

II.

BAVLI TRACTATE TAANIT CHAPTER TWO

FOLIOS 15A-18B

2:1

- A. The manner of fasting: how [was it done]?
- B. They bring forth the ark into the street of the town and put wood ashes on the ark, on the head of the patriarch, and on the head of the head of the court.
- C. And each person puts [ashes] on his head.
- D. The eldest among them makes a speech of admonition: “Our brothers, concerning the people of Nineveh it is not said, ‘And God saw their sackcloth and their fasting,’ but, ‘And God saw their deeds, for they repented from their evil way’ (Jon. 3:10).
- E. “And in prophetic tradition it is said, ‘Rend your heart and not your garments’ (Joe. 2:13).”

2:2

- A. They arise for prayer.
- B. They bring down before the ark an experienced elder, who has children, and whose cupboard [house] is empty, so that his heart should be wholly in the prayer.
- C. And he says before them twenty-four blessings:
- D. the eighteen said every day, and he adds six more to them.
- E. And these are they:
- F. Remembrance verses, Shofar verses,
- G. “In my distress I cried to the Lord and he answered me...” (Psa. 120),
- H. and, “I will lift up my eyes to the hills...” (Psa. 121),
- I. and, “Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Lord...” (Psa. 130),
- J. and “A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed” (Psa. 102).

2:3

- A. R. Judah says, “He did not have to say Remembrance verses and Shofar verses.
- B. “But in their stead he says, ‘If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence’ (1Ki. 8:37ff.).
- C. “And, ‘The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah concerning the drought’ (Jer. 14:1ff.).
- D. “And he concludes each of them with its appropriate ending.”

2:4

- A. For the first [ending] he says, “He who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, redeemer of Israel.”

2:5

- A. For the second he says, “He who answered our fathers at the Red Sea will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who remembers forgotten things.”

2:6

- A. For the third he says, “He who answered Joshua at Gilgal will answer you and hear the sound of your cry thus day. Blessed are you, O Lord who hears the sound of the shofar.”

2:7

- A. For the fourth he says, “He who answered Samuel at Mizpeh will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who hears a cry.”

2:8

- A. For the fifth he says, “He who answered Elijah at Mount Carmel will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who hears prayer.”

2:9

- A. For the sixth he says, “He who answered Jonah in the belly of the fish will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who answers prayer in a time of trouble.”
- B. For the seventh he says, “He who answered David and Solomon, his son, in Jerusalem, will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who has mercy on the land.”

2:10

- A. M'SH B: In the time of R. Halapta and R. Hananiah b. Teradion someone passed before the ark and completed the entire blessing, and they did not answer after him, “Amen.”

- B. “Sound the sustained sound on the shofar, O priests! Sound the sustained sound on the shofar!
- C. “He who answered Abraham our father at Mount Moriah will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day.
- D. “Sound the quavering sound on the shofar, sons of Aaron! Sound the quavering sound on the shofar!”
- E. “He who answered our fathers at the Red Sea will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this very day.”
- F. And when the matter came before sages, they ruled, “We practiced that custom only at the Eastern Gate [and on the Temple Mount].”

2:11

- A. “On the first set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch [on duty that week] fast but do not complete the entire day [in fasting], and the members of the father’s house [on duty that particular day] did not fast at all.
- B. “On the second set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch fast and complete the day in fasting, and the members of the father’s house [on duty that day] fast but do not complete the day in fasting.
- C. “On the seven last fast days, these and those fast and complete the fast day,” the words of R. Joshua.
- D. And sages say, “On the first three fast days these and those did not fast at all.
- E. “On the second set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch fast but do not complete the day in fasting, and the members of the father’s house [on duty that day] did not fast at all.
- F. “On the last seven fast days, the members of the priestly watch fast and complete the fast days. and the members of the father’s house fast and do not complete the fast day.”
- G. The members of the priestly watch are permitted to drink wine by night but not by day,
- H. and the members of the father’s house are not [permitted to drink wine] either by day or by night.
- I. Members of the priestly watch and members of the public delegation are prohibited to get a haircut and to wash their clothes.
- J. But on Thursday they are permitted to do so,
- K. because of the honor owing to the Sabbath.

2:12

- A. As to any [day concerning which] in the Fasting Scroll [Megillat Taanit] it is written [in Aramaic:] “not to mourn” —
- B. on the day before, it is prohibited to mourn.
- C. On the day after. it is permitted to mourn.
- D. R. Yosé says, “On the day before it and also on the day after, it is prohibited to mourn.”

- E. [On those days concerning which in the fasting scroll it is written] “not to fast,”
- F. on the day before and on the day after, it is permitted to fast.
- G. R. Yosé says, “On the day before it, it is prohibited, on the day after, it is permitted.”

2:13

- A. They do not decree a fast for the community in the first instance for a Thursday,
- B. so as not to disturb market prices.
- C. But the first three fasts are on Monday, Thursday, and Monday.
- D. And the second set of three fast days are on Thursday, Monday, and Thursday.
- E. R. Yosé says, “Just as the first ones do not begin on a Thursday, so also the second set and the final set [do not begin on a Thursday] “

2:14

- A. They do not decree a fast for the community to take place on the New Moon, Hanukkah, or Purim.
- B. “But if they had begun [a sequence of fasts], they do not break off, “ the words of Rabban Gamaliel.
- C. Said R. Meir, “Even though Rabban Gamaliel said that they do not break off, he would concede that they also do not complete [fasting for the whole day].”
- D. And so is the rule for the Ninth of Ab which coincides with a Friday.

I.1 A. The manner of fasting: how [was it done]? They bring forth the ark into the street of the town and put wood ashes on the ark, on the head of the patriarch, and on the head of the head of the court:

- B. *Does this pertain even to the first six fasts? Then there is the following contradiction:* On the first three fasts and on the second they enter the synagogue and pray exactly as they pray through the entire year, but on the seven last fasts they take the ark out into the street of the city and put ash on the ark and on the head of the patriarch and on the head of the head of the court, and everybody takes and puts ashes on his own head.
- C. *Said R. Pappa, “When we have learned our Mishnah-rule, we have learned the Tannaite law only in connection with the last seven fasts.”*

II.1 A. and on the head of the head of the court:

- B. *Then the Tannaite rule goes on to say, And each person puts [ashes] on his head.*
- C. *But is this really true? And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: Rabbi says, “When it is a matter of paying honor we begin with the most honored, where it is a case of applying censure we begin with the least.*
- D. “[When it is a matter of honor:] ‘And Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and to Ithamar’ (Lev. 10: 6).

- E. “But where it is a case of applying censure: first the snake was cursed, then Eve, finally Adam.”
- F. *Here too it is a matter of acknowledging hierarchical precedence, for by this act people say to them, “You have the dignity to beseech mercy for all of us.”*

III.1 A. And each person puts [ashes] on his head:

- B. *Said R. Adda, “Since everybody else puts ashes on his own head, why shouldn’t the patriarch and head of the court also take ashes and put them on their own heads — what distinguishes them that someone else should take and put ashes on their heads?”*
- C. Said R. Abba of Caesarea, “Humiliating oneself is not the same thing [16A] as being humiliated by others.

III.2 A. And where do they put the ashes?

- B. Said R. Isaac, “On the place where the Tefillin are placed: ‘to appoint to them that mourn in Zion, to give them a garland for ashes’ (Isa. 61: 3).”

III.3 A. [They bring forth the ark into the street of the town and put wood ashes on the ark:] Why do they go out into the street?

- B. Said R. Hiyya bar Abba, “To say, ‘We cried out in private and were not answered. We shall humiliate ourselves in public.’”
- C. R. Simeon b. Laqish said, “We have gone into exile. May our exile atone for us.”
- D. *What is at issue between them?*
- E. *At issue between them is when they go into exile from one synagogue to another synagogue.*

III.4 A. And why do they bring the ark into the street of the town?

- B. Said R. Joshua b. Levi, “To say: We had a utensil that we kept hidden, and now, because of our sins, it has been humbled.”

III.5 A. And why do they put on sackcloth?

- B. Said R. Hiyya bar Abba, “To say, ‘Lo, we are regarded as no better than cattle.’”

III.6 A. And why do they put wood ashes on the ark?

- B. Said R. Judah b. Pazzi, “That is to say, ‘I will be with him in trouble’ (Psa. 91:15).”
- C. R. Simeon b. Laqish said, “‘In all their afflictions he was afflicted’ (Isa. 63: 9).”
- D. *Said R. Zira, “To begin with, when I saw the rabbis put wood ash on the ark, my whole body trembled.”*

III.7 A. And why does each person put [ashes] on his head?

- B. *There is a dispute between R. Levi bar Hama and R. Hanina on this matter.*
- C. One said, “‘Lo, we are regarded before you like ashes.’”
- D. The other said, “‘So that in our behalf he will remember the ashes of Isaac.’”
- E. *What is at issue between them?*
- F. *At issue between them is whether or not ordinary dirt can be used [which would serve for humiliation but not for calling to mind the binding of Isaac].*

III.8 A. Why do they go out to the cemetery?

- B. *There is a dispute between R. Levi bar Hama and R. Hanina on this matter.*

- C. One said, “‘Lo, we are regarded before you like corpses.’”
- D. The other said, “‘So that the dead may seek mercy for us.’”
- E. *What is at issue between them?*
- F. *At issue between them is going to a gentile cemetery.*

III.9 A. What is the meaning of “Mount Moriah”?

- B. *There is a dispute between R. Levi bar Hama and R. Hanina on this matter.*
- C. One said, “The mountain from which instruction [*hora’ah*] went forth to Israel.”
- D. The other said, “The mountain from which fear went forth to the idolators.”

IV.1 A. The eldest among them makes a speech of admonition: “Our brothers, concerning the people of Nineveh it is not said, ‘And God saw their sackcloth and their fasting,’ but, ‘And God saw their deeds, for they repented from their evil way’ (Jon. 3:10). And in prophetic tradition it is said, ‘Rend your heart and not your garments’ (Joe. 2:13):”

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. If there is an elder, the elder speaks, and if not, a sage speaks, and if not, a man of stature speaks.
- D. *In referring to an elder, does the framer intend to mean, even though he is not a sage?*
- E. *Said Abbaye, “This is the sense of the statement: if there is an elder who is a sage, the elder who is a sage speaks, and if not, then a sage, and if not, then a man of stature.”*

IV.2 A. [He says,] “Our brethren, it is not the wearing of sackcloth and the fasting that make the difference, but repentance and good deeds make the difference. For so we find of the men of Nineveh, that, in their connection **the people of Nineveh it is not said, ‘And God saw their sackcloth and their fasting,’ but, ‘And God saw their deeds, for they repented from their evil way’ (Jon. 3:10).”**

IV.3 A. “Let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and beast” (Jon. 3: 8):

- B. *What did they do?*
- C. *They set beasts by themselves and children by themselves and said before him, “Lord of the world, if you don’t have mercy on us, we shall not have mercy on these.”*

IV.4 A. And let them cry mightily to God” (Jon. 3: 8):

- B. *What did they say?*
- C. They said before him, “Lord of the world, One who is submissive and one who is not submissive, one who is righteous and one who is wicked — who gives way to whom?” [Rabbinowitz: Man cannot force God to yield to him, God should yield to the prayer of a man who humiliates himself before him].

IV.5 A. “Let them turn everyone from his evil way and from the violence that is in their hands” (Jon. 3: 8):

- B. *What is the meaning of “and from the violence that is in their hands”?*

- C. Said Samuel, “Even if someone stole a beam and built it into his villa, he should tear down the entire villa to the ground and restore the beam to the original owner.”
- D. Said R. Adda bar Ahbah, “A man who has committed a sin and confessed it but does not repent — to what is he to be compared? To a man who holds on to a dead creeping thing in his hand [and immerses in an immersion-pool to seek cultic cleanness], for even if he immerses in all the water in the world, the immersion does him no good. If he tossed it away, however, once he has immersed in the minimum of forty seahs of water, his immersion accomplishes his purpose, as it is said, ‘But who confesses and forsakes them shall obtain mercy’ (Pro. 28:13), and, ‘Let us lift up our heart with our hands to God in heaven’ (Lam. 3:41).”

V.1 A. They arise for prayer. They bring down before the ark an experienced elder, who has children, and whose cupboard [house] is empty, so that his heart should be wholly in the prayer:

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. When they arise for reciting the Prayer, even if there is present an elder and sage, they do not bring him down before the ark, but a man who is fluent in his prayer.
- D. R. Judah says, “It is someone heavily burdened [with a family] who has nothing, who has hard labor in the field and whose house is empty, whose youth is unblemished [following Rabbinowitz], who is meek and humble and accepted by the people, who has a nice way and who has a lovely voice and is expert in declaiming the Torah, prophets, and writings, at repeating [traditions] of Midrash and laws and narratives and expert in all of the blessings.”
- E. *[Upon hearing that statement, the assembled] rabbis fixed their glance upon R. Isaac bar Ammi.*
 - F. Someone heavily burdened [with a family] who has nothing is really the same as whose house is empty!
 - G. Said R. Hisda, “It refers to one whose house is empty of all transgression.”
 - H. “whose youth is unblemished.” said Abbaye, “This is one who did not make a bad name for himself in his youth.”

V.2 A. “My heritage has become to me like a lion in the forest, she has uttered her voice against me, therefore I have hated her” (Jer. 12: 8):

- B. *What is the meaning of* she has uttered her voice against me?
- C. Said Mar Zutra bar Tobiah said Rab, and some say, said R. Hama said R. Eleazar, “This refers to the representative of the community who descends to the ark even though he is unworthy.”

VI.1 A. And he says before them twenty-four blessings: the eighteen said every day, and he adds six more to them. [And these are they: Remembrance verses, Shofar verses, “In my distress I cried to the Lord and he answered me...” (Psa. 120), and, “I will lift up my eyes to the hills...” (Psa. 121), and, “Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Lord...” (Psa. 130), and “A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed” (Psa. 102)]:

- B. *Are there only six, and aren't there seven, as we have learned in the Mishnah: For the seventh he says, “He who answered David and Solomon, his son, in*

Jerusalem, will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who has mercy on the land."

- C. *Said R. Nahman bar Isaac, "What is the meaning of **seventh** here? It is the seventh of the longer benedictions."* [This refers to the seventh benediction of the Prayer, which concludes, "who redeems Israel." On fasts for rains, it was augmented with the language, "He who answered." Then there were six additional, special blessings as set forth in the Mishnah's rule, thus seven long benedictions (Rabbinowitz).]
- D. *For it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- E. **At the blessing, "...who redeems Israel," the prayer is extended, and at the conclusion is added, "He who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah will answer you and listen to the sound of your outcry this very day. Blessed are you, redeemer of Israel," They answer after him, "Amen." Then the synagogue precentor says to them, "Sound the shofar, sons of Aaron, sound the shofar with a sustained sound," and then they proceed, "He who answered our fathers on the Red Sea will answer you and hear the sound of your outcry this day. Blessed is he who remembers what has been forgotten. And they answer after him, "Amen." Then the synagogue precentor says to them, "Sound the shofar with a broken sound, sons of Aaron, sound the shofar with a broken sound." And so too with all the other blessings, with one he says, "Sound the shofar with a sustained sound," and with the other, "Sound the shofar with a broken sound" [cf. T. [Ta. 1:13](#)].**
- F. Under what circumstances does this procedure apply? In the provinces. But in the sanctuary, that is not how it was done. That is because people do not answer, "Amen," in the sanctuary.
- G. And how do we know that people do not answer, "Amen," in the sanctuary?
- H. For it is said, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting, and let them say, Blessed be your glorious name that is exalted above all blessing and praise" (Neh. 9: 5).
- I. Might one suppose that there is only one form of praise after all the blessings?
- J. Scripture says, "Exalted above all blessing and praise," which is to say, "Give him praise after every blessing."
- K. Then what does one say in the sanctuary?
- I. "Blessed be the Lord God, God of Israel, from eternity to eternity. Blessed be the Redeemer of Israel." And they answer after him, "Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom forever and ever."
- J. **The precentor of the synagogue says to them, "Sound the shofar, priests sons of Aaron, sound the shofar with a sustained sound. Then he says, "He who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah will answer you and listen to the sound of your outcry this very day. Blessed are you, Lord, God of Israel, who remembers things that have been forgotten. They answer after him, "Amen. Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom for ever and ever. The precentor of the synagogue says to them, "Sound the shofar with a broken**

sound, sons of Aaron, sound the shofar with a broken sound.” And so too with all the other blessings, with one he says, “Sound the shofar with a sustained sound,” and with the other, “Sound the shofar with a broken sound.” And so did R. Halapta conduct matters in Sepphoris, and R. Hanania b. Teradion in Sikhni [cf. M. 2:10/T. Ta. 1:13].

- K. And when the matter came before sages, they ruled, “We practiced that custom only at the Eastern Gate [and on the Temple Mount]” [M. 2:10F].
- L. *And there are those who say that it has been taught as a Tannaite statement in the following way:*
- M. He says before them twenty-four blessings, eighteen that are said every day, to which he adds six more.
- N. And those additional six blessings — where does he recite them?
- O. Between “who redeems Israel” and “who heals the sick.”
- P. And he amplifies that blessing [heals the sick], and the congregation answer, “Amen” after each and every blessing.
- Q. Under what circumstances does this procedure apply? In the provinces. But in the sanctuary, they would say, “Blessed be the Lord God, God of Israel, from eternity to eternity. Blessed be the Redeemer of Israel.” And they do not answer after him, “Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom forever and ever.”
- R. Why not?
- S. That is because people do not answer, “Amen,” in the sanctuary.
- T. And how do we know that people do not answer, “Amen,” in the sanctuary?
- U. For it is said, “Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting, and let them say, Blessed be your glorious name that is exalted above all blessing and praise” (Neh. 9: 5).
- V. “Exalted above all blessing and praise,” which is to say, “Give him praise after every blessing.”

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

- B. **When completing the first blessings, he says, “Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed is the redeemer of Israel.” And they answer after him, “Blessed be the name of his kingdom forever and ever. And the precentor of the synagogue says, “Sound a sustained sound on the shofar, o priests, sound a sustained sound,” and then he says, “He who answered Abraham at Mount Moriah will answer you and hear the sound of your outcry on this very day.”**
- C. **When completing the second set, he says, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed is he who remembers things that have been forgotten,” and they answer after him, “Blessed be the name of his glorious kingdom forever and ever,” and the precentor of the synagogue says, “Sound a quavering sound, sons of Aaron, sound a quavering sound on the shofar,” and he says, “He who answered our fathers on the Red Sea will answer you and hear the outcry of your supplication this very day,” and they sound a sustained and a quavering and a sustained sound on the shofar, and so with each and every blessing. In the case of one**

he says, “Sound a sustained sound,” and in the case of the other he says, “Sound a wavering sound,” until all of the blessings have been said. And so did R. Halapta conduct matters in Sepphoris, and R. Hanania b. Teradion in Sikhni [cf. M. 2:10/T. Ta. 1:13].

- D. And when the matter came before sages, they ruled, “We practiced that custom only at the Eastern Gate [and on the Temple Mount]” [M. 2:10F].

VII.1 A. R. Judah says, “He did not have to say Remembrance verses and Shofar verses. But in their stead he says, ‘If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence’ (1Ki. 8:37ff.). And, ‘The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah concerning the drought’ (Jer. 14: 1ff.). And he concludes each of them with its appropriate ending:”

- B. *Said R. Adda of Jaffa, “What is the operative consideration for R. Judah? It is that people say remembrance-verses and shofar-verses [17A] only on the New Year and on the Day of Atonement of the Jubilee year, and in war time.”*

VIII.1 A. For the first [ending] he says, “He who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, redeemer of Israel:”

- B. *A Tannaite statement:*

- C. There are those who reverse the order and assign “crying” to Elijah and “praying” to Samuel.

- D. *Now there is no problem with the case of Samuel, since in reference to Samuel, the words “prayer” and “crying out” are used. But with reference to Elijah, while “prayer” is used, “crying out” is not used!*

- E. [Elijah’s statement,] “Answer me, O Lord, answer me” (1Ki. 18:37) is an expression of outcry.

IX.1 A. For the sixth he says, “He who answered Jonah in the belly of the fish will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who answers prayer in a time of trouble.” For the seventh he says, “He who answered David and Solomon, his son, in Jerusalem, will answer you and hear the sound of your cry this day. Blessed are you, O Lord, who has mercy on the land:”

- B. *Now didn’t Jonah come after David and Solomon? So why is he mentioned first in sequence?*

- C. *Because the framer of the liturgy wished to conclude with, “Blessed are you, Lord, who has mercy on the Land” [of Israel, and David and Solomon bore responsibility for its welfare].*

IX.2 A. *A Tannaite statement:*

- B. In the name of Sumkhos they said, “Blessed are you...who humbles the haughty.”

X.1 A. “On the first set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch [on duty that week] fast but do not complete the entire day [in fasting], and the members of the father’s house [on duty that particular day] did not fast at all. On the second set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch fast and complete the day in fasting, and the members of the father’s house [on duty that day] fast but do not complete the day in fasting. On the seven

last fast days, these and those fast and complete the fast day, “ the words of R. Joshua. And sages say, “On the first three fast days these and those did not fast at all. On the second set of three fast days the members of the priestly watch fast but do not complete the day in fasting, and the members of the father’s house [on duty that day] did not fast at all. On the last seven fast days, the members of the priestly watch fast and complete the fast days. and the members of the father’s house fast and do not complete the fast day.” The members of the priestly watch are permitted to drink wine by night but not by day, and the members of the father’s house are. not [permitted to drink wine] either by day or by night:

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. On what account have they said, **The members of the priestly watch are permitted to drink wine by night but not by day?**
- D. It is a precaution lest the liturgy weigh heavily on the men of the father’s house so that they will be asked to come and help them.
- E. On what account have they said, **the members of the father’s house are. not [permitted to drink wine] either by day or by night?**
- F. It is because they are perpetually engaged with the liturgy.
- G. On this basis they have said, “Any priest who is able to discern the exact date of his priestly watch and of his father’s house’s priestly watch, and knows for certain that his father’s house is assigned for duty that day is forbidden to drink wine that entire day. In the case of one who is able to discern the exact date of his priestly watch but not the exact date of his father’s house’s watch, but who knows for certain that his father’s house is assigned for duty is forbidden to drink wine that entire week. If he is not able to discern his priestly watch and the priestly watch of his father’s house, but he knows that his father’s house is assigned duty there, he is forbidden to drink wine through the entire year.”
- H. Rabbi says, “I say, ‘He is forbidden to drink wine forever. But what can I do. For what alleviates his situation [the cessation of the animal offerings] also ruins his situation [there being no further priestly responsibilities of weight].”¹
- I. *Said Abbaye, “In accord with which authority do priests these days drink wine? It is in accord with Rabbi.”*

XI.1 A. Members of the priestly watch and members of the public delegation are prohibited to get a haircut and to wash their clothes. But on Thursday they are permitted to do so, because of the honor owing to the Sabbath:

- B. *What is the operative consideration?*
- C. Said Rabbah bar bar Hannah said R. Yohanan, “It is so that they should not enter the week of their priestly service in a slovenly state.”

XI.2 A. Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:

- B. A king gets a haircut every day, a high priest on Fridays, an ordinary priest once in thirty days.
- C. A king gets a haircut every day: *What is the pertinent proof-text?*
- D. Said R. Abba bar Zabeda, “Said Scripture, ‘Your eyes shall see the king in his beauty’ (Isa. 33:17).”

- E. A high priest on Fridays: *What is the pertinent proof-text?*
- F. Said R. Samuel bar Nahman said R. Yohanan, "Since the priestly watches change [each Friday]."
- G. An ordinary priest once in thirty days: *how do we know it?*
- H. *It derives from a verbal analogy established by the appearance of the word for "to allow locks to grow" in the context of the Nazirite and in the context of the priests. Of the priests it is written, "Neither shall they shave their heads nor allow their locks to grow, they shall only poll their heads" (Eze. 44:20), and of the Nazirite, "He shall be holy, he shall let the locks of his hair of his head grow long" (Num. 6: 5) — so just as in the latter case, what is at issue is the growth over thirty days, so here what is at issue is the growth over thirty days.*
 - I. *And as to the Nazirite himself, how do we know that fact?*
 - J. Said R. Mattenah, "A Nazirite vow that is otherwise not defined lasts for thirty days. How do we know? Scripture said, "...will be...", and the letters of the Hebrew word for 'will be' add up to thirty in numerical value."
 - K. *Said R. Pappa to Abbayye, "But perhaps this is the sense of the All-Merciful: [in stating, nor allow their locks to grow] that the priests should not let the hair grow at all?"*
 - L. *He said to him, "Had Scripture stated, 'nor let their hair grow long,' matters would have been as you say. But since it is written, 'nor allow their locks to grow,' the rule is, they may let their hair grow but they may not let it grow too long."*
 - M. *If so, then at this time [with the Temple in ruins] the rule should also be the same!*
 - N. *No, it is comparable to the matter of drinking wine. Just as in the matter of drinking wine, it is forbidden to do so at the time of coming into the Temple, but at times of not coming into the Temple, there is no prohibition, so here too [the rule is the same].*
 - O. *Has it not been taught on Tannaite authority: Rabbi says, "I say, 'He is forbidden to drink wine forever. But what can I do. For what alleviates his situation [the cessation of the animal offerings] also ruins his situation [there being no further priestly responsibilities of weight].'" And said Abbayye, "In accord with which authority do priests these days drink wine? [17B] It is in accord with Rabbi." From that statement, it is to be inferred that from the perspective of the rabbis, it is forbidden for priests to drink wine even now. And for them what is the governing consideration? It is the hope:*

quickly may the house of the sanctuary be rebuilt, so that we shall need a priest who is suitable to conduct the liturgy, and we should find none!

- P. *[Not at all]. In the present case it is possible for the priest to get a haircut on the spot and go into the Temple.*
- Q. *Well, then, in the case of drunken priests, too, it is possible that they will take a nap and then go into the Temple.*
- R. That is in line with what R. Ammi bar Abba said, “A short walk or a little sleep take away the effects of wine.” *That is in line with R. Aha’s statement, “A short walk or a little sleep take away the effects of wine.”*
- S. *But in that regard has it not been stated, Said R. Nahman said Rabbah bar Abbuha, “That statement applies to one who has drunk no more than a quarter-log of wine, but if someone has drunk more than a quarter-log, a walk makes him all the more tired, and sleep will cause all the more drunkenness.”*
- T. *R. Ashi said, “Those priests who are drunk defile the sacred service, so the rabbis made a decree against priests’ drinking wine. Those whose hair is too long do not defile the service, so the rabbis made no decree against that condition.”*
- U. *An objection was raised: **The following priests are subject to the death-penalty [if they participate in the cult]: those who have excessively long hair and those who are drunk [T. Ker. 1:5C].** Now as to the drunk ones, that is in line with the verse of Scripture, “Drink no wine or strong drink, you or your sons with you, so that you do not die” (Lev. 10: 9). But what is the proof text for those with excessively long hair?*
- V. *The ones who are drunk are comparable to the ones with long hair. It is written, “Neither shall they shave their heads nor let their locks grow long,” followed by, “Neither shall they drink wine” (Lev. 10: 9). This establishes an analogy between those that let the hair grow too long and those that get drunk. Just as drunkenness [during the sacred service] is subject to the death-*

penalty, so participating in the rite with excessively long hair likewise is subject to the death-penalty. *And on the same basis:* Just as priests who are drunk desecrate the sacred service, so priests with excessively long hair desecrate the sacred service.

W. *No. When an analogy is drawn, it has to do with the death penalty, but not with the profanation of the cult.*

XI.3 A. *Said Rabina to R. Ashi, “As to this teaching [that priests whose hair is too long should not officiate and are subject to the death-penalty if they do], before Ezekiel came along, who stated it?”*

B. *[The reply of Ashi:] “And in accord with your reasoning [that there should have been a source prior to Ezekiel], what do you make of what R. Hisda said? [R. Hisda said] ‘This matter we did not learn from the Torah of Moses, until Ezekiel came along and taught it to us: “No alien, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh shall enter my sanctuary to serve me” (Eze. 44: 9). Now, before Ezekiel came along, who taught it?’ But it was learned as a tradition, and Ezekiel came along and supplied scriptural support for the tradition, and here too, it was a tradition, and Ezekiel came along and supplied a scriptural basis for it.”*

XII.1 A. *As to any [day concerning which] in the Fasting Scroll [Megillat Taanit] it is written [in Aramaic:] “not to mourn — on the day before, it is prohibited to mourn. On the day after, it is permitted to mourn:*

- B. *Our rabbis have taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. *These are the days on which there is to be no fasting, and on some of them also, mourning is forbidden as well:*
- D. *from the new moon [first] until the eighth day of Nisan, during which the Daily Whole Offering was set up, mourning is forbidden;*
- E. *from the eighth of Nisan until the close of the Festival of Passover, during which time the date for the Festival of Pentecost was reestablished, fasting is forbidden.*

- XII.2** A. The master has said: *from the new moon [first] until the eighth day of Nisan, during which the Daily Whole Offering was set up, mourning is forbidden:*
- B. *Why say, “from the new moon,” rather say, from the second of Nisan, and as to the new moon itself, it is a festival day and in any event forbidden for mourning!*
- C. Said Rab, “That formulation was required only to extend the prohibition to the preceding day.”
- D. *But the preceding day also should be forbidden, since it is the day before the anticipated new moon!*
- E. *The requirement of observing the new moon derives from the Torah, and laws deriving from the Torah require no additional stringencies [to assure that they are observed].*
- F. *For it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- G. As to any day that is inscribed in the Fasting Scroll, on the day prior to those days and on the day after those days, it is forbidden [to mourn]. As to Sabbaths and Festivals, mourning is forbidden on the day prior to their advent but on the day afterward it is permitted to do so.
- H. Now what’s the difference between the one and the other? These derive from the teachings of the Torah, and laws deriving from the Torah require no additional stringencies [to assure that they are observed]. The others derive from the teachings of scribes, and laws deriving from teachings of the scribes do require additional stringencies [to assure that they are observed].

- XII.3** A. The master has said: *from the eighth of Nisan until the close of the Festival of Passover, during which time the date for the Festival of Pentecost was reestablished, fasting is forbidden:*
- B. *Why say, “until the close of the Festival of Passover”? Why not say simply, until the Festival, and since the Festival itself is a festival period, mourning is forbidden at that time anyhow.*
- C. Said R. Pappa, “It is in line with what Rab said, [18A] ‘That formulation was required only to extend the prohibition to the preceding day.’” Here too, that formulation was required only to extend the prohibition to the preceding day.”
- D. *In accord with the view of what authority does that position conform?*
- E. *It conforms to the position of R. Yosé, who has said, “It is forbidden to mourn both on the day prior and on the day following the specified occasions.”*
- F. *If that is the rule, it should be forbidden to mourn also on the twenty-ninth day of Adar also — why do you determine to focus on the consideration that it is the day before the Daily Offering was established, when you can derive the rule governing that day from the fact that it is the day after the twenty-eighth of Adar.*
- G. *For it has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- H. *On the twenty-eighth of that [month, that is, Adar], good news came to the Jews, that they need not separate themselves from [practice of] the law.’ For the government had decreed that they*

may not involve themselves with [study and practice of] Torah, that they may not circumcise their sons, and that they must profane the Sabbath. What did Judah b. Shammua and his associates do? They went and took council with a certain matron with whom all of the notables of Rome were familiar. She said to them, ‘Tonight, come and cry [to the Roman government] for help!’ That night, they came and cried out: ‘In the eyes of [God in] heaven, are we not your brothers? And are we not all the children of a single father? And are we not all the children of a single mother? How are we different from every other people and language that you enact harsh decrees upon us?’ Now, as a result [the government] annulled those [decrees], and [as for] that same day—they designated it a feast.

- I. Said Abbaye, “That formulation was required only to deal with the case of a month that is full [that has thirty days, not twenty-nine]. [Rabbinowitz: in that case the thirtieth of Adar would be the last day of the month and could only be included in the restriction on the ground that it precedes the first of Nisan and not that it follows the twenty-ninth of Adar, since a day, the twenty-eight, intervenes].”
- J. R. Ashi said, “You may even maintain that it pertains to a month that is lacking [and is only twenty-nine days]. On a day following a festival day fasting alone is forbidden, but mourning is permitted, but as for the twenty-ninth of Adar, situated between two festival days, it is treated as though it were a festival day itself, with mourning forbidden on that day too.”

XII.4 A. The master has said: *from the eighth of Nisan until the close of the Festival of Passover, during which time the date for the Festival of Pentecost was reestablished, fasting is forbidden:*

- B. *Why formulate the rule as, from the eighth of Nisan? Why not say, from the ninth day, and the eighth day itself will be forbidden for mourning, for it is the day on which the Daily Whole Offering was established [and so is one of the eight festival days listed in any case]?*
- C. *“The eighth day is stated” for this reason: should it happen that the seven festival days be abolished [e.g., should it be necessary for some calamity to fast on those days anyhow], the eighth day of the month itself would be forbidden for fasting, for it would be the first day on which the date of the Festival of Pentecost was definitely established.*
- D. *Now that you’ve gone that far, then as to the twenty-ninth too, should it ever happen that the twenty-eighth of Adar be rescinded from its status as a festival day, then the twenty-ninth would remain forbidden, since it is the day before the day on which the Daily Offering was established.*

XII.5 A. *It has been stated:*

- B. R. Hiyya bar Assi said Rab [said], “The decided law accords with R. Yosé [at XII.3.E: It is forbidden to mourn both on the day prior and on the day following the specified occasions].”

- C. And Samuel said, “The decided law conforms with the view of R. Meir.”
- D. *But did Samuel make any such statement? And has it not been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- E. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, “Why does [the Fasting Scroll] repeat the language, ‘on them,’ two times? It is to say to you that fasting prior to the specified days is forbidden but permitted afterward.” And said Samuel, “The decided law is in accord with Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel.”
- F. *To begin with he took the view that, since there is no Tannaite authority who adopts a lenient position as does R. Meir, he said, “the decided law is in accord with R. Meir.” But when he heard the tradition attributed to Rabban Simeon that takes a still more lenient position, he said, “The decided law accords with Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel.”*
- F. And so said Bali said R. Hiyya bar Abba said R. Yohanan, “The decided law is in accord with R. Yosé.”
- G. *Said R. Hiyya to Bali, “Let me explain to you that when R. Yohanan said, ‘The halakhah is in accord with R. Yosé,’ his statement pertained to the matter of not fasting.”*
- H. And did R. Yohanan make such a statement? And did not R. Yohanan say, “The decided law is in accord with the unattributed Mishnah-rule.” And we have learned in the Mishnah: **Even though they have said, “they push it up and they do not postpone [the reading of the Scroll of Esther than the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar],” [on the days on which they read the Scroll of Esther] [18B] they are permitted to hold a lamentation for the dead, to call fasts and to give gifts to the poor [M. Meg. 1:3F-G].** *Now to what does that statement pertain? Should we say it applies to those that should read the Esther-Scroll on the fifteenth of Adar and read it on the fourteenth? But is fasting permitted on that day? Is it not written in the Fasting-Scroll, “The fourteenth and the fifteenth of Adar are days of Purim, on which mourning is not permitted,” on which Raba commented, “It was necessary. It was necessary to make mention of both dates to make explicit that what is forbidden on the one day is equally forbidden on the other.” Then might it refer to those who are supposed to read the Megillah on the fourteenth, who read it on the thirteenth of Adar? In that case — that is Nicanor’s Day on which fasting is forbidden! If it speaks of those who should read it on the fourteenth and read it on the twelfth — but that is Toreyanos’s day! So it can only refer to those who ought to read on the fourteenth, who*

read it on the eleventh — and yet it is explicit that mourning and fasting are permitted! [Rabbinowitz: But it is the day before Toreyanos's Day and according to Yosé the restriction is extended to it. how then can mourning and fasting be permitted thereon? How could Yohanan declare that the law is according to Yosé?]

- I. *No, it refers to those who should read it on the fourteenth of Adar, who read it on the twelfth, and, as to your objection that that is Toreyanos's day, that day [on which it was forbidden to fast or mourn], Toreyanos's day itself was annulled, because, on that same day, Shamayyah and Ahiah his brother were killed that day [so it is no longer a day of celebration].*
- J. That is in line with what R. Nahman did, for he ordained a public fast on the twelfth of Adar. Said to him rabbis, ““It's Toreyanos's day.”
- K. *He said to them, Toreyanos's day itself was annulled, because, on that same day, Shamayyah and Ahiah his brother were killed.*”
- L. But then let the restrictions remain valid for the day, since it is the day before Nicanor's day?
- M. Said R. Ashi, “Now that day itself have sages nullified [and it is no longer a festival day], so should fasting be forbidden that day because it is the day before Nicanor's Day?”

XII.6 A. *What is Nicanor's Day, and what is Toreyanos's day?*

- B. *It has been taught on Tannaite authority:*
- C. Nicanor was one of the Greek generals. Every day he would wave his hand toward Judah and Jerusalem and exclaim, “When is it going to fall into my power so I can trample it!”
- D. When the kingdom of the Hasmonean household grew powerful and conquered them, they cut off his thumbs and big toes and hung them at the gates of Jerusalem and said, “The house that spoke arrogantly, and the hands that waved toward Jerusalem — let vengeance be exacted from them.”

XII.7 A. *And what is Toreyanos's day?*

- B. They say: When Toreyanos sought to kill Lulianos and Pappos, brothers in Lydia, he said to them, “If you come from the people of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, let your God come and save you from my power as he saved Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah from the power of Nebuchadnezzar..”

- C. Said to him Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, “But they were completely righteous men and worthy of having a miracle done for them. And, moreover, Nebuchadnezzar was a worthy monarch and worthy of having a miracle done on his account. But that wicked man you is a common person and unworthy of having a miracle done on your account, and as for us, we deserve extermination from the Omnipresent. Now if you don’t kill us, the Omnipresent has at his disposal many others available to kill us, many bears and lions to attack and kill us. The Holy One, blessed be he, has handed us over into your power only because some day he is going to avenge our blood from your hand.”
- D. Even so, he killed them on the spot. People scarcely took a step from there before despatches came from Rome, and [in conformity with them] they split his skill with clubs.

XIII.1 A. They do not decree a fast for the community in the first instance for a Thursday, so as not to disturb market prices. But the first three fasts are on Monday, Thursday, and Monday. And the second set of three fast days are on Thursday, Monday, and Thursday. R. Yosé says, “Just as the first ones do not begin on a Thursday, so also the second set and the final set [do not begin on a Thursday] “ They do not decree a fast for the community to take place on the New Moon, Hanukkah, or Purim:

- B. What is the definition of “a beginning” [such that the sequence of fasts is not to be broken off]?
- C. R. Aha said, “Three fasts.”
- D. R. Assi said, “One.”
- E. Said R. Judah said Rab, “That is the position of R. Meir, which he set forth in the name of Rabban Gamaliel. But sages say, ‘One should fast and complete the fast.’”
- F. Mar Zutra expounded in the name of R. Huna, “The decided law is, ‘One should fast and complete the fast.’”