean], for with respect to the status of the objects that the woman has touched for the preceding twenty-four hours in the case of the menstruating woman, the status of those objects is held in suspect; people do not eat the food nor burn it, while in the present case, as a matter of fact, we have an unconditional declaration of uncleanness.*
- H. *The operative consideration there is that one has the occasion to rule, preserve that which is unclean in its status quo, and I maintain that the unclean person has not validly immersed.*
- I. *To the contrary, preserve the immersion pool in its status quo, and I maintain that it has not been lacking [prior to the moment that the deficiency was uncovered].*
- J. *Lo, in your very presence it is lacking!*
- K. *Here too, the blood is right there before you.*
- L. *But it is only now that she sees it.*
- M. *Here too, it is only now that the deficiency has taken effect.*
- N. *But what’s the problem? Perhaps the water was gradually diminishing, but here can you say that only now she was gradually observing the flow of blood?*
- O. *In that case, [the immersion pool] there are two considerations that negatively affect the status of the immersion pool, while here there is only one negative consideration that affects the woman’s status [which is that she just now has seen the blood, but she was formerly confirmed to have been clean, so we assume that the flow has just begun].*

- P. *And how does this case differ from the case of the keg of wine, concerning which we have learned in the Mishnah: If one was checking a keg of wine from time to time in order to use it as heave offering for other wine which came into his possession, and it was found to be vinegar, as to wine for which this keg was to serve as heave offering that had been designated as such for the preceding three days it is certain that it had already become vinegar; from this time and retroactively, there is a doubt as to whether or not the wine had already become vinegar [T. Ter. 4:8H-J]. Now this presents a contradiction to the principle of Shammai [that menstruants are not deemed to have been unclean for any length of time retrospectively, but reckon their flow only from the moment they found a drop of menstrual blood].*
- Q. *The ruling is as it is there because there is the possibility of ruling, preserve the status quo of the certainly-untithed produce, and I may claim that it has not been properly tithed.*
- R. *To the contrary, preserve the wine in its status quo, and say that it has not turned into vinegar.*
- S. *But lo, it has turned into vinegar right before you!*
- T. *Here too, lo there is a drop of blood right before you.*
- U. *But this is when it has just observed it.*
- V. *There too, it is just now that it has turned to vinegar.*
- W. *How compare! There one may well say that the wine turned into vinegar little by little, but can it be said in the case at hand that she has observed the flow little by little?*
- X. *What sort of a question is this? Perhaps she observed the blood only when it came in volume.*
- Y. *In that case, [the keg] there are two considerations that negatively affect the status of the wine in the keg while here there is only one negative consideration that affects the woman's status [which is that she just now has seen the blood, but she was formerly confirmed to have been clean, so we assume that the flow has just begun].*
- Z. *But there is a contradiction between the case of the keg and the one of the immersion pool. What is the difference between the two, so that in the case of the immersion pool, the retrospective uncleanness is treated as a matter of certainty, while in the matter of the keg of wine, the retrospective turning of the wine into vinegar is deemed only a matter of doubt?*
- AA. *Said R. Hanina of Sura, "Who is the Tannaite authority behind the case of the keg? It is R. Simeon, who with reference to the immersion pool also maintains that the upshot is to declare in doubt matters affected by that pool. For it has been taught on Tannaite authority: **An immersion pool that was measured and found lacking the requisite volume of water — all things requiring cleanness that were prepared depending upon it — retroactively — whether involving private or public domain — are unclean.** R. Simeon says, 'Objects that derive from public domain are deemed clean. Those that derive from private domain are held in suspense.'*

- BB. **[3A]** “And both parties derived their positions only from the case of the wife accused of adultery. *Rabbis take the view that the case [of the immersion pool] is comparable to the one of the wife accused of adultery.* Just as in the case of the wife accused of adultery, the woman is subject to doubt but the matter is treated as though it were a certainty [so she has to prove her innocence, rather than her guilt], *here too*, it is a matter of doubt but sages have treated it as one of certainty [so everything is treated as unclean until proven clean].”
- CC. *If the analogy is drawn from the wife accused of adultery, then I may say that, just as in the case of the wife accused of adultery, if the offense is supposed to have taken place in public domain [where there is no privacy], she is assumed to have been clean, here too, matters involving public domain are to be assumed to be clean.*
- DD. *How now! There, with reference to the wife accused of adultery, the operative consideration is privacy [the wife being accused of going off into private with another man], and privacy is not possible in the public domain. Here the operative consideration is the deficiency of valid water, and what difference does it make to me whether the deficiency takes place in public domain or in private domain? And should you say, well, any matter of doubt concerning uncleanness in public domain is resolved as clean, since, in this case, there are two negative considerations, it is tantamount to a certainty that uncleanness is present.*
- EE. *And R. Simeon likewise invokes the analogy of the wife accused of adultery. Just as in the case of the wife accused of adultery, if the accusation concerns the public domain, she is deemed clean, so here too, matters involving public domain are deemed to be clean.*
- FF. *If the analogy is drawn from the wife accused of adultery, then I may say that, just as in the case of the wife accused of adultery, if the offense is supposed to have taken place in private domain, she is certainly assumed to be unclean, here too, matters involving private domain are to be assumed to be unclean.*
- GG. *How now! In that case [involving the wife accused of adultery], there is a basis for the ruling, for lo, the husband expressed jealousy to her but she nonetheless went into private with another man, but here, what foundations are there for the matter?*
- HH. *If you prefer, I shall state the following:*
- II. *This is the operative consideration for the position of R. Simeon that cases involving doubt in the public domain are resolved as clean:* he derives the rule governing the conclusion of a spell of uncleanness [through the immersion in an immersion-pool] from the rule governing the commencement of a spell of uncleanness [through contact with a source of uncleanness]: just as, at the beginning of a spell of uncleanness, if it is a matter of doubt whether one has touched a source of uncleanness or has not touched a source of uncleanness, if the doubt involves the public domain, he is clean, so is the rule governing the conclusion of the spell of uncleanness in the immersion pool. If there is a matter of doubt whether one has immersed or has not immersed, if the doubt involves the public domain, he is ruled to be clean.
- JJ. *And rabbis?*

KK. *How now! In that case [involving the beginning of a spell of uncleanness], since a man is presumed to be clean, by reason of doubt we do not assign him to the classification of uncleanness, but here, the man is assumed to be unclean, and by reason of doubt we do not remove him from the classification of uncleanness.*

I.2. A. *And how does the ruling in our Mishnah differ from that applied in the case of the alleyway, concerning which we have learned in the Mishnah: **The creeping thing which is found in the alleyway imparts uncleanness retroactively, until one will state “I inspected this alleyway and there was no creeping thing in it,” or until the time that it [last] was cleaned [M. Nid. 7:2A-C].*** [Slotki: the sweeping is equivalent to an examination. Only objects in the alley prior to the sweeping are clean, while those that were there afterward, since a dead creeping thing may have fallen into the alley as soon as the sweeping was over, are unclean. Uncleanness in a doubtful case is brought about retrospectively, so why does Shammai restrict the period of uncleanness to the time of the discovery of the drop of blood alone?]

B. *There too, since there are the dead creeping things that derive from the alley itself and also those that derive from points unknown, the case is parallel to one in which there are two negative factors.*

C. *And if you wish, I shall say, this is the operative consideration of Shammai: since a woman feels when she suffers a flux [she will know the exact point at which the blood came out].*

D. *And Hillel?*

E. *She will be thinking that what she is sensing is urine [not blood of the menstrual kind].*

F. *And as to the position of Shammai, lo, there is the case of the woman who is sleeping?*

G. *If a woman is asleep, she still would feel a certain discomfort, as is so where one feels a discharge of urine.*

H. *And lo, there is the case of the woman not of sound senses?*

I. *Shammai concedes the case of the woman not of sound senses.*

J. *But lo, the language that is used is, “[For] all women [it is] sufficient for them [to reckon uncleanness from] their time [of discovering a flow].”*

K. *The use of “women” serves only to exclude the position of R. Eliezer.*

L. *For R. Eliezer has said, “**Four women [fall into the category of those for whom the] time [of first seeing blood] suffices**” and no more than that.*

M. *So [Shammai] indicates that the criterion pertains to all women.*

I.3. A. *And lo, there is the case of stains [M. 7:2D-H: **And so: a stain which is found on a garment imparts uncleanness retroactively, until one will state, “I inspected this garment, and there was no bloodstain on it,” or until such time as it was [last] washed. And it imparts uncleanness whether wet or dry. R. Simeon says, “The dry imparts uncleanness retroactively, and the wet imparts uncleanness only so long as it can have been wet.”*** These stains of menstrual blood cause uncleanness retrospectively, though prior to the moment of discharge the woman cannot have been aware of any flow.]

- B. *May one say that the Mishnah-passage concerning stains does not accord with the position of Shammai?*
- C. Said Abbaye, “Shammai concedes in the case of stains [that uncleanness is retroactive]. What is his operative consideration? Since she was not involved in handling a slaughtered fowl nor has she walked through the butchers’ market, *where did this blood come from? And if you prefer, this is the operative consideration for Shammai’s concession here: if it were the fact that the blood was present, it would have flowed earlier [so we assume the blood flowed the moment it was found].*”
- D. And Hillel?
- E. The walls of the womb held the blood back.
- F. And Shammai?
- G. The walls of the womb do not hold back blood.

I.4. A. And as to the woman who uses a diaphragm when having sexual relations, *what is there for Shammai to say* [since the diaphragm would absorb the menstrual blood, so there would be no proof that the blood did not make its appearance prior to when it was discovered. So how could Shammai maintain that the menstrual uncleanness commences only at the moment that the blood is discovered?]

- B. Said Abbaye, “Shammai concedes the case of the woman who uses a diaphragm when having sexual relations.”
- C. Raba said, “A diaphragm poses no problem to Shammai, since perspiration causes it to shrink [and blood will get by, if it is present].”
- D. And Raba concedes the case of a diaphragm that is a tightly-packed absorbent.

I.5. A. *And what is the difference between the one explanation and the other* [that a woman feels the blood, or that the blood would have flowed out earlier]?

- B. **[3B]** *At issue between the two explanations is the pertinence of the comparison with the cases of the keg of wine and the immersion pool and the alleyway. According to the formulation [that a woman is confirmed in her status as being clean], there is an incongruity in adducing those cases as parallel, while if we invoke the explanation that a woman feels the drop or that the blood would have flowed out earlier, there is no incongruity among the several cases.*
- C. *And what is the practical difference between the two approaches to explaining the ruling?*
- D. *In the view of Abbaye, it is the case of the diaphragm,*
- E. *and in the view of Raba, it is the case of the diaphragm that is tightly packed.*

I.6. A. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority in accord with the operative consideration that if there were any blood, it would have flowed from the beginning:*

- B. Said Hillel to Shammai, “Do you not concede in the case of a basket, one corner of which has served for cultically clean foods, in which, in another corner, a dead creeping thing is found, that foods that were cultically clean to begin with now are deemed retrospectively unclean [Slotki: because it is possible that the creeping thing was in the basket before the clean foods were removed, and it imparted uncleanness to the basket, which made the

foods unclean. If the creeping thing had been found in the same corner as the clean foods previously kept there, there would be no issue that the food that has been removed is deemed clean, since it certainly would have been removed before the creeping thing had fallen into the basket, for if the dead creeping thing had been there earlier, it would have been discovered when the objects were removed.]”

- C. He said to him, “True.”
- D. “And what is the difference between the one case and the other [that uncleanness is retrospective in the case of the basket but not in the case of the menstruating woman]?”
- E. “The one has a bottom, the other has no bottom.” [The basket has a bottom where the dead creeping thing can have stayed unnoticed, but the menstruant has no bottom, and if any blood were in the antechamber, it would have flowed out.]

I.7. A. *Raba said, “The operative consideration of Shammai concerns the suspension of procreation [and if people were worried about retrospective uncleanness, they would not have sexual relations].”*

- B. *And so too has it been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. Shammai said to Hillel, “If so, you will keep the daughters of Israel from having sexual relations.”
- D. *And according to him [Raba] who provided this explanation of Shammai’s reason, lo, has it not been taught on Tannaite authority in accord with the prior explanation, “if the blood were there, it would have flowed out”?*
- E. *There it was Hillel who erred. He supposed that the consideration important to Shammai was that “if the blood were there, it would have flowed out,” and he therefore addressed to him the problem concerning the case of the basket. But Shammai replied to him, “My reason, in point of fact, is the concern for the cessation of sexual relations. And in respect to the error you have made in assuming that I had some other consideration in mind, on account of which you object on the basis of the case of the basket, the appropriate reply remains that the basket has a bottom but the vagina has none.”*
- F. *And as to the person who presented the first explanation [if there were any blood in the vagina, it would have flowed out earlier], lo, has it not been taught on Tannaite authority in accord with the explanation that Shammai’s concern was for continued sexual relations?*
- G. *This is what Hillel said to Shammai, “If the operative consideration is the one that you have said, namely, if the blood had been present, to begin with it would have flowed, then you have to place a limit on your ruling. For why should this law be different from all the rest of the laws in the Torah for which a limit has been set?”*
- H. He said to him, “If so, you will prevent the daughters of Israel from having sexual relations.”
- I. And Hillel?
- J. *“Did I say anything about sexual relations? What I was talking about was food prepared in a state of cultic cleanness!”*

- K. And Shammai?
- L. *“No restrictions should pertain even to food prepared in cultic cleanness, cine otherwise the person’s heart will prompt neglecting sexual relations altogether.”*

I.8. A. *It has been stated:*

- B. A basket, one corner of which has served for cultically clean foods, in which, in another corner, a dead creeping thing is found —
- C. Hezekiah said, “The foods that were cultically clean to begin with now are deemed retrospectively clean.”
- D. R. Yohanan said, “The foods that were cultically clean to begin with now are deemed retrospectively unclean.” [Slotki: because it is possible that the creeping thing was in the basket before the clean foods were removed, and it imparted uncleanness to the basket, which made the foods unclean. If the creeping thing had been found in the same corner as the clean foods previously kept there, there would be no issue that the food that has been removed is deemed clean, since it certainly would have been removed before the creeping thing had fallen into the basket, for if the dead creeping thing had been there earlier, it would have been discovered when the objects were removed.]
- E. *Now lo, Shammai and Hillel concur in the case of the basket that the foods that were earlier deemed clean are now retrospectively deemed to be unclean!*
- F. *When Shammai and Hillel concur, it is in respect to a basket that has a bottom. But when Hezekiah and R. Yohanan differ, it concerns a basket that has no bottom.*
- G. *If it has no bottom, then what is the operative consideration for the position of R. Yohanan [for treating the objects as unclean]? It is because, while the basket had no bottom, it had a rim [turned inwards, so that the dead creeping thing might have been caught there and not been noticed].*
- H. *And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- I. **He who draws ten buckets of water, one after another, and a dead creeping thing is found in one of them — that bucket is unclean, but the rest of them are clean [T. Toh. 4:4].** In this regard said R. Simeon b. Laqish in the name of R. Yannai, “This rule pertains only to a case in which the bucket had no rim, but if it had a rim, then all of the buckets are deemed unclean.”
- J. *May I then say that Hezekiah does not concur with the position of R. Yannai?*
- K. [Not at all. Since] *water flows while fruit do not flow* [the basket has to be turned upside down before all the fruit can be emptied out, so it is not possible for the dead creeping thing to have remained within. If one found a dead creeping thing in the basket later in, we have to assume that the food had been removed before the creeping thing got there, and the food is then deemed clean.] *Alternatively, people are not terribly zealous concerning the*

condition of water, but they are zealous concerning the condition of produce. Alternatively, I shall say, when Shammai and Hillel concur, their agreement concerns a basket that has not been inspected [4A], but when Hezekiah and R. Yohanan differ, it is in the case of a basket that has been inspected. One master takes the view that lo, it has been inspected, and the other master maintains, "I claim that the dead creeping thing fell into the basket just when the man removed his hand."

- L. *But lo, is this not case similar to the one involving the woman, and the woman is deemed to have been properly examined [so the basket must be assumed to be properly examined]. [Slotki: since it was stated that the objects in the basket were regarded as retrospectively unclean, this would form an objection to Hezekiah's position.]*
- M. *Since blood-flows are common in a woman, she is deemed equivalent to one that has not been examined.*
- N. *Or, if you prefer, I shall explain, when Shammai and Hillel concur, it is in the case of a basket that is not covered over. But the case in which Hezekiah and R. Yohanan differ involves a basket that is covered over. [Nothing could fall by accident. Hezekiah holds that objects are clean, since someone would have known.]*
- O. *If it is covered over, then how did the dead creeping thing fall in?*
- P. *For example, the manner of using the basket was to open and close the cover.*
- Q. *And lo, this case is deemed parallel to the case of the woman, and the woman is deemed equivalent to the basket that is covered over.*
- R. *Since blood-flows are common in a woman, she is deemed equivalent to one that is not covered over.*
- S. *And if you prefer, I shall say, where Shammai and Hillel concur, it concerns the corner of the basket alone, while where Hezekiah and R. Yohanan differ, it concerns the corner of the room.*
- T. *But lo, the passage explicitly makes reference to a basket!*
- U. *This is the sense of the statement: a basket that is used for food in a state of cultic cleanness, located in the corner of this room, and which one moved to another corner, and a dead creeping thing turned up in it when it was located in the other corner —*
- V. *Hezekiah takes the view that we do not assume that uncleanness located in one place affects some other place.*
- W. *And R. Yohanan takes the view that we do assume that uncleanness located in one place affects some other place.*
- X. *And have we not learned in the Mishnah:*
- Y. **If one touched someone by night and does not know whether he was alive or dead, and on the morrow got up and found him dead — R. Meir declares the man clean. And sages declare him unclean, for all matters involving uncleanness are assigned**

to the status that pertains to them when they are located [M. Toh. 5:7]. *And in this connection it was taught as a Tannaite formulation:* that pertains to them when they are located and also where they are located. [Slotki: If in the morning the person was found dead in the place in which he had been touched by night, the man who touched him is unclean; but if he was found in a different place, the man is assumed to be clean. Thus it follows that we do not presume uncleanness found in one place to apply to another. How then could R. Yohanan maintain that the rule is applied even in such a case?]

Z. *And if you should say, that condition pertains in particular to whether or not to burn the food that has been affected, but if it is a question of simply suspending a decision on its status, we do suspend a decision, in point of fact, have we not learned in the Mishnah: A needle that was found covered with rust or broken is deemed insusceptible to uncleanness, since in all questions of uncleanness, we settle matters in accord with the condition that pertains at the moment at which they were found [M. Toh. 3:5]? Now why should this be the case? Why not say, this needle to begin with was in fine condition [and so susceptible to uncleanness], and it is only now that the rust has come up upon it? And furthermore, we have learned in the Mishnah: If a burned creeping thing was found on olives, or a filthy rag was found on them, it is deemed clean [we assume the creeping thing or rag was burned before touching the olives and so not unclean at the moment of contact] since in all questions of uncleanness, we settle matters in accord with the condition that pertains at the moment at which they were found [M. Toh. 3:5], and should you say that the decision is made by appeal to the condition that prevails at the moment that they are found, whether that yields a lenient or a strict decision, and in accord with the location at which they are found, but if it is not in the location at which it was found, then, while the objects are not to be burned, still their status is held in suspect, has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: if a loaf of bread is lying on a shelf, and under the shelf lay an object subject to a lesser remove of uncleanness that conveys maddaf-uncleanness, even though, if the object on top should fall, it is not possible that it should not have touched the unclean object, still, the loaf is deemed clean, because I assume that a clean person entered there and removed the loaf from the shelf and put it on the ground where it was found, for I say that a clean person entered there and removed the loaf, unless one can state, "I am positive that no one entered there" [T. Toh. 4:1], and in connection with this rule, R. Eleazar said, "This rule pertains only to a sloping shelf [Slotki: from which the loaf is most likely to slide down and fall on the unclean object below. Now, since even in such a case it is not assumed that the loaf fell on*

the unclean object and contracted uncleanness before it rolled away to its present position, it follows that the rule of presumptive uncleanness is not applied when two different places are involved. How could R. Yohanan rule that presumptive uncleanness pertains even as in the case of the basket and the creeping thing where two places are involved?]

- AA. *There, the operative consideration [for not applying the rule of presumptive uncleanness to the loaf] is stated explicitly: [4B], namely, for I say that a clean person entered there and removed the loaf.*
- BB. *Well, here too, why not claim, “A raven came and dropped the dead creeping thing into the basket”?*
- CC. *In the case of a human being, who acts with deliberation, we invoke such an argument, but in the case of a raven, which does not act with deliberation, we do not invoke such an argument.*
- DD. *Now take note: the loaf of bread involves a matter of doubt concerning uncleanness that occurs in private domain, and any matter of doubt that takes place in private domain is resolved as unclean [so why should the loaf be deemed clean]?*
- EE. *The reason is that we deal with a case of something that is not subject to interrogation, and in any case in which we deal with something that is not subject to interrogation, whether in public domain or in private domain, a matter of doubt is resolved as clean.*
- FF. *But if you wish, I shall say the following: here we deal with a case of uncleanness that is decreed only on the authority of rabbis. For note that at issue here is maddaf-uncleanness, which is along the lines of the phrase, “a driven leaf” (Lev. 26:36).*

II.1 A. And sages say not in accord with the opinion of this one nor in accord with the opinion of that one, but: the woman is held to have been unclean only during the preceding] twenty-four hours when this lessens the period from the examination to the last examination, and she is held to have been unclean only during the period from examination to examination when this lessens the period of twenty-four hours.”

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. **And sages say not in accord with the opinion of this one nor in accord with the opinion of that one:**
- D. *not in accord with the opinion of Shammai, who set no limit to the application of his ruling, nor in accord with the opinion of Hillel, who went beyond all measure.*
- E. **But: the woman is held to have been unclean only during the preceding] twenty-four hours when this lessens the period from the examination to the last examination, and she is held to have been unclean only during the period from examination to examination when this lessens the period of twenty-four hours**
- F. **How does a period of twenty-four hours diminish the period from one examination to the next examination? If she examined herself after the**

Sabbath and found herself clean and spent Monday and Tuesday and did not examine herself, and on Wednesday examined herself and found herself unclean — lo, this one imparts uncleanness to objects that she has touched during the preceding twenty four hour period, but not from one examination to the last examination. And how does the period from one examination to the next examination diminish the period of twenty-four hours? If she examined herself in the morning and found herself clean and spend the second hour and the third hour, not examining herself, and then at the fourth hour she examined herself and found herself unclean, lo, this woman imparts uncleanness to objects that she has touched from the present examination to the last examination, but not during the whole prior twenty-four hour period [T. Nid. 1:1-2].

- G. *It is perfectly obvious that, since she examined herself at the first hour and found herself clean, we should not declare unclean objects that she has touched during the prior twenty-four hours!*
- H. *Since the Tannaite authority has dealt with the clause that, a period of twenty-four hours diminishes the period from one examination to the next examination, he introduced also the clause that, the period from one examination to the next examination diminishes the period of twenty-four hours.*

II.2. A. *Said Rabbah, “What is the operative consideration of rabbis? A woman feels what happens to her [and she is aware of when the flow begins].”*

B. *Said to him Abbayye, “If so, then sufficient for her should be the time at which her period regularly begins!”*

C. *But Rabbah’s intention was only to sharpen the wits of Abbayye! Rather, what is the real consideration of rabbis [in Rabbah’s view]? It is in accord with that which R. Judah said Samuel said, “Sages have ordained that the daughters of Israel should inspect themselves morning and evening, morning to validate the food prepared in a state of cleanness during the prior night, and evening to validate the food prepared in a state of cleanness during the prior day. But this woman, since she did not inspect herself, has lost the advantage of her set time [of twelve hours] [one day, or one night, which, under ordinary conditions of regular inspection, would have sufficed to mark unclean food that she had prepared since her prior inspection; in her case, having failed to make an inspection, what she has prepared for the entire twenty-four hour period preceding is now deemed to have been retrospectively unclean].”*

D. *What is the meaning of “her set time [of twelve hours]”?*

E. *It means, one additional set time of twelve hours.*

F. *Said R. Pappa to Raba, “Lo, sometimes you would find that there are three set-times within a twenty-four hour period [Slotki: when for instance the first examination after a number of days without an examination took place at midday. If the uncleanness extended backwards for a period of twenty-four hours, it would cover the set time of the day of the examination, the set time of the preceding night, and the set time of the day preceding that night. Since the penalty imposed is only one additional set*

time of twelve hours, why in this case should it be lengthened to two set-times, twenty four hours?]"?"

- G. Sages have imposed a uniform limit upon their measures, so as not to divide a twenty-four hour period [and twenty-four hours is fixed, without regard to whether it covers two set-times or three set-times].
- H. *And if you prefer, I shall say the following:* it is so as not to reward one who has sinned. [The woman has not examined her body regularly; she has delayed her last examination from morning to noon. If her period of uncleanness is less than twenty four hours, she benefits. But one who had examined herself in the morning and who loses the preceding twenty four hours would not have that benefit.]
- I. *What is the practical difference between these two explanations [G, H]?*
- J. *The practical difference would involve a woman who was under duress and for that reason was unable to examine herself.* [Slotki: according to the first reply, she would be subject to uncleanness for a full period of twenty-four hours, while according to the second reply, since she is not a sinner, the period would be two set-periods, and her uncleanness would then commence from the start of the previous evening.]

III.1 A. Every woman who has a fixed period — sufficient for her is her time. She who makes use of test rags, lo, this is equivalent to an examination, which lessens either the period of the twenty-four hours or the period from examination to examination.

- B. *May we then say that the Mishnah at hand represents the position of R. Dosa and not rabbis, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. **R. Eliezer says, “Four women [fall into the category of those for whom the] time [of first seeing blood] suffices: (1) the virgin, (2) the pregnant woman, (3) the nursing mother, and (4) the old lady” [M. 1:3A-B].**
- D. R. Dosa says, “Every woman who has a fixed period — sufficient for her is her time.”
- E. *You may even maintain that our Mishnah accords with rabbis, for they differed from R. Dosa only with regard to a flow that did not occur at the woman’s set time, but if it occurred at her set time, they would agree with him; and our Mishnah-paragraph refers to a flow that occurred at a woman’s set time and so represents the view of both authorities.*
- F. *Does it then follow that R. Dosa holds to his position even if a discharge occurs not at the woman’s set time? Then according to whom is the following teaching, which we have learned on Tannaite authority: a woman who has a fixed time — her bloodstain nonetheless is deemed to impart uncleanness even retrospectively, [from the time that her inspection-cloth was last washed], for if she should observe a flow not at her set time, she would be unclean retrospectively for a period of twenty-four hours.*
- G. *May we then say this represents the opinion of rabbis but not of R. Dosa?*
- H. *You may even say it represents the view of R. Dosa. R. Dosa differs from rabbis only concerning the time of the woman’s period, but as to other than the time of her period, he concurs with their position. Our Mishnah-paragraph then speaks*

of the appearance of blood at the woman's set time, and it is the position of R. Dosa, and [5A] the cited Tannaite version represents the opinion of all parties.

- I. *Why not reverse matters?*
- J. *Since it is possible to read matters so as to yield either a more lenient or a more strict ruling, we choose the more strict reading.* [Slotki: the lenient possibility is that the flow at the set time causes no retrospective uncleanness, and this is the general opinion, while the one at any other time is subject to retrospective uncleanness in the views of rabbis; the final ruling is that the flow at the set time causes retrospective uncleanness according to rabbis, and one at any other time causes retrospective uncleanness even according to Dosa.]

III.2. A. *Now it is taught:* for if she should observe a flow not at her set time, she would be unclean retrospectively for a period of twenty-four hours.

- B. *Now the operative consideration is that only in the case of a woman who has a fixed period do rabbis distinguish between her stain and her actually seeing a flow of blood, but* in the case of other women, concerning whom sages have ruled that it is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from the time that they discover flow, the extent of uncleanness of their stains is the same as the extent of their uncleanness on seeing a flow of blood. *Now whose position does this represent?*
- C. *It is the view of R. Hanina b. Antigonus, for* said R. Judah said Samuel in the name of R. Hanina b. Antigonus, "In the case of all women, their blood stains impart uncleanness retrospectively, and in the case of other women, concerning whom sages have ruled that it is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from the time that they discover flow, the extent of uncleanness of their stains is the same as the extent of their uncleanness on seeing a flow of blood, except for a girl who has not reached the time of her period, in which case even if her bed sheets are muddy with blood, they do not take account of her situation."
- D. *And does R. Hanina take account of the condition of the bloodstain at all? And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- E. As to all women, their bloodstains unclean, and the bloodstains of women of whom sages have said, "It is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from the time that they discover flow," are unclean. R. Hanina ben Antigonus says, "The women of whom sages have said, 'It is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from the time that they discover flow,' are not subject to the consideration of bloodstains."
- F. *Does this not mean that* they are not subject to the consideration of bloodstains at all?
- G. No, the meaning is, they are not subject to the consideration of bloodstains retroactively, but they are subject to the consideration of bloodstains from this time [when the bloodstain has been noted] and onward.

- H. *Does that then not imply that the initial Tannaite authority takes the view that even retroactively [they are taken into consideration]?*
- I. *Yes indeed, and it stands for the view of R. Meir who imposes a strict ruling in the case of bloodstains, as has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- J. “As to all women, their bloodstains unclean retroactively, and the bloodstains of women of whom sages have said, ‘It is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from the time that they discover flow,’ are unclean retroactively,” the words of R. Meir.
- K. R. Hanina b. Antigonus says, “The bloodstains of women of whom sages have said, ‘It is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness from the time that they discover flow,’ are unclean from the moment at which they make their appearance. And a girl who has reached her time to have her menstrual period is subject to the law of bloodstains, and one that has not reached her time to have her menstrual period is not subject to the law of bloodstains. And from what point is she at her time to see blood? From the point at which she reaches her maidenhood.”

IV.1 A. She who makes use of test rags, lo, this is equivalent to an examination, [which lessens either the period of the twenty-four hours or the period from examination to examination]:

- B. Said R. Judah said, Samuel, “The rag that is used prior to having sexual relations does not impose a limit as does an examination.”
- C. *What is the operative consideration?*
- D. Said R. Qatina, “It is because she is excited about her ‘house.’”
- E. *So if she is excited about her “house,” what difference does it make?*
- F. Since she is “excited about her ‘house,’” she does not insert the test-rag into the depressions and folds [and the examination is hasty].

IV.2. A. We have learned in the Mishnah: She who makes use of test rags, lo, this is equivalent to an examination. Does this use of the plural, rags, not mean, one rag prior, the other for after, sexual relations?

- B. *No, both this one and that one serve for after having sexual relations, one being for him, the other being for her, as we have learned in the Mishnah: It is the way of Israelite women to make use of two test rags, one for him and one for her [M. 2:1].*
- C. *How now! If you have said that one is for prior to sexual relations, the other for afterward, it is necessary, for it might have entered your mind to suppose that since she is excited about her “house,” she does not conduct a thorough examination, and so we are informed that, nonetheless, lo, this is equivalent to an examination. But if you hold that this one and that one are for after the sexual relations, it is perfectly self evident [that lo, this is equivalent to an examination].*

- D. *What might you have supposed?* Perhaps she may see a drop of blood as tiny as a mustard seed that semen might cover up, *so we are informed that we do not take account of such a possibility.*
- E. *If you prefer, I shall explain that rabbis have imposed the requirement on the woman of making two examinations, one prior to sexual relations, the other afterward, but when it is taught on Tannaite authority, **lo, this is equivalent to an examination**, this refers to after sexual relations.*
- F. *But lo, it says, **She who makes use of test rags** [which implies, that there is no firm obligation to do so]?*
- G. *Read: and a woman shall use test rags.*

V.1 A. ...which lessens either the period of the twenty-four hours or the period from examination to examination.

- B. *Since the period of twenty-four hours imposes a limit, **[5B]** is it necessary to make explicit that the examination has the same effect?*
- C. *What might have you thought? That rabbis took account of the possible loss of food prepared in a state of cleanness only during the twenty-four hour period, but as to the loss of the food during the interval to the prior examination they did not take account? So we are informed that that is not the case.*

VI.1 A. How is the case in which] her time suffices for her? If she was sitting on the bed and engaged in things requiring cleanness and arose and saw a drop of blood, she is unclean, but all of those things requiring cleanness are clean:

- B. *Why was it necessary to state in the Mishnah, **If she was sitting on the bed and engaged in things requiring cleanness and arose and saw a drop of blood, she is unclean, but all of those things requiring cleanness are clean?** Why not say simply, if she was engaged in things requiring cleanness and arose and saw a drop of blood?*
- C. *In this way the framer of the passage teaches us that the reason that the bed is clean is that in the case of that woman, it is sufficient for her to reckon her time of uncleanness from the moment that she discovered the blood, but, when the uncleanness extends backward over the prior twenty-four hours, the bed also is regarded as unclean.*
- D. *That then supports the position of Zeiri, for Zeiri has said, "For the period of twenty four hours prior to her discovery of having a menstrual flow, a woman imparts uncleanness to that upon which she lies and sits in such wise that that object imparts uncleanness to man who in turn imparts uncleanness to clothing that he is wearing [who sits on that same bed]. [The bed then is one of a woman confirmed as a menstruant, which conveys uncleanness to whoever touches it and to the clothing he is wearing, even though the clothing itself does not come into contact with the bed (Porusch).]"*
- E. *But the bed falls into the classification of that which cannot be subjected to interrogation, and any doubt affecting that which is not subject to interrogation is resolved as clean.*
- F. *Zeiri explained, "This [ruling of the Mishnah, which regards the bed on which the woman sat during the prior twenty-four hours as definitely unclean, though it is subject to doubt as to the exact moment at which the woman's period began]*

speaks of a case in which her girl-friends were carrying her in bed, so that the bed may be regarded as an extension of the hand of her friends [and there is, then, the possibility of interrogation, in which case matters of doubt are resolved as unclean].”

- G. *Now, however, that R. Yohanan has said, “When there is a matter of doubt as to uncleanness that is brought about through human agency, even though at issue is a utensil lying on the ground, it is regarded as a case in which there is the possibility of interrogation as though involved were a sentient being who can be interrogated,” even though her girl-friends were not carrying the bed [the same rule would apply].*

VI.2. *A. Reverting to the body of the prior text:*

- B. R. Yohanan said, “When there is a matter of doubt as to uncleanness that is brought about through human agency, even though at issue is a utensil lying on the ground, it is regarded as a case in which there is the possibility of interrogation as though involved were a sentient being who can be interrogated.”
- C. *An objection was raised: If a person was wrapped in his cloak, with unclean things and clean things at his side, and unclean things and clean things above, there is doubt whether he touched or did not touch them — the matter of doubt concerning him is resolved as clean. And if it is not possible for him not to ‘have come into contract, the matter of doubt affecting him is deemed unclean. R. Dosa [Bavli: Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel] says, “They say to him that he should do it again.” They said to him, “They do not attempt a repetition in matters involving cleanness” [T. Toh. 4:1A-I]. Now why should this be the case? Lo, here we have a doubt concerning uncleanness that is brought about through human agency?*
- D. *But that is beside the point, for R. Hoshaia repeated as a Tannaite version, “If involved is private domain, a matter of doubt affecting him is resolved as unclean, but if involved is public domain, a matter of doubt is resolved as clean.”*

VI.3. *A. Reverting to the body of the prior text:*

- B. Zeiri said, “For the period of twenty four hours prior to her discovery of having a menstrual flow, a woman imparts uncleanness to that upon which she lies and sits in such wise that that object imparts uncleanness to a human being [who sits on that same bed] who in turn imparts uncleanness to clothing that he is wearing. [The bed then is one of a woman confirmed as a menstruant, which conveys uncleanness to whoever touches it and to the clothing he is wearing, even though the clothing itself does not come into contact with the bed (Porusch).]”
- C. *Now is this really so? Lo, when Abimi came from Khuzistan, he came along and brought a version of the Mishnah in hand as follows: “The uncleanness during the period of twenty-four hours affecting a woman prior to the point at which she discovered that she was menstruating is equivalent to the uncleanness imparted by contact with her [and not her having lain or sat on a chair or bed, such as Zeiri’s formulation maintains].” Is the sense not, just as what she touches does not impart uncleanness to a human being, so what she lies on does not impart uncleanness to a human being [who is in contact with the same object]?*

- D. *Said Raba, "And do you really follow this ruling [of Abimi's, that seems to treat the uncleanness of the bed or chair of a menstruating woman as less unclean than earthenware that she touches]? The contrary proposition may be shown by an argument a fortiori: If an earthenware utensil that is sealed with a tight seal, the contents of which are protected from uncleanness when in the tent of a corpse, is not afford protection from uncleanness during the twenty-four hours preceding the woman's discovery that she is menstruating, is it not logical that beds and chairs on which she has sat, which are not protected in any way from the uncleanness that is shed in the tent over a corpse, should not be protected from uncleanness that she imparts during the twenty-four hours prior to her discovering that she is menstruating?"*
- E. *But did not Abimi of Khuzistan cite a teaching on Tannaite authority?*
- F. *State it in the following language: That on which she lies and sits is in the same category [6A] as that which touches her herself. Just as that which touches her herself imparts uncleanness to a human being so that that person imparts uncleanness to clothing [which is not even in contact with the woman], so that on which she lies or sits imparts uncleanness to a human being so that the person imparts uncleanness to clothing as well.*
- G. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority in accord with the position of Raba:*
- H. *She who produces a drop of blood imparts uncleanness for the prior twenty-four hours. And to what does she impart uncleanness? Beds and chairs, food and drink, and clay utensils that are tightly sealed. And her counting [of the eleven clean days after the seven days of the menstrual period] is disrupted. But she does not impart uncleanness retroactively to him who has sexual relations with her.*
- I. *R. Aqiba says, "She does impart uncleanness to him who has sexual relations with her, and she counts [the eleven clean days following the seven menstrual days] only from the moment at which she produced the drop of blood."*
- J. *Her bloodstain imparts uncleanness retroactively. And to what does it impart uncleanness? Food and drink, beds and chairs, and clay utensils that are tightly sealed. But her counting [of the eleven clean days after the seven days of the menstrual period] is not disrupted, and she does not impart uncleanness retroactively to him who has sexual relations with her.*
- K. *One way or the other [whether it is a flow or a stain], they suspend [the status of food that she has touched], which is neither eaten nor burned.*
- L. *Now had Raba heard such a formulation on Tannaite authority, he ought to have cited it as such, and if he had not heard the formulation on Tannaite authority, then what need did he have for an argument a fortiori?*
- M. *In point of fact he had heard the tradition on Tannaite authority, but had he derived his position only from the Tannaite version, I might have supposed that the uncleanness is imparted to either the man or the clothing [not directly touched by the seat or bed], but not to the person*

and also to the clothing he was wearing, so he had also to appeal to the argument a fortiori.

- VI.4.** A. Said R. Huna, “The retroactive contamination during the twenty-four hour period prior to the discovery of menstrual blood pertains to Holy Things but not to priestly rations [heave offering].”
- B. *If that were so, then this should have been treated on Tannaite authority in the context of the other grades of sanctity [that are listed at M. Hag. Chapters Two and Three, which present rules that apply to Holy Things but not to priestly rations].*
- C. *When the Tannaite authority treats this matter, it is in cases in which there is a definite contamination, but in cases in which the contamination is not confirmed, the matter is not listed.*
- D. *An objection was raised: [Her bloodstain imparts uncleanness retroactively.] [And to what does it impart uncleanness? Food and drink, [beds and chairs, and clay utensils that are tightly sealed]. Is this not the case whether the food and drink are in the status of Holy Things or of priestly rations?]*
- E. *No, it is only the case for the food and drink in the status of Holy Things.*
- F. *Come and take note: R. Judah says, “Also when they leave off eating priestly rations [the women of the priestly caste have to examine their bodies to see whether they have produced a drop of menstrual blood],” and we noted in that connection, “What was was” [so what can we do about it now?], [and in response,] said R. Hisda, “It is necessary only to treat in a proper manner the left-overs that are before her.” [So how can we say that at stake is Holy Things and not priestly rations?]*
- G. *R. Huna repeats the matter as a Tannaite version in this language: “...so as to burn the left overs that are in hands, with the examination being done immediately after the meal” [so we know that the priestly rations indeed have been touched by a menstruant].”*
- H. *Come and take note: there was the case in which Rabbi acted in accord with R. Eliezer [who holds that the period of uncleanness begins with the appearance of the blood but not retroactively]. After he realized what he had done, he said, “R. Eliezer is worthy of being relied upon [6B] in an emergency.” And we noted in that connection, “What is the meaning of ‘After he realized what he had done’? If we should say that the law is not in accord with R. Eliezer but rather in accord with rabbis, then even in an emergency, how could he have acted in accord with him? Rather, is it not the case that a statement of the decided law was not set forth in accord with either this authority or that authority, and, when he realized that it was not a mere individual who differed from [Eliezer], but that the majority differed from him, he nonetheless observed, “R. Eliezer is worthy of being relied upon in an emergency.” Now [to the point:] if you say that the issue concerned priestly rations, then we can understand, for there was such a thing as priestly rations in the time of Rabbi, but if you say that at stake was food in the status of Holy Things [deriving from the Temple altar for the priesthood’s use], was there food in the status of Holy Things in the time of Rabbi?*

- I. *The answer accords with what Ulla said, for Ulla said, "The associates [who undertake to keep the laws of tithing and cultic cleanness in a strict manner] who are located in Galilee observe [even the rules] cultic cleanness [when they eat their common food]," and so that very well might have been the case in the time of Rabbi.*
- J. *Come and take note: there was the case in which the slave-girl of Rabban Gamaliel was baking loaves of bread in the status of priestly rations, and between touching each and every loaf, she would wash her hand in water and examine herself. After the final loaf, she examined herself and found that she was unclean. She came and addressed the question to Rabban Gamaliel, who said to her, "All of them are unclean."*
- K. *She said to him, "My lord, did I not have an examination between touching each and every loaf of bread?"*
- L. *He said to her, "If so, that last one is unclean, but the rest of them are clean."*
- M. *Now it is taught on Tannaite authority here, "loaves of bread in the status of priestly rations" [and the consideration of retroactive uncleanness is raised]!*
- N. *What is the meaning of "priestly rations" here? It is, "loaves of bread for a thank-offering."*
- O. *But do loaves of bread of a thank-offering have to be baked [after having been consecrated and handed over to the priest]?*
- P. *It was a case in which they were designated while they were being kneaded [and were baked after consecration], and that is in line with what R. Tubi bar R. Qatina said, "As to loaves of bread for a thank-offering which one baked in four separate loaves, one has fulfilled his obligation." And we noted in that connection, "Lo, do we not require forty loaves [so how can we use just four]?" [The reply was,] "This is just for the optimum fulfillment of the religious requirement [but four will do]." And do we not have to separate priestly rations from each loaf?" And should you say that one removes a piece from each loaf, one may reply, "The Torah has said, 'one' (Lev. 7:14), meaning, one must not break off a piece. And to this it was replied, "They were set aside while they were being kneaded." So here to, they were separated while being kneaded.*
- Q. *Come and take note: there was another case in which the slave-girl of Rabban Gamaliel was sealing wine kegs with clay bungs, and between each and every one, she washed her hands in water and examined herself. After the final loaf, she examined herself and found that she was unclean. She came and addressed the question to Rabban Gamaliel, who said to her, "All of them are unclean."*
- R. *She said to him, "My lord, did I not have an examination between touching each and every loaf of bread?"*
- S. *He said to her, "If so, that last one is unclean, but the rest of them are clean."*
- T. *Now if you take the view that one incident involved food or drink in the status of Holy Things, and the other, food or drink in the Status of priestly rations, then that explains why she went back and asked him a question a second time. But if you maintain that both matters involved food or drink in the status of Holy Things, then why in the world would she have had to go back and ask another time?*

- U. *The incident involved two different slave-girls.*
- V. *Another version:*
- W. Said R. Huna, "The retroactive contamination during the twenty-four hour period priority to the discovery of menstrual blood pertains to both Holy Things and also priestly rations [heave offering]."
- X. *How do you know? It is because the matter is left off the list of the various grades of sanctity [which apply to Holy Things but not to priestly rations].*
- Y. Said R. Nahman to him, "And lo, it has been taught on Tannaite authority: '[retrospective uncleanness] pertains to Holy Things but not to priestly rations].'"
- Z. *R. Samuel b. R. Isaac accepted this teaching [of Nahman's Tannaite reciter] in respect to unconsecrated food that was prepared in accord with the rules that apply to the cleanness of Holy Things, but not with reference to unconsecrated food that was prepared in accord with the rules of cleanness of priestly rations. [Slotki: it does not apply to actual priestly rations, which is subject to the same restrictions as Holy Things.]*
- AA. *We have learned in the Mishnah there: [If before the woman rolled out the dough, her dough became mixed with consecrated dough, the mixture is exempt from dough offering, for a mixture of unconsecrated and consecrated dough is exempt from dough offering. However if the mixture occurred after she rolled the unconsecrated dough out, the mixture is subject to dough offering, since the liability to dough offering took effect as soon as the unconsecrated dough was rolled out.] If the possibility that she had entered a state of uncleanness arose before she rolled the dough out, let it be prepared in a state of uncleanness, [for the possibility of uncleanness has already rendered the dough unfit to be eaten by a priest, and so there would be no point for the woman to wait until she is able to prepare the dough in a state of cleanness]. But if the same possibility arose after she rolled the dough out, let it be prepared in a state of cleanness [M. Hal. 3:2A-E].*
- BB. **If the possibility that she had entered a state of uncleanness arose before she rolled the dough out, let it be prepared in a state of uncleanness** — because it is unconsecrated food, and in the Land of Israel it is permitted to impart uncleanness to unconsecrated food.
- CC. **But if the same possibility arose after she rolled the dough out, let it be prepared in a state of cleanness** — because unconsecrated food that is not properly prepared in respect to the removal of dough offering is in the status of dough offering, and it is forbidden to impart uncleanness to dough offering.
- DD. *A Tannaite statement: [7A] [in the case of doubt to which reference is made above,] the dough-offering [of dough prepared in a state of cleanness] is kept in suspense, neither eaten nor burned.*
- EE. *Now with reference to what sort of doubt have the spoken? It is a matter of doubt concerning dough offering.*
- FF. *And what is a matter of doubt concerning dough offering?*
- GG. *Both Abbaye and Raba said, "It is so that you should not maintain that the rule is expressed here with regard to a case in which there is certain uncleanness, parallel to the one of the two paths, [where one is unclean, one clean, and a person has*

walked in one and does not know in which one he walked], *for in that case even unconsecrated food also contracts uncleanness. Rather, the rule applies even in a case in which only leaning is in play, as we have learned in the Mishnah: If a Zab [a person afflicted with the uncleanness of Lev. 15] and a clean person were unloading an ass or loading it up, when their burden is heavy, they are unclean [since the clean person may have leaned on the unclean and was shaken by him, and moving or shaking is a medium for imparting uncleanness affecting a Zab]; when their burden is light, they are clean. And all of them are clean for members of the congregation [who keep cultic cleanness even when eating unconsecrated food] and unclean for those who eat priestly rations [M. Zeb. 3:2], and unconsecrated food that is not properly prepared in respect to the removal of dough offering is in the status of dough offering.*

- HH. *And have we not learned in the Mishnah: A woman who is in the status of one who has immersed on the same day and awaits sunset to complete the process of purification kneads dough and cuts off dough offering for it and sets it apart and puts it in an Egyptian basket or on a board and brings it near and designates it by name, because it is in the third remove of uncleanness, and the third remove is clean so far as unconsecrated food is concerned [M. Tebul Yom 4:2A-B]. Now if you say that unconsecrated food that is not properly prepared in respect to the removal of dough offering is in the status of dough offering, lo, has she not imparted uncleanness to it?! [Slotki: when the woman first touched it? What then is the use of the entire procedure?]*
- II. Said Abbaye, “In any case involving unconsecrated food in which a confirmed source of uncleanness imparts uncleanness, sages have decreed that a source of uncleanness that is subject to doubt imparts uncleanness to unconsecrated food that is not properly prepared in respect to the removal of dough offering. *And in the case of this person who has immersed on the same day and is waiting for sunset to complete the process of purification, since [a person in that status] does not impart uncleanness to unconsecrated food as a matter of certainty, sages also have not made a decree in her regard on the count of unconsecrated food that is not properly prepared in respect to the removal of dough offering.*”
- JJ. And lo, the period of the prior twenty-four hours in the case of a menstruating woman, in which case the woman imparts uncleanness as a matter of certainty to unconsecrated food, sages has still not made a decree by reason of doubt to treat as unclean unconsecrated food that is not properly prepared in respect to the removal of dough offering.
- KK. *For a master has said, “R. Samuel b. R. Isaac accepted this teaching [of Nahman’s Tannaite reciter] in respect to unconsecrated food that was prepared in accord with the rules that apply to the cleanness of Holy Things, but not with reference to unconsecrated food that was prepared in accord with the rules of cleanness of priestly rations.”*
- LL. *In the former case no priestly ration is kneaded with the unconsecrated food, but in the latter case, priestly ration is kneaded up with the dough.*
- MM. *If you prefer, I shall say: omit reference to the issue of the retroactive uncleanness for twenty-four hours imparted by the woman who discovers that she*

is in her menstrual period, because that is merely a decree made by rabbis [but does not derive from the law of the Torah].

I.1 comes right to the point in identify the point at issue between Shammai and Hillel, immediately comparing their positions with rulings in the Mishnah that are not parallel but that share the same operative consideration. This is done with the Talmud's accustomed thoroughness and perspicacity. Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 continue this same process. I distinguish the set from No. 1 only because each commences a new stage in the ongoing string of analytical problems; but the line of thought is uninterrupted, beginning to end. It is another magnificent composition, by a single hand (so to speak), of a well-crafted and sustained argument. No. 8 then reverts to a case introduced earlier, the usual mode of providing supplementary information, in the manner of footnotes. II.1 provides a fine exposition of the familiar language of the Mishnah, now in the amplification of the Tosefta. No. 2 goes over familiar ground: reasons for the positions of sages. No. 3 picks up a detail of No. 2. III.1 identifies the authority behind our Mishnah's ruling. IV.2 proceeds to the same inquiry. IV.1 provides an important clarification of detail. No. 2 then tests the proposed clarification. V.1 further clarifies the same phrase of the Mishnah. No. 2 forms a footnote to No. 1, and No. 3 continues the same process. No. 4 further clarifies the effects of retroactive contamination during the twenty-four hour period prior to the discovery of the drop of menstrual blood. 4.D accounts for the positioning of the whole at just this point. VI.1 concludes the glossing of the wording of the Mishnah.

1:3-6

1:3

- A. R. Eliezer says, "Four women [fall into the category of those for whom the time [of first seeing blood] suffices:
- B. "(1) the virgin, (2) the pregnant woman, (3) the nursing mother, and (4) the old lady."
- C. Said R. Joshua, "I heard only [that this rule applies to] the virgin."
- D. [7B] But the law is in accord with the opinion of R. Eliezer.

1:4

- A. Who is (1) the virgin?
- B. Any girl who never in her life saw a drop of blood, even though she is married.
- C. (2) A pregnant woman?
- D. Once it is known that the foetus is present.
- E. (3) A nursing mother?
- F. Until she will wean her son.
- G. [If] she gave her son to a wet nurse, weaned him, or he died —
- H. R. Meir says, "She conveys uncleanness [to everything she touched] during the preceding twenty-four hours."
- I. And sages say, "Sufficient for her is her time."

1:5

- A. (4) Who is an old woman?
- B. Any woman for whom three periods have gone by without a flow near to the time of her old age.
- C. R. Eliezer says, “Any woman for whom three periods have passed without her suffering a flow — sufficient for her is her time.”
- D. R. Yosé says, “A pregnant woman and a nursing mother for whom three periods have passed-sufficient for them is their time.”

1:6

- A. And of what case did they speak when they said, “Sufficient for her is her time”?
- B. Of the case of the first appearance of a drop of blood.
- C. But in the case of the second appearance of such a drop of blood, she conveys uncleanness to whatever she touched during the preceding twenty-four hours.
- D. But if she saw the first flow by reason of constraint [through abnormal causes], even in the case of the second drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time.

I.1 A. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

- B. Said R. Eliezer to R. Joshua, “You have not heard, but I have heard. You have heard only one, but I have heard many. They do not say to one who has never seen the new moon to come and give testimony, but they say so to one who has seen it.”
- C. Throughout the entire life of R. Eliezer, people would carry out the law in accord with the position of R. Joshua. After the death of R. Eliezer, R. Joshua restored the matter to its proper place, in accord with the view of R. Eliezer [T. **Nid.** 1:5].
- D. *What is the reason that during the lifetime of R. Eliezer they did not follow his ruling?*
- E. *It is because he was excommunicated, and it was thought, “If we practice the law in accord with his position in one matter, we may practice the law in accord with his position in other matters, and, out of respect for R. Eliezer, no one would object to that fact. But after R. Eliezer had died, in which case we will find that people will object [to following his view in a variety of other, unrelated matters], he restored the [one] matter to its proper place, in accord with the view of R. Eliezer.*

I.2. A. Said R. Judah said Samuel, “The law accords with R. Eliezer in four matters.” *The first is the one of which we have just spoken.*

- B. The second: **A woman in labor is deemed to be a menstruant.** [If] a woman was in hard travail for three days during the eleven days, and [if] she enjoyed a respite for twenty-four hours and [then] gave birth — “lo, this one is one who has given birth as a Zabah [while in the status of one who has a flux] ,” the words of R. Eliezer. R. Joshua says, “A night and a day, like the

eve of the Sabbath and its day.” For she has had relief from the pain and not from the blood [M. **Nid. 4:4**].

- C. The third: **The Zab and the Zabab who examined themselves on the first day and found themselves to be clean, on the seventh day and found themselves to be clean, and on the remaining, intervening days did not examine themselves — R. Eliezer says, “Lo, they are in the assumption of being clean.” R. Joshua says, “They have only the first day and the seventh day alone [as clean days].” R. Aqiba says, “They have only the seventh day alone [as a clean day]” [M. **Nid. 10:3**].** *And it was taught in this connection, R. Yosé and R. Simeon say, “The opinion of R. Eliezer seems to us better than the opinion of R. Joshua, and the opinion of R. Aqiba is better than the opinions of both of them, but the law is in accord with the ruling of R. Eliezer” [T. **Nid. 9:13C-D**].*
- D. And the fourth: **The outer sides of utensils which were made unclean with liquid — R. Eliezer says, “They render liquids unclean, but they do not spoil foods.”**
- E. **They render liquids unclean, — even when the liquid is unconsecrated, but they do not spoil foods — even when it is in the status of priestly rations.**
- F. **R. Joshua says, “They render liquids unclean, and they spoil foods.” [Simeon the brother of Azariah says, “Neither thus nor so,”but liquids which were made unclean on the outer sides of the utensils — “render unclean at one remove and render unfit at one further remove.” Lo, this one — heave offering — says, “The things that made you [liquids] unclean did not make me unclean, but you made me unclean”] [M. **Toh. 8:7**].**
- G. Said R. Joshua, “It is a matter of an argument a fortiori: if that which is in the status of having been immersed and waiting for sunset for the completion of the rite of purification, which does not impart uncleanness to liquid that is unconsecrated, nonetheless imparts unfitness to food in the status of priestly rations, the outer sides of utensils, which impart uncleanness to liquid that is unconsecrated, surely should render unfit food in the status of priestly rations!”
- H. And R. Eliezer?
- I. *The rule governing the status of the outer sides of utensils derives only from the rabbis, while the status of having been immersed and waiting for sunset for the completion of the rite of purification derives from the authority of the Torah. And on the strength of the contrast of a rule deriving from rabbis and one deriving from the authority of the Torah, we do not construct an argument a fortiori. In point of fact, on the strength of the law of the Torah, food does not impart uncleanness to a utensil, and liquid does not impart uncleanness to a utensil, but it is the rabbis who made a decree in that case, because of the possibility of laxity in regard to the fluids that derive from z man or woman afflicted with the uncleanness described at Leviticus 15, so it is only in the matter of liquid, which readily contract uncleanness, that rabbis have made their preventive decree, but, as to food, since it is not readily made unclean, rabbis made no such rule. And why make particular reference to the outer parts of utensils? It is because the restrictions that pertain to them are minor. For we have learned in the Mishnah: **Bases of utensils, and their rims, and their hangers, and the handles of***

utensils which hold [something, that is, which have a receptacle], on which fell [unclean] liquids — one dries them, and they are clean. And [as to] all other utensils, which cannot hold pomegranates, which do not have outer parts and an inside, on [one] part of which [unclean] liquids have fallen — the whole is unclean. A utensil, the outer parts of which have been made unclean with liquids the outer parts are unclean, its inside, its rims, hangers, and handles are clean. [If] its inside is made unclean, the whole is unclean [M. Kel. 25:6].

- J. *And of precisely what proposition does Samuel inform us in so stating, since all of these cases contain a Mishnaic statement of the decided law? And if you say that he informs us of the case involving the outer parts of utensils, in which instance the statement of the decided law is not included, then why not simply say, “the law follows the view of R. Eliezer in the case of the outer parts of utensils”?*
- K. *This is what he proposed to tell us: that the decided law does not derive from an analytical argument [lit.: Talmud]. [An explicit statement is required.]*
- L. *And are there no other such cases? And there not the following, which we have learned in the Mishnah: R. Eliezer says, [8A] “They instruct a minor to exercise the right of refusal” [M. Yeb. 13:7I]. And R. Judah said Samuel said, “The decided law accords with R. Eliezer.”*
- M. *When Samuel said, “The decided law accords with R. Eliezer in four matters,” he made reference only to the division of Purities, but as to other divisions, there are numerous such cases. And that stands to reason, for we have learned in the Mishnah: One who makes his dough in one qab portions and they touched each other — the portions are exempt from dough offering, unless they stick together. R. Eliezer says, “Also one who scrapes loaves of one qab portions from the sides of an oven and puts the loaves in a basket — the basket combines them into a single portion large enough so as to be subject to dough offering” [M. Hal.2 2:4A-B]. And R. Judah said Samuel said, “The decided law accords with R. Eliezer.”*
- N. *That proves the point.*
- O. *But why is this proof more decisive than the earlier one?*
- P. *It is because, in the former instance, R. Eleazar stands with R. Eliezer, for we have learned in another context in the Mishnah: R. Eleazar says, “They instruct a minor to exercise the right of refusal” [M. Yeb. 13:11H].*
- Q. *But does he stand with him? Have we not demonstrated that both statements [covering the judgment of Samuel that the law accords with Eliezer and also Eleazar] were necessary, and these matters are not deemed equivalent to one another.*
- R. *Rather it is because R. Judah b. Baba takes up the same position as R. Eliezer, for we have learned in the Mishnah: R. Judah b. Baba gave testimony concerning five matters: (1) that they instruct women married while minors to exercise the right of refusal; (2) that they permit a woman to remarry on the testimony of a single witness [that her husband has died]; (3) that a chicken was stoned in Jerusalem because it had killed a human being; (4) concerning wine forty days old, that it may be poured out as a libation offering on the altar of the Temple; and (5) concerning the morning daily*

whole offering, that it may be offered at the fourth hour [M. Ed. 6:1]. Now is the reference to a minor not to the one of which R. Eleazar and R. Eliezer spoke?

- S. No, what is the meaning of **“minors”**? It is, minors in general.
- T. If that were so, then in the matter of **“a woman,”** it should also say, **“women”** — meaning, women in general!
- U. But since here there is a reference to **“a woman,”** and alongside is a reference to **“minors,”** it is to be concluded that the framer of the passage has spoken in precise terms.
- V. That proves it.
- W. And said R. Eleazar, “The law accords with the position of R. Eliezer in four matters.”
- Z. And are there no more than four? And have we not learned in the Mishnah: **R. Eliezer says, “They instruct a minor to exercise the right of refusal” [M. Yeb. 13:7I].** And R. Eleazar said, “The decided law accords with R. Eliezer.” And should you say, when R. Eleazar said, “The law accords with R. Eliezer,” he was making reference to four rulings in the division of Purities, but as to the other divisions, there are more, are there more? And have we not learned in the Mishnah: **Rose, henna, balsam, and lotus and proceeds received for them are subject to [the laws of] the Sabbatical year and the money [received from the sale of this produce] is subject to [the laws of] the Sabbatical year. They are subject to the laws of removal and proceeds received for them are subject to the laws of removal. R. Simeon says, “Balsam is not subject to [the laws of] the Sabbatical year, because it is not a fruit [but rather a sap secreted by the tree]” [M. Shebiit 7:6].** And said R. Pedat, “Who is the Tannaite authority who maintains that balsam is a fruit? It is R. Eliezer.” And said R. Zira, “I see that, between you and your father, you will cause balsam to be generally permitted, for you have said, ‘who is the Tannaite who taught that balsam is a fruit? It is R. Eliezer,’ and your father has said, ‘the decided law is in accord with R. Eliezer in four matters.’”
- AA. Now if it were so that there are more than four, then he should have said to him, “Your father has said, the law accords with R. Eliezer in four matters in the division of Purities. But in other divisions there are yet more.”
- BB. Then does not the difficulty arise [that the rite of refusal is omitted anyhow]?
- CC. In the case of the rite of refusal, the law accords with R. Eliezer because R. Eleazar concurs with him, as we have learned: **R. Eleazar says, “They instruct a minor to exercise the right of refusal” [M. Yeb. 13:11H].**
- DD. But does he stand really with him? Have we not demonstrated that both statements [covering the judgment of Samuel that the law accords with Eliezer and also Eleazar] were necessary, and these matters are not deemed equivalent to one another.
- EE. Rather it is because R. Judah b. Baba takes up the same position as R. Eliezer, for we have learned in the Mishnah: **R. Judah b. Baba gave testimony concerning five matters...[M. Ed. 6:1].**
- FF. And are there no others? And have we not learned in the Mishnah: **And [they insert] habdalah in [the blessing which concludes] “who endows with**

knowledge,” [the fourth blessing]. R. Aqiba says, “One says it as a fourth blessing unto itself.” R. Eliezer says, “[One says it] in the ‘thanksgiving,’ [the Eighteenth Blessing] [M. **Ber. 5:2C-E**]. And said R. Eleazar, “The law accords with the position of R. Eliezer.”

- GG. *Said R. Abba, “That is because he said the rule in the name of R. Hanina b. Gamaliel, for it has been taught on Tannaite authority: R. Aqiba says, ‘One says it as a fourth blessing unto itself.’ R. Hanina b. Gamaliel says, ‘One says it in the ‘thanksgiving.’”*
- HH. **[8B]** *And lo, was he not much older than he [Eliezer was much older than Hanina]!*
- II. *Rather, say matters in the following way: it is because R. Hanina b. Gamaliel stood alongside him in the theory of the matter.*
- JJ. *And did he stand with him? Has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: On the night of the Day of Atonement one says the Prayer of seven blessings and recites the confession; in the morning one says the Prayer of seven blessings and makes the confession; during the Additional Prayer one says the prayer of seven blessings and recites the confession; in the afternoon prayer one says the Prayer of seven blessings and recites the confession; at the concluding rite one says the prayer of seven blessings and recites the confession; and in the evening, one says the Prayer of seven blessings which summarize the Eighteen. And R. Hanina b. Gamaliel in the name of his fathers says, “One says the Prayer of eighteen benedictions, for one has to recite the Habdalah prayer in the paragraph, ‘Who favors man with knowledge.’”*
- KK. *Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, “He spoke in the name of his fathers, but as to his own position, that was not his position.”*
- LL. *Said R. Jeremiah to R. Zira [Slotki: who objected to Pedat’s assertion as to the authorship of the ruling on balsam], “And do you not take the view, yourself, that who is it who taught the rule that balsam is classified as fruit? it is in fact R. Eliezer. For we have learned in the Mishnah: **R. Eliezer says, “He who curdles milk with the sap of [a tree subject to] orlah — [the milk] is forbidden [under the law of orlah]” [M. **Orl. 1:7D-E**].***
- MM. *You may even say that rabbis accord with this view. Where they differ from R. Eliezer, it is in regard to the sap of the tree, but as to the sap of the fruit, they concur with him, for we have learned in the Mishnah: **Said R. Joshua, “I have heard explicitly that one who curdles milk with the sap of the leaves of an orlah tree, for with the sap of the roots [of an orlah tree] — the milk is permitted [not in the status of orlah]. But he who curdles milk with the sap of unripe figs of an orlah tree — the milk is forbidden, because the figs are fruit” [M. **Orl. 1:7F-H**].***
- NN. *If you prefer, I shall say, where rabbis differ from R. Eliezer, it is with a fruit-bearing tree, but as to a tree that does not bear fruit, they concur that the sap is regarded as equivalent to the fruit. For we have learned in the Mishnah: **R. Simeon says, “Balsam is not subject to [the laws of I the Sabbatical year, because it is not a fruit [but rather a sap secreted by the tree]. And sages say, “Balsam is subject to the law of the Sabbatical year, because the sap of the tree is classified as its fruit.” [M. **Shebiit 7:6**].***

- OO. *Now who are the sages represented here? Are these not rabbis who differ from R. Eliezer?* [Slotki: thus it follows, as Zira says, that in the case of balsam the rabbis are of the same opinion as Eliezer, and there is no need to attribute to him the ruling that is the decided law; it is commonplace.]
- PP. A certain elder said to him, “Said R. Yohanan, ‘Who are sages? It is R. Eliezer, who has said, “Its balsam is its fruit.” Now if by “sages” R. Eliezer is meant, then why speak of a tree that does not produce fruit, since even where a tree does produce fruit, its sap is regarded as its fruit?”
- QQ. *He made his reply in the framework of the opinion of rabbis, saying to them, “In my opinion, even in the case of a fruit producing tree, the sap is regarded as the fruit; but in your view, you should agree with me at the very least in the case of a tree that produces no fruit, that the sap is the fruit.” But rabbis said to him, “It makes no difference [in either case sap is not regarded as fruit].*

II.1 A. Who is the virgin? Any girl who never in her life saw a drop of blood, even though she is married.

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. **If a virgin was married and produced a drop of blood that was due to the marital relations, or if when she bore a child she saw a drop of blood that was due to the birth of the child, she is still classified as a virgin, for when rabbis spoke of a virgin, it had to do with whether or not the girl had menstruated, but it had nothing to do with hymeneal blood [T. [Nid. 1:6A-D](#)].**
- D. *Is this really true? But has not R. Kahana said, “A Tannaite authority taught: there are three kinds of virgin, the virgin-girl, the virgin-soil, and the virgin-sycamore. The virgin girl is one that has never had sexual relations, — with the practical consequence whether or not she may marry a High Priest or whether or not she may claim to the marriage-settlement of two hundred zuz that goes to a virgin. The virgin soil is soil that has never been cultivated — with the practical consequence being whether it may be designated as a rough valley or its legal status in respect to purchase and sale;. The virgin sycamore is one that has never been cut down — with the practical issue being its legal status with respect to purchase and sale or else with respect to whether or not it is permitted to cut it down in the Sabbatical year.” For so we have learned in the Mishnah: **A virgin sycamore may not be cut down in the Sabbatical Year, because cutting down such a tree is classified as cultivation [M. [Sheb. 4:5](#)].** Now if this statement were so, why did the authority at hand not cite it as well?*
- E. *Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, “When he made his list, he referred to matters which have no special name, but a kind of a classification that bears a special name [‘virgin in respect to menstrual blood’] is not included.”*
- F. *R. Sheshet b. R. Idi said, “When the Tannaite authority made his list, he included matters that depend on a particular deed [for the loss of virginity], but the case of virginity in respect to menstruation, in which a particular deed is not involved, he did not include.”*
- G. *R. Hanina b. R. Iqa said, “When the Tannaite made his authority, he referred to things that do not revert to their original condition, but one that does revert to its*

original condition [a woman ultimately ceases to menstruate] he has not included on his list.”

- H. *Rabina said, “When the Tannaite made his authority, he referred to things to which a purchaser was likely to pay close attention, but that to which a purchaser is not going to pay close attention he does not list.”*
- I. *But don’t people object in this matter? And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: R. Hiyya says, “Just as leaven is good for dough, so blood is good for a woman”? And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority in the name of R. Meir, “Any woman who has a substantial menstrual flow has a large number of children”?*
- J. *Rather, say the matter in this language: he referred only to a matter for which purchaser is anxious to leap, but matters for which a purchaser is not anxious to leap he did not list.*

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

- B. *What is virgin-land? It is any that produces clods and the earth is not loose.*
- C. *If a potsherd is found in it, one may be certain that once it has been cultivated.*
- D. *If flint is found in it, it is certainly virgin soil.*

III.1 A. **A pregnant woman? Once it is known that the foetus is present.**

- B. **And how long does it take for the embryo to be discernible?**
- C. **Sumkhos says in the name of R. Meir, “Three months. Even though there is no absolute proof in Scripture for that proposition, there is at least an indication of it, as it is said, ‘And it came to pass about three months after that she was told that she was pregnant’ (Gen. 38:24)” [T. **Nid. 1:7A-C**].**
- D. *That’s what you call an indication? It is an explicit verse of Scripture, and a reliable one at that!*
- E. *It is because there are those who give birth at nine months, and those who give birth at seven [that this is not an absolute proof]. [We test the information of Scripture against observations of nature.]*

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

- B. **If a woman was assumed to be pregnant and produced a drop of blood and afterward she miscarried something that is not a human foetus [Bavli: an inflated object or something that could not sustained life]— lo, she remains as she presumably had been, so that sufficient for her is her time. And even though there is no scriptural proof of the matter, there is at least an allusion to it: “We were with child, we writhed, we have as it were brought forth wind” (Isa. 26:18) [T. **Nid. 1:6D-E**].**
- C. *That’s what you call an indication? It is an explicit verse of Scripture, and a reliable one at that!*
- D. *It is because the Scripture refers to males.*
- E. *An objection was raised [to the proposition that under the stated condition, it suffices to reckon her period from the time of her observation of the discharge, so that she is assumed to be in the condition of presumptive pregnancy]: if a woman*

was in hard labor [producing a flow of blood] for two days, and on the third day she aborted an inflated object or something that could not sustained life, lo, this is one who is classified as giving birth in the condition of a Zabah [bearing the uncleanness described at Lev. 15] [so she has to count seven days and bring the offering prescribed at Lev. 15 before she reverts to a condition of cleanness].

- F. *Now if you hold that this is a perfectly valid birth [9A], has not the All-Merciful declared clean the blood that flows in a painful labor right before birth?*
- G. Said R. Pappi , “Forget the issues of the twenty-four hours of retrospective uncleanness [=B], for that is only a rabbinical enactment.”
- H. *R. Pappa said, “The reason [that a woman who is pregnant treats her menstrual period as commencing only from the moment at which she sees blood and does not reckon a retrospective span of uncleanness] is that during pregnancy, a woman’s head feels heavy and her limbs too [on which account her menstrual flow disappears], and here too a woman’s head feels heavy and her limbs too.”*

III.3. A. R. Jeremiah addressed this question to R. Zira: “If a woman produced a drop of blood and afterward her foetus became discernible, *what is the law? Is she subject to retrospective uncleanness for a prior twenty-four hours since it is only know that her embryo was not discernible at the moment that she saw blood? Or perhaps, since the drop of blood was observed just before she discerned that she was pregnant, do we not assign retrospective uncleanness for a prior twenty-four hours?*”

- B. *He said to him, “Is not the operative consideration that a woman’s head feels heavy and her limbs too? But at the time that she saw the blood, her head did not feel heavy nor did her limbs.”*

III.4. A. A elder asked R. Yohanan, “If, during her pregnancy, a woman did not examine herself at the time of her fixed period, *what is the law? I am raising the question within the supposition of him who says that a woman’s obligation to examine herself at the occasion of her fixed period rests on the authority of the Torah. What is the ruling? Since the obligation to examine herself at the time of her fixed periods derives from the authority of the Torah, she has to have an examination? Or perhaps since her menstrual blood is suspended during this time, she does not have to have an examination?*”

- B. *He said to him, “You have learned on Tannaite authority: **R. Meir says, “If she was in hiding and the time of her period came and she did not examine herself, lo, this one is deemed clean, because fright suspends the blood.” [But during the seven clean days that must be counted by the man or woman that has a flux, or [the one day of cleanness to be counted] by her that awaits day against day — [during that time,] lo, these are in the assumption of being unclean] (M. Nid. 4:9H-L).** The operative consideration, therefore, is that she is subject to fright. Lo, if she is not subject to fright, and the time of her period came and she did not examine herself, lo, this one is deemed unclean. It follows that the obligation to examine oneself at the fixed time of one’s period derive from the authority of the Torah, and because the woman was subject to fright, her blood was suspended, and she did not have to examine herself. Here too her blood is suspended and she does not have to examine herself.”*

- IV.1 A. A nursing mother? Until she will wean her son. [If] she gave her son to a wet nurse, weaned him, or he died — R. Meir says, “She conveys uncleanness [to everything she touched] during the preceding twenty-four hours.” And sages say, “Sufficient for her is her time.”**
- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. **“A nursing mother whose infant died during the twenty-four months of nursing imparts uncleanness within the preceding twenty-four hour period or from one examination to the prior examination, as do all other women. Therefore if she goes on and nurses her infant, even during a period of five years, sufficient for her is her time,” the words of R. Meir.**
- D. **R. Judah and R. Yosé and R. Simeon say, “Sufficient for her is her time only during the twenty-four months in which it is normal to nurse the infant. Therefore if she goes on and nurses her infant even for five years, only the twenty-four months apply to her status [during which time alone she falls under the classification of the nursing mother] and beyond that time she imparts uncleanness within the preceding twenty-four hour period or from one examination to the prior examination” [T. Nid. 2:1A-D].**
- E. Now when you find occasion, you will note that, in the view of R. Meir, the menstrual blood decomposes and turns into milk [which is why the woman is not subject to menstrual uncleanness so long as she is breast feeding]. In the view of R. Judah, R. Yosé, and R. Simeon, for the first twenty four months, her limbs feel disjointed, and her strength does not return.
- F. *Why in the framing of the statement of R. Meir is “therefore” used?*
- G. *It is because of the “therefore” in the formulation of the statement of R. Yosé.*
- H. *And why the “therefore” in the formulation of the statement of R. Yosé?*
- I. *What might you have said? R. Yosé has two operative considerations here [the blood turns into milk, the woman’s limbs are disjointed]. So it is implied that there is only one.*
- J. *So too it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- K. **“The menstrual blood decomposes and turns into milk,” the words of R. Meir.**
- L. **R. Yosé says, “For the first twenty four months, her limbs feel disjointed, and her strength does not return.”**
- M. *Said R. Ilai, “What is the scriptural basis for the position of R. Meir? It is written, ‘Who can bring a clean thing from out of an unclean? Is it not the Only One?’ (Job. 14: 4).”*
- N. *And that of rabbis?*
- O. **Said R. Yohanan, “They explain that reference here is to semen, which is unclean, while the human being created from it is clean.”**
- P. **And R. Eleazar says, “This refers to the purification water, for the man who sprinkles that water, and the man on whom it is sprinkled, are clean, but one who otherwise touches it is unclean.”**
- Q. **But is the one who sprinkles purification water clean? And has it not been written, “And he who sprinkles the purification water shall**

wash his cloths” (Num. 19:21). [Therefore he is presumably unclean.]

- R. *What is the meaning of “who sprinkles...”? It is, “who touches.”*
- S. *But is it not written explicitly, “He who sprinkles is required to wash his clothes” (Num. 19:21), but “he who touches” is not required to wash his clothes!*
- T. *Rather, frame matters as follows: what is the meaning of “who sprinkles...”? It is, “he who carries.”*
- U. *Then why not write, “he who carries”?*
- V. *It is to imply that [one is made unclean only] if he carries the requisite volume of water that is required for sprinkling.*
- W. *That reply forms no problem to one who maintains that the valid act of sprinkling requires a fixed amount of water, but from the viewpoint of him who says that it does not require a fixed volume of water, what is there to be said?*
- X. *Even from the viewpoint of him who says that it does not require a fixed volume of water, that opinion pertains to the one who is sprinkled, but in regard to the utensil, a fixed volume of water is required. For so we have learned in the Mishnah: **How much must be in the water for it to be sufficient for sprinkling? Enough so that one may dip the tips of the buds and sprinkle. [R. Judah says, “They regard them [the buds] as though they were on a hyssop of brass which absorbs no water]” [M. Par. 12:5C-E].** That is in line with what Solomon said, “I said, I will get wisdom, but it was far from me” (Qoh. 7:23).*

V.1 A. Who is an old woman? Any woman for whom three periods have gone by without a flow near to the time of her old age:

- B. *What is the definition of **near to the time of her old age**?*
- C. *Said R. Judah, “It is any age at which a woman’s friends refer to her as old.”*
- D. *And R. Simeon says, [9B] “It is any woman whom people call her mother to her face, and she does not turn red.”*
- E. *R. Zira and R. Samuel b. R. Isaac —*
- F. *One said, “That is, any woman who does not mind.”*
- G. *The other said, “That is, any woman who does not turn red.”*
- H. *What is at issue between them?*
- I. *At issue between them is the case of a woman who turns red but who does not really mind.”*

V.2. A. What is the definition of a “period” [in the context of the Mishnah]?

- B. *Said R. Simeon b. Laqish in the name of R. Judah Nesiah, “An ordinary ‘period’ [in this context] is thirty days.”*
- C. *And Raba said R. Hisda said, “It is twenty days.”*
- D. *But they do not really differ, for the former authority reckons both the days of uncleanness [the menstrual period itself] as well as the days of cleanness [within*

the entire cycle], and the other authority does not reckon the days of uncleanness [within the cycle].

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

- B. **If an old lady missed three periods and then saw a drop of blood — sufficient for her is her time [and she does not reckon with retroactive uncleanness]. If she again missed three periods and saw a drop of blood, still sufficient for her is her time. If she again missed three periods and then saw a drop of blood, lo, she is classified with all other women. She imparts uncleanness for the prior twenty-four hours or from one examination to the prior examination [T. Nid. 1:11A-H].**
- C. And it is not only the rule [that after the third flow, the woman's uncleanness begins twenty-four hours prior] when she has noted the flow at perfectly regular intervals [e.g., ninety days apart], but even if she observed the flow at [Slotki:] successively decreasing intervals or increasing intervals [Slotki: irrespective of whether the first interval extended over ninety-three days, the second over ninety-two and the third only over ninety, or the first extended over ninety one days, the second over ninety-two, and the third over ninety-three], [the same rule applies].
- D. If you say, "even if she observed the flow at successively decreasing intervals or increasing intervals," *so it is not necessary to maintain that the rule pertains when she observed the flow at perfectly regular intervals. But, to the contrary, if the intervals are perfectly regular, she should then have established for herself a regular period at which her menstrual cycle begins, so that sufficient for her should be the uncleanness that commences from the moment at which her period starts. And should you say that the position before us represents the policy of rabbis who differ from R. Dosa, who say, "A woman who has a fixed time for the beginning of her menstrual cycle nonetheless imparts uncleanness to objects she has touched during the prior twenty-four hours," still, the opposite ordering of matters should be required, namely, not only if she observed the flow at successively decreasing intervals or increasing intervals, [the same rule applies], but even if she observed the flow at precisely the same intervals [the same rule applies].*
- E. *Then repeat as the Tannaite version:* Not only if she observed the flow at successively decreasing intervals or increasing intervals, [the same rule applies], but even if she observed the flow at precisely the same intervals [the same rule applies].
- F. *And if you prefer, I shall work matters out in the following way: "This is the sense of the statement: 'That is not if she observed the flow at precisely the same intervals, but only if she observed the flow at successively decreasing intervals or increasing intervals [does the same rule apply], for she then will have establish a fixed period for her menstrual cycle, in which case sufficient for her is her time [at the advent of the period, and not the preceding twenty-four hours,' and whose view does this represent? It is that of R. Dosa."*

VI.1 A. **R. Eliezer says, "Any woman for whom three periods have passed without her suffering a flow — sufficient for her is her time:"**

- B. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*

- C. **Said R. Eliezer to sages, “There is the case of a young girl in Haitalu, whose time had come to begin her menstrual period, and who nonetheless missed three periods, and the case came before sages, who ruled, ‘Sufficient for her is her time.’”**
- D. **They said to him, “It was an interim ruling, which does not provide definitive proof” [T. **Nid. 1:9C-D**].**
- E. *What is the pertinence of the claim that it was an interim ruling?*
- F. *There are those who say that it was a time of famine.*
- G. *There are those who say that she had prepared a large volume of foods requiring cultic cleanness, and sages were concerned about the needless loss of food that had been prepared in cultic cleanness.*
- H. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- I. **There was the case in which Rabbi acted in accord with R. Eliezer [who holds that the period of uncleanness begins with the appearance of the blood but not retroactively]. After he realized what he had done, he said, “R. Eliezer is worthy of being relied upon in an emergency.”**
- J. *What is the meaning of ‘After he realized what he had done’? If we should say that the law is not in accord with R. Eliezer but rather in accord with rabbis, then even in an emergency, how could he have acted in accord with him? Rather, is it not the case that a statement of the decided law was not set forth in accord with either this authority or that authority, and, when he realized that it was not a mere individual who differed from [Eliezer], but that the majority differed from him, he nonetheless observed, “R. Eliezer is worthy of being relied upon in an emergency.”*

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

- B. **A girl who has not reached her time for having her first period but who saw a drop of blood — at the first and second appearances of the blood, sufficient for her is her time [and there is no consideration of retroactive uncleanness]. But when she sees the third drop of blood, lo, she is classified with all other women, and she imparts uncleanness to what she has touched during the preceding twenty-four hour period or between one examination and the prior examination. If she missed her flow for three periods and then saw a drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time. If she missed yet a third period and then she saw a drop of blood, lo, she is classified with all other women, and she imparts uncleanness to what she has touched during the preceding twenty-four hour period or between one examination and the prior examination. When she reaches her time to have a menstrual period, at the first appearance of blood, sufficient for her is her time [and there is no consideration of retroactive uncleanness]. At the second appearance of blood, she imparts uncleanness to what she has touched during the preceding twenty-four hour period or between one examination and the prior examination. If three appearances have gone by for her, and then she observed a drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time [and there is no consideration of retroactive uncleanness] [T. **Nid. 1:8A-G**].**

- C. The master has said, **“If she missed her flow for three periods and then saw a drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time.” [10A]** *But then what is the rule if she again produces blood at the end of later, single cycles?* [Slotki: does it suffice for her to reckon her uncleanness from the time that she observes the discharge, or is her uncleanness to be retrospective?]
- D. Said R. Giddal said Rab, “The first time and the second, sufficient for her is the time of her period [without retroactive uncleanness], but the third time this happens, she imparts uncleanness for the prior twenty-four hours or from the present to the last examination.”
- E. **If three appearances have gone by for her, and then she observed a drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time:** *and then what is the rule if she again produces blood at the end of later, single cycles?*
- F. Said R. Kahana said R. Giddal said Rab, “The first time, sufficient for her is the time of her period [without retroactive uncleanness], but the second time this happens, she imparts uncleanness for the prior twenty-four hours or from the present to the last examination.”
- G. *Who is the authority for this ruling? It is Rabbi, takes the view that two occurrences mark a series so a presumption is established.*
- H. *Then note the further statement: **If three appearances have gone by for her, and then she observed a drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time [and there is no consideration of retroactive uncleanness].***
- I. *Is this not the view solely of R. Eliezer [that Rabbi adopted only reluctantly]? And should you say that it is indeed R. Eliezer, and, as to the matter of an interval of three cycles, Rabbi does adopt the view as R. Eliezer, does Rabbi really concur with him, since it was stated, “after he realized what he had done”?*
- J. *Rather, what we have is the view of R. Eliezer, and, [in respect to maintaining that a series is established by two occurrences], as to the matter of establishing a regular time for menstruation, he concurs with Rabbi.*

- VI.3.** A. As to a bloodstain that is found by one who has not yet reached the age of menstruation between the first and the second appearance of a discharge, it is clean.\ As to one that is found between the second and the third —
- B. Hezekiah said, “It is unclean.”
 - C. R. Yohanan said, “It is clean.”
 - D. Hezekiah said, “It is unclean,” *since, if the woman had seen blood, it would have been unclean, her bloodstain also is unclean.*
 - E. R. Yohanan said, “It is clean,” *since she has not established a presumption as to menstruation, her bloodstain also we do not declare to be unclean.*
 - F. **[10B]** *An objection was raised [to Hezekiah’s position] by R. Ilai: “What is the difference between this class of women and a virgin who is just married, whose blood is classified as clean?”*
 - G. Said to him R. Zira, “In the case of this one, it is common for her to produce secretions [from the hymeneal wound], while in the case of that one, it is not common for her to produce secretions.”

VI.4. A. Said Ulla said R. Yohanan in the name of R. Simeon b. Yehosedeq, “‘A young girl who had not reached the time for her menstrual period, who saw a drop of blood, on the first and second such occasions, her spit and pressure-uncleanness imparted by her in a public place [in a case in which we are not sure whether or not the girl is unclean] are deemed clean. Her bloodstain is also clean.’ *But I do not know whether he has made this statement on his own or in behalf of his master.*”

B. *What difference does it make?*

C. It has to do with dealing *with the opinion of an individual when there are two other authorities* [and the law would follow the majority. If this was his view in his own name, then it is Hezekiah as against Yohanan.]

D. *When Rabin and all those who go down to the sea arrived, they repeated it as the ruling of R. Simeon b. Yehozedeq.*

VI.5. A. Said R. Hilqiah bar Tubi, “A young girl who had not reached the time for her menstrual period — even if a discharge of menstrual blood continued for seven days running, it is regarded as a single appearance of blood.”

B. *Since the language is used, “even if a discharge of menstrual blood continued for seven days running,” it is hardly necessary to state that that is the law where there was an interruption in the flow [followed by a renewal of the discharge].*

C. *To the contrary*, if there is a break in the flow, it would make the discharge into two distinct observations!

D. *Then read as follows:* A young girl who had not reached the time for her menstrual period — if a discharge of menstrual blood continued for seven days running, it is regarded as a single appearance of blood.

E. Said R. Shimi bar Hiyya, “Blood that is dripping is not equivalent to seeing a drop of blood.”

F. *But lo, she sees the blood!*

G. *Then read as follows:* Blood that is dripping is not equivalent to seeing a drop of blood, but rather, it is equivalent to a broken up flow.

H. *Does it follow that to qualify as a continuous flow, it has to run like a river?*

I. *Then read as follows:* it is only like a continuous discharge [and therefore is counted as a single observation, and the girl is not subject to retrospective uncleanness (Slotki)].

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

B. It is the established presumption that before Israelite women have reached puberty, they are assumed to be clean, and women do not examine them.

C. After they have reached puberty, lo, they are presumed to be unclean, and women do examine them.

D. R. Judah says, “They do not inspect them by hand, since that may injure them, but they anoint them with oil on the inside and dry them off on the outside, and the inspection then proceeds automatically.”

VII.1 A. **R. Yosé says, “A pregnant woman and a nursing mother for whom three periods have passed — sufficient for them is their time:”**

B. *A Tannaite authority repeated as the Tannaite version before R. Eleazar, “R. Yosé says, ‘A pregnant woman and a nursing mother for whom three cycles have*

passed — she suffices to reckon their period of uncleanness only from the time of observing a flow.”

- C. *He said to him, “You have given as the subject of the sentence two categories, but you have provided a predicate for only one. Perhaps the sense is that it is a pregnant woman who is also a nursing mother? And by the way, then you have presented the further implication that the days of pregnancy supplement those in which she is nursing, and those of nursing supplement those of the pregnancy.”*
- D. *And that is in line with what has been taught on Tannaite authority: the days of pregnancy supplement those in which she is nursing, and those of nursing supplement those of the pregnancy. How is this the case? If there was an interruption in the menstrual cycle of two periods during her pregnancy, and of one during her nursing period, or of two during her nursing period and one during her pregnancy, or of one and a half during her pregnancy and one and a half during her nursing, they join together to form a three-time interruption.”*
- E. *Now there is no problem in understanding why the days of pregnancy supplement those in which she is nursing, for such a thing can happen when she is nursing. But how is it possible that those of nursing supplement those of the pregnancy?*
- F. *If you wish, I shall explain that it could happen in the case of a dry birth [without bleeding], and if you prefer, I shall explain that menstrual blood and birth blood are to be distinguished [and the latter does not interrupt the interval of the former (Slotki)], and if you wish, I shall explain, read only the initial clause [about the days of pregnancy supplementing those of nursing, and delete the other].*

VIII.1 A. And of what case did they speak when they said, “Sufficient for her is her time”? In the case of the first appearance of a drop of blood. But in the case of the second appearance of such a drop of blood, she conveys uncleanness to whatever she touched during the preceding twenty-four hours.

- B. Said Rab, “The statement [**But in the case of the second appearance of such a drop of blood, she conveys uncleanness to whatever she touched during the preceding twenty-four hours**] applies to all the listed cases.”
- C. And Samuel said, “It refers only to the virgin and the old lady, but as to the pregnant woman and the nursing mother, throughout all the days of pregnancy or through all the days of nursing, it is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness not retroactively but only from the time of observing a flow.”
- D. And so said R. Simeon b. Laqish, “The statement [**But in the case of the second appearance of such a drop of blood, she conveys uncleanness to whatever she touched during the preceding twenty-four hours**] applies to all the listed cases.”
- E. And R. Yohanan said, “It refers only to the virgin and the old lady, but as to the pregnant woman and the nursing mother, throughout all the days of pregnancy or through all the days of nursing, throughout all the days of pregnancy or through all the days of nursing, it is sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness not retroactively but only from the time of observing a flow.”
- F. *The dispute follows the lines of a dispute among Tannaite versions:*
- G. “A pregnant woman or a nursing mother who were [11A] bleeding profusely — throughout all the days of pregnancy or through all the days of nursing, it is

sufficient for them to reckon uncleanness not retroactively but only from the time of observing a flow,” the words of R. Meir.

- H. R. Yosé and R. Judah and R. Simeon say, “The ruling that sufficient for them is the time of their actually seeing a drop of blood applies only to the first appearance of a drop of blood, but the second imparts uncleanness for the preceding twenty-four hours or from one examination to the prior examination.”

IX.1 A. But if she saw the first flow by reason of constraint [through abnormal causes], even in the case of the second drop of blood, sufficient for her is her time.

- B. Said R. Huna, “If she jumped and saw a drop of blood, and again jumped and saw a drop of blood, and again jumped and saw a drop of blood, she has established a pattern for herself as to a fixed period.”
- C. *For what purpose? If I should say that it is in respect to particular days, lo, on every day on which she did not jump, she also did not see a drop of blood. So it is a fixed pattern as to jumping.*
- D. *But has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: In any case in which a fixed period is established by reason of a flow by reason of constraint, even if this can be shown to have happen any number of times, does not establish a fixed period for a woman. Does this not mean, she does not establish a fixed period at all? No, what it means is, she has not established a fixed period with respect to days alone or jumping alone, but only as regards to days and jumping jointly, a fixed period is well established [so any Sunday on which she jumped is deemed a fixed period].*
- E. *It is perfectly obvious then that no fixed period can be established in regard to days alone [without reference to other causes for the same event, not related to the day of the week, so why teach the obvious]!*
- F. *Said R. Ashi, “We deal with a case, for example, she jumped on Sunday and saw blood, jumped on a Sunday and saw blood, and on the Sabbath she jumped and did not see blood, and then on Sunday she saw blood without jumping. What might you have supposed? Retrospectively the rule has been demonstrated that it was the day and not the jumping that had caused the flaw, we thus are informed that it was the jumping on the Saturday that was the cause for the blood on Sunday, and the reason that the woman did not see the blood on Saturday was that the jumping was premature.”*
- G. *Another version:*
- H. Said R. Huna, “If she jumped and saw a drop of blood, and again jumped and saw a drop of blood, and again jumped and saw a drop of blood, she has established a pattern for herself as to a fixed period in respect to days but not in respect to jumping.”
- I. *How so?*
- J. *Said R. Ashi, “We deal with a case, for example, she jumped on Sunday and saw blood, jumped on a Sunday and saw blood, and then on Sunday she saw blood without jumping. What might you have supposed? Retrospectively the rule has been demonstrated that it was the day and not the jumping that had caused the flow.”*

I.1 enriches the discussion of Eliezer's position in the Mishnah, and No. 2 carries forward the same matter. Obviously, this vast amplification of No. 2 has no bearing upon our Mishnah and has been composed around a problem of its own. II.1 moves on to a complement drawn from the Tosefta, which is then analyzed, with No. 2 a brief addition to explain an item in the fore-going. III.1, 2 proceed to amplify the Mishnah by reference to the Tosefta's treatment of the same matter. No. 3 asks a question pertinent to the theme of the Mishnah and consequent upon the materials of Nos. 1, 2. No. 4 pursues a further pertinent question. The knowledge of the woman who interrogates the rabbi extends to principles of an analytical character; she requires not merely a ruling, let alone information. IV.1 commences, once more, with Tosefta's complement. The secondary analysis occupies the remainder of the unit. V.1 glosses the Mishnah with a minor piece of information. No. 2 glosses further. No. 3 proceeds to the Tosefta's secondary expansion of the Mishnah's basic rule. VI.1 follows the same pattern, simply complementing the Mishnah's language with further materials of Tannaite provenience. No. 2 follows suit. Then Nos. 3, 4, 5 add tertiary cases, built on the principles and topics now in place. No. 6 is a singleton. VII.1 and VIII.1 complement the Mishnah, the latter with an amplification of Yosé's position. IX.1 provides a complement to the Mishnah's rule. So the pattern for the entire set of Mishnah-paragraphs is unitary and coherent.

1:7

- A. **Even though they have said, "Sufficient for her is her time," (1) she must nonetheless examine herself,**
- B. **except for (a) the menstruating woman,**
- C. **and (b) the woman who is sitting in the blood of her purifying [after having given birth].**
- D. **And (2) she makes use of test rags,**
- E. **except for (a) the one who is sitting in the blood of her purifying,**
- F. **and (b) a virgin, whose drops of blood are clean.**
- G. **And (3) twice must she [who has a fixed period] examine herself:**
- H. **(a) in the morning and (b) at twilight,**
- I. **and (c) when she prepares for sexual relations.**
- J. **Beyond these examinations, women of the priestly caste [must examine themselves] when they eat heave offering.**
- K. **R. Judah says, "Also: when they finish eating heave offering."**
- I.1** A. **[Even though they have said, "Sufficient for her is her time," she must nonetheless examine herself,] except for the menstruating woman:**
- B. *for during the days of her menstrual period, she does not require examination anyhow.*
- C. *That explanation poses no problem to the position of R. Simeon b. Laqish, who has said, "A woman may establish for herself a fixed period during the zibah-days [the eleven days between menstrual periods, in which any flow of blood is deemed to be classified as the flux to which reference is made in Lev. 15]. [Slotki: if she suffered a menstrual flow on the first day of two consecutive months and also on*

the fifteenth day, which is one of the eleven days of the zibah-period of the same months, while on the first of the third month she had no flow and on the fifteenth of that month she again observed a flow, on account of the three observations on the fifteenth of the successive month she establishes for herself a settled period, which will be on the fifteenth of the subsequent months. That is so even though the first two observations had taken place during the eleven zibah-days.] But a woman may not establish for herself a fixed period during the menstrual days” [so there is no reason to conduct an examination during her menstrual days].

- D. *But in the view of R. Yohanan, who has said, ““A woman may establish for herself a fixed period during the menstrual days,” she should examine herself. Perhaps she may establish a fixed period for herself!*
- E. *R. Yohanan will say to you, “When I maintain the position that I do, it is a case in which a woman has observed the flow from a previously closed source [Slotki: so that the flow first appeared on the first day of three consecutive months and on the twenty-fifth day of the second month. In this case the first day of each subsequent month is regarded as the settled period, because the first two of the three discharges originated from a closed source, there having been no flow before, while the last, though it appeared after the menstruation had begun on the twenty-fifth of the previous months, is also regarded as originating from a closed source, since the discharge on the twenty fifth, which originated from a closed source, is deemed to be the commencement of the flow on the first of the month that followed it.] But if she saw the flow from an open source, I did not take that position. [Slotki: in our Mishnah even the first observation would be made during the menstruation, when the source is already open].”*

II.1 A. and the woman who is sitting in the blood of her purifying [after having given birth].

- B. *It is taken as premise that the reference is to one who desires to continue in “the blood of purification” [but had not yet commenced at that time; a woman after childbirth who concluded the seven unclean days after a male or the fourteen after a female].*
- C. *That [ruling, that no examination is necessary on the seventh or the fourteenth day, as the case may be] poses no problems to the position of Rab, who has held, “[The blood that is discharged within forty or eighty days after childbirth and held to be clean] all derives from the same source, which the Torah has declared to be unclean [during the seven or fourteen days after childbirth] and clean [during the subsequent days, respectively, which are the days of the blood of purification]. The Torah has declared the blood unclean, and the Torah has declared the blood clean.” There are no problems to that position.*
- D. *But from the viewpoint of Levi, who has said, “They are two distinct sources of blood,” she surely should examine herself! For it is possible that still that original source of blood, which is unclean, has not yet ceased to flow [Slotki: unless there was an examination and it had been ascertain that there was a definitive break in the flow at the end of the seven or fourteen days respectively, so the woman might still be unclean even though the unclean period has passed].*

- E. *Levi will say to you, “Whose position is represented here? It is [11B] the House of Shammai: “[The blood that is discharged within forty or eighty days after childbirth and held to be clean] all derives from the same source.”*
- F. *But does the Tannaite authority who formulated our passage present as anonymous [and therefore authoritative] the position of the House of Shammai?*
- G. *He presented the rule anonymously, and then there is a difference of opinion, and in any case in which there is an anonymous statement of the law followed by a dispute, the decided law is not in accord with the anonymous version of the law.*
- H. *But if you prefer, I shall say: why has it been said, “who desires to continue in the blood of purification”? What might have you ruled? That she should make an examination, since she may thereby establish a fixed period for herself? Thus we are informed that [no examination is required] since we do not establish a settled period by appeal to a regular discharge in the from the source when it is clean for a regular source that is unclean.*
- I. *Now that poses no problem from the viewpoint of Levi, who has held that there are two sources. But according to Rab, who maintains that there is only a single source of blood, what is there to be said? Why should she not examine herself, since if she does, she may establish a settled period for herself?*
- J. *Even so, we do not establish a settled period by appeal to a regular discharge in the from the source when it is clean for a regular source that is unclean.*

III.1 A. And twice must she [who has a fixed period] examine herself:

- B. *We have learned there in the Mishnah: **A girl whose time for seeing [blood] [age of menstruation] had not yet come and who was married — the House of Shammai say, “They give her four nights.” And the House of Hillel say, “Until the wound will heal” [M. Nid. 10:1A-C].** [Intercourse is permitted for four nights, or until the wound heals, and the blood that flows in the interim is not classified as menstrual blood and unclean.]*
- C. *Said R. Giddal said Samuel, “This teaching applies only when the bleeding on account of intercourse has not stopped, though she later on produced a discharge of blood that may not have been on account of intercourse; but if the bleeding through intercourse had stopped and she then observed a discharge, she is unclean [for the blood is now menstrual]. If one night has passed without her having sexual relations, and then she saw a drop of blood, she is unclean. If the color of the blood has changed, she is unclean [by reason of the new type of blood, assumed to be menstrual].”*
- D. *R. Jonah raised an objection: “**and a virgin, whose drops of blood are clean.** But why should that be the case? Let her make use of test rags, since it is possible that the color of her blood has changed [and she will be unclean, by the assumption just now stated]?”*
- E. *Said Raba, “Let me cite the opening clause: **Even though they have said, “Sufficient for her is her time,” (1) she must nonetheless examine herself, except for (a) the menstruating woman, and (b) the woman who is sitting in the blood of her purifying [after having given birth].** These are the ones who do not require examination, but a virgin whose blood is clean does require an examination. It follows that there are mutual contradictions in these rules.”*

- F. *The one [Jonah's ruling] speaks of a case in which it is assumed that the penis is the cause of the change [and a test after intercourse would prove nothing, since no test is made after intercourse, none is required before (Slotki/Rashi)], and the other ruling [Raba's] speaks of a case in which there had been no sexual relations [Slotki: and a change of color would clearly indicate that the wound is healed and the blood is menstrual]."*
- G. *So too it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- H. *Under what circumstances? When the bleeding on account of intercourse has not stopped, though she later on produced a discharge of blood that may not have been on account of intercourse; but if the bleeding through intercourse had stopped and she then observed a discharge, she is unclean [for the blood is now menstrual]. If one night has passed without her having sexual relations, and then she saw a drop of blood, she is unclean. If the color of the blood has changed, she is unclean [by reason of the new type of blood, assumed to be menstrual].*

IV.1 A. And twice must she [who has a fixed period] examine herself: in the morning and at twilight, and when she prepares for sexual relations.

- B. *Said R. Judah said Samuel, "This rule pertains only to the question of preparing food in a state of cleanness, but as to having sexual relations with her husband, she is permitted to do so [so that even a woman who has no fixed period has no obligation to examine herself prior to having sexual relations with her husband]."*
- C. *That is self-evident, since we have learned in the Mishnah: **in the morning!***
- D. *But if the statement was made at all, it had to do with the concluding portion of the same rule: **when she prepares for sexual relations.***
- E. *Said R. Judah said Samuel, "This rule pertains only to a woman who is preparing food in a state of cleanness," for, since she requires an examination as to her condition for preparing food in a state of cleanness, also requires an examination for her condition in respect to having sexual relations with her husband, but if she is not engaged in preparing food in a state of cleanness, she does not require an examination prior to having sexual relations.*
- F. *What is it that he then presumes to teach us, for we have learned: **All women are assumed [without further examination] to be clean for their husbands [M. Nid. 2:4A].***
- G. *Had I derived the rule from that statement of the Mishnah, I would have assumed that that rule pertains in particular to a woman who has a fixed period, but a woman who does not have a fixed period requires an examination.*
- H. *But does not the Mishnah-paragraph before us refer to a woman who has a fixed period [so how can Samuel have applied the law to a woman who has no fixed period]?*
- I. *Our Mishnah-paragraph refers to both a woman who has a fixed period and to a woman who does not have a fixed period, and this is what it teaches us: even though a woman has a fixed period, since she requires an examination for the purpose of preparing food in a condition of cultic cleanness, she also requires an examination for purposes of having sexual relations with her husband.*
- J. *But has not Samuel made this point already? For said R. Zira said R. Abba bar Jeremiah said Samuel, "A woman who does not have a fixed period is forbidden to*

have sexual relations until she examines herself,” *and we have interpreted that statement to refer to a woman who is engaged in preparing food in a condition of cultic cleanness.*

- K. *The one statement was derived by inference from the other.*
- L. *So too has it been taught as a Tannaite statement:*
- M. Under what circumstances? That is in the case of an examination in connection with preparing food in a state of cultic cleanness. But as to having sexual relations with her husband, she is permitted to do so [without a further examination].
- N. Under what circumstances? That is in the case in which he left her in a condition of assumed cleanness. But if he left her in a condition of assumed uncleanness, she remains thereafter assumed to be unclean until she informs him, “I am clean.”

IV.2. A. [12A] *R. Zira addressed this question to R. Judah: “What is the law on a woman’s having to examine herself prior to sexual relations with her husband?”*

- B. He said to him, “Let her not examine herself.”
- C. But if she does examine herself, what difference does it make?
- D. If so, the husband’s conscience will trouble him, and he will desist from sexual relations.

IV.3. A. *R. Abba addressed this question to R. Huna: “What is the law as to a woman’s examining herself immediately after intercourse, so as to impose liability on the husband for a sin-offering [should it turn out that he has inadvertently had sexual relations with a menstruating woman]?”*

- B. *He said to him, “Is it possible for a woman to examine herself immediately after intercourse? Has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: ‘What is the span of time that encompasses the period ‘immediately after intercourse’? This may be compared to the case of an attendant [the penis] and the witness [the test-rag] who stand at the side of the lintel [the vagina]: the witness goes in as soon as the attendant leaves, and that is the interval that marks the span of time, “immediately after intercourse” concerning which rabbis have said that one must wipe oneself off, but not examine oneself?’”*
- C. Rather, the question is this: what is the law as to her wiping herself off?
- D. *There are those who say that this is what he asked him: “What is the law as to a woman’s examining herself immediately after intercourse, so as to impose liability on the husband for a suspensive guilt offering?”*
- E. He said to him, “She should not examine herself.”
- F. But if she does examine herself, what difference does it make?
- G. If so, the husband’s conscience will trouble him, and he will desist from sexual relations.

V.1 A. and when she prepares for sexual relations:

- B. Said R. Ammi said R. Yannai, “And this [**use of test rags, twice, in the morning and at twilight, and when she prepares for sexual relations**] is the testing-rag employed by women of virtue.”
- C. *Said R. Abba bar Mammel to R. Ammi, “A Tannaite version has it as, **must...examine herself**, so how can you say that this involves [only] virtuous women?”*

- D. He said to him, "It is because I say, 'Whoever carries out the teachings of sages is called 'virtuous.'"
- E. *Said Raba, "Is one who does not carry out the teachings of sages merely lose the title of 'virtuous,' but not be called wicked?"*
- F. Rather, said Raba, "As to the really virtuous women, the testing rag with which they examine themselves before one act of sexual relations they do not utilize before another act, but those who are not markedly virtuous examine themselves with one and the same rag, and it does not bother them."

V.2. A. *Reverting to the body of the prior passage [IV.1J]:*

- B. Said R. Zira said R. Abba bar Jeremiah said Samuel, "A woman who does not have a fixed period is forbidden to have sexual relations until she examines herself."
- C. *Said R. Zira to R. Abba bar Jeremiah, "It is the one who has no fixed period who has to have an examination, but if she does have a fixed period she does not have to have an examination?"* [Slotki: but how could this assumption be held since our Mishnah prescribes an examination while speaking of a woman who has a fixed period?]
- D. *He said to him, "If she has a fixed period, then, when she is awake, she requires an examination, but when she is asleep, she does not have to have an examination. But if a woman does not have a fixed period, then, whether she is awake or asleep, she does require an examination."*
- E. *Said Raba, "Why should he not say to him: if she does have a fixed period, then, as to preparing food requiring cultic cleanness, she does require an examination, but as to her husband, she does not require an examination, and if she does not have a fixed period, then even for having sexual relations with her husband, she also requires an examination? And since he did not reply to him in these terms, it follows that Samuel takes the view that in no case does a woman have to have an examination prior to having sexual relations with her husband."*

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

- B. Wives of ass-drivers, workers, and those who come from the house of mourning or a house of feasting are deemed in regard to their husbands to be presumed clean, so that the husbands may come and stay with them, whether they are asleep or awake.
- C. Under what circumstances is this the rule? When they left them in the presumption that they were clean. But if they had left them in the assumption that they were unclean, then under all circumstances they are held to be unclean until the wife shall say to the husband, "I am clean."
- D. *Now how did Samuel interpret this passage? If the passage speaks of a woman who has a fixed period, then the rule governing the woman when she is awake poses a problem to him, and if the law speaks of a woman who does not have a fixed period, then, whether she is awake or whether she is asleep, it is a problem.*
- E. In point of fact the context is a woman who has a fixed period, but since the husband has propositioned her, there is no more reliable examination than that [for if she did not know that she was cleaned, she would not have consented to the proposition].

V.4. A. Said R. Pappa to Raba, “What is the rule as to actually acting in accord with this Tannaite version?”

B. **[12B]** He said to him, “Brewer, no — for otherwise she would be repulsive in his view.”

V.5. A. Said R. Kahana, “I asked the members of the household of R. Pappa and of R. Huna b. R. Joshua, ‘When you come from the house of study, do the rabbis require an examination for you? And they told me no.’”

B. But why not ask the rabbis themselves?

C. Perhaps they made a more strict rule for themselves [than they applied to others].

V.6. A. Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:

B. “A woman who does not have a fixed time for her period is forbidden to have sexual relations and has no claim on a marriage-settlement nor on the usufruct of property administered by her husband nor to support nor to compensation for worn-out clothes, and the husband must divorce her and may not remarry her forever,” the words of R. Meir.

C. R. Hanina b. Antigonus says, “She uses two test rags when she has sexual relations. But they render her unfit [if they show blood] or fit [if they do not].” [None of the foregoing provisions pertain.]

D. In the name of Abba Hanan they have said, “Woe is her husband!”

E. “She is forbidden to have sexual relations:” lest she ruin him [since she may be menstruating when she has sexual relations with him].

F. “and has no claim on a marriage-settlement:” since she is not suitable for sexual relations, she has no claim on a marriage settlement.

G. “nor on the usufruct of property administered by her husband nor to support nor to compensation for worn-out clothes:” this is because all stipulations that are included in the agreed terms of the marriage-contract are equivalent in validity to the marriage-contract itself.

H. “and the husband must divorce her and may not remarry her forever:” that is obvious!

I. No, it requires explicit articulation, to cover a case in which later on she was healed. It might have been assumed that, under such conditions, he may remarry her. We are thereby informed that that is not the case. For sometimes she may go and marry someone else and then be healed, and he may say, ‘If I had known that that was going to be the case, then even had you given me a hundred manehs, I should never have divorced her,’ so the writ of divorce will turn out to be null, and her children from the subsequent marriage will be declared mamzerim.

J. “In the name of Abba Hanan they have said, ‘Woe is her husband:’”

K. There are those who say, “It was with regard to R. Meir that he made this statement, for Abba Hanan holds that the woman must be paid her marriage-settlement.”

L. There are those who say, “It was with regard to R. Hanina b. Antigonus that he made that statement, for Abba Hanan holds that sexual relations may not take place since she might cause her husband to sin.

- M. Said R. Judah said Samuel, "The decided law is in accord with R. Hanina b. Antigonos."
- N. *In what aspect? If it has to do with her being engaged with food requiring cleanness, lo, Samuel has already made that statement once, and if it is not in a matter having to do with her preparing food requiring cultic cleanness, lo, he has stated, "In any matter having to do with her sexual relations with her husband, she does not require examination." For said R. Zira said R. Abba bar Jeremiah said Samuel, "A woman who has no fixed period for her menstrual cycle is forbidden to have sexual relations unless she examines herself," and we have interpreted that statement to deal with a case in which she was taken up with the preparation of food requiring cultic cleanness.*
- O. *The authority who repeated the one as a Tannaite version is not the same who repeated the other as a Tannaite version.*

I.1 extends the implications of the cited rule of the Mishnah. The explanation is categorical and poses no problems. II.1 goes through exactly the same type of procedure, which is to examine the law of the Mishnah by appeal to principles that intersect but that are not explicitly addressed by the case before us. III.1 once more discerns the qualifying rules and their underlying premises; the entire substrate of facts and principles then emerges through the clarification of the Mishnah's simple rule. IV.1 again pursues the same line of inquiry. Nos. 2, 3 pursue further questions of clarification and extension, going over the themes of No. 1. V.1 provides a minor gloss but then raises the question of whether this practice is merely recommended or absolutely required. No. 2 reviews a passage cited in No. 1. Nos. 3, 4 develop the discussion further, and No. 5 continues the discussion which is seamless. No. 6 then introduces a further tradition pertinent to the situation of a woman with, or without, a fixed cycle.