

III

BAVLI TRACTATE MEGILLAH CHAPTER THREE

FOLIOS 21A-25B

3:1

- A. One who reads the Megillah may stand or sit.
- B. If one [person] read it, [or] if two [people] read it, they have fulfilled their obligation.
- C. In a place where it is customary to recite a blessing [in conjunction with the reading], one recites a blessing; and [in a place where it is customary] not to recite a blessing, one does not recite a blessing.

3:2

- A. On the second [day of the week] and [on] the fifth, and on the Sabbath at the afternoon service, three read in the Torah.
- B. One may neither reduce them nor augment them; and one does not conclude [with a reading] from a Prophet.
- C. The one who begins the Torah [reading] and the one who concludes [it] recites a blessing, [the former] before it and [the latter] after it.

3:3

- A. On New Moons and on the non-sacred days of a festival, four read [in the Torah].
- B. One may neither reduce them nor augment them; and one does not conclude [with a reading] from a Prophet.
- C. The one who begins the Torah [reading] and the one who concludes [it] recites a blessing, [the former] before it and [the latter] after it.

3:4

- A. This is the generalization: Any [day] on which there is Musaf [i.e., either the additional service, or, in earlier times, an additional sacrifice] and is not a holiday, four read [in the Torah]:
- B. On a holiday, five.
- C. On Yom Kippur, six.

- D. **On a Sabbath, seven.**
- E. **One may not reduce them, but one may augment them; and one concludes [with a reading] from a Prophet.**
- F. **The one who begins the Torah [reading] and the one who concludes [it] recites a blessing, [the former] before it and [the latter] after it.**

- I.1 A. **[One who reads the Megillah may stand or sit:]** *One taught:* Which is not true of the Torah. [Standing is required of the Torah reader].
- B. From where [do we derive] these words [in A]?
- C. Said R. Abahu, that Scripture said: “And you stand here with Me” (Deu. 5:28).
- D. And said R. Abahu: Were it not that the verse is written, it would be impossible to say it, [namely] that, as it were, even The Holy One, Blessed Be He, is standing.
- E. And said R. Abahu: From where do we know that a rabbi should not sit on a couch and teach his student [sitting] on the ground? As is said, “And you stand here with Me” (Deu. 5:28).
- F. *The rabbis taught:* From the days of Moses until Rabban Gamaliel, they did not study Torah [in any posture] other than standing. After Rabban Gamaliel died, an infirmity descended into the world, and they used to study Torah sitting.
- G. *And that is as is taught:* **After Rabban Gamaliel died, the honor of Torah was lost (M Sot. end).**

- I.2 A. One scriptural passage says “and I sat on the mountain” (Deu. 9: 9), and another scriptural passage says “and I stood on the mountain” (Deu. 9:10).
- B. Said Rav: Standing [while] learning, sitting [while] reviewing.
- C. R. Hanina said: Neither standing nor sitting but bent.
- D. R. Yohanan said: [In this context,] *yeshiva* [translated above as “sitting”] only means “staying,” as is said, “and you stayed (*va-teshevu*) in Qadesh for many years” (Deu. 1:46).
- E. Rava said: Easy things [he learned] standing; difficult ones, [he learned] sitting.

- II.1 A. **If one [person] read it [in its entirety], [or] if two [people] read it, they have fulfilled their obligation (M 3:1B).**
- B. **[21b]** *One taught:* Which is not the case with the Torah.
- C. *The rabbis taught:*
- D. **Regarding the Torah, one [person] reads, and one translates, as long as one does not read and two translate.**
- E. **And regarding the Prophets, one [person] reads, and two may translate, as long as two do not read and two translate.**
- F. **And regarding Hallel, and the Megillah, even ten may read and [even] ten may translate [cf. T 3:20].**
- G. *Why? Since it is treasured, they [i.e., the listeners] pay attention and listen.*

- III.1 A. **In a place where it is customary to recite a blessing [in conjunction with the reading], one recites a blessing (M 3:1C1).**
- B. Said Abayye: They did not teach [this] other than [regarding the blessing recited] after it; but before it, there is a requirement to recite a blessing.

- C. As said Rav Judah, said Samuel: One recites a blessing over all commandments, as one is about to perform them.
- D. *How does one know that this [Hebrew word] 'over [here translated "about to"] is an expression of preceding?*
- E. Said Rav Nahman bar Isaac, said Scripture: "and Ahimaatz ran through the valley and passed [i.e., preceded the arrival of] the Kushite" (2Sa. 18:23).
- F. *Abayye said from here:* "and he passed before them" (Gen. 33: 3).
- G. *And if you wish, say from here:* "and their king passed before them, and God was at their head" (Mic. 2:13).

III.2 A. *What blessing does he recite before it?*

- B. *Rav Sheshet from Qatraziah happened to be before Rav Ashi, and he recited the blessings m-n-h [a mnemonic for 'al Miqra' megillah ("...on reading the Megillah"), she-'asah Nisim la-avoteinu... ("who performed miracles for our fathers..."), and she-heHeyanu... ("who has kept us alive...").*
- C. *What blessing should one recite after it?*
- D. Blessed are you Lord, our God, King of the Universe, the God who fights our battles, and judges our claims, and avenges our injustices, and reclaims payment from our enemies, and who metes out just reward to all our mortal enemies. Blessed are you, Lord, who claims [payment] for Israel from all their enemies.
- E. Rava said: ...the redeeming God.
- F. *Said Rav Pappa: Therefore we say both of them:* Blessed are you Lord, who claims [payment] for Israel from all their enemies, the redeeming God.

IV.1 . On the second [day of the week] and [on] the fifth, and on the Sabbath at the afternoon service, three read [in the Torah]. (M 3: 2)

- B. *To what do these three correspond?*
- C. Said Rav Assi: To Torah, Prophets, and Hagiographa.
- D. Rava said: To Priests, Levites, and Israelites.
- E. *But according to what Rav Shimi taught, [namely]: One does not reduce [the reading] to fewer than ten verses in the synagogue; [a verse beginning] va-yedaber, "And the Lord spoke," [e.g., to Moses] counts [among the ten], to what do these ten [verses] correspond?*
- F. Said R. Joshua ben Levi: To the ten idle men in the synagogue.
- G. Rav Joseph said: To the Ten Commandments that were said to Moses at Sinai.
- H. R. Levi said: To the ten praises David said in the book of Psalms.
- I. And R. Yohanan said: To the ten utterances through which the world was created.
- J. *Which are they?*
- K. [The cases of] *va-yomer*, "And God said," in [chapter 1 of] Genesis.
- L. *There are [only] nine.*
- M. [The word] *bereishit*, "In the beginning," is also an utterance, as is written, "Through the word of God the heavens were created; and through the spirit of His mouth, all of their hosts" (Psa. 33: 6).

- IV.2** A. Said Rava: A first [reader] who read four [verses] is praiseworthy; a second [reader] who read four [verses] is praiseworthy; a third [reader] who read four [verses] is praiseworthy.
- B. A first [reader who] read four [verses] is praiseworthy, as we have learned: **In three baskets of [a volume of] three seah [in which] they collect for [the needs of] the [Temple] chamber. And on them was written Aleph, Bet, Gimmel [cf. M Sheq. 3:2]** in order to know which was taken first, in order to sacrifice from it first, for the requirement is [fulfilled] through the first one.
- C. A middle [“second...” reader who] read four [verses] is praiseworthy, as is taught: “...near the lampstand they shine” (Num. 8: 2) teaches that their fronts face the western light, and the western light faces the Divine Presence. And said R. Nathan: From here [we conclude] that the middle one is praiseworthy.
- D. And a final [reader who] read four [verses] is praiseworthy, because one causes ascent in sacred matters and does not cause descent.
- E. *Rav Pappa happened to be at the synagogue of Avi Gover, and the first reader read four [verses], and Rav Pappa praised him.*

V.1 A. One may neither reduce them nor augment them (M 3:2B).

- B. *One taught:* The one who opens recites a blessing before it, and the one who closes recites a blessing after it [cf. M 3:2C].
- C. *And now, that everyone recites a blessing [both] before and after it, this is the reason that the rabbis instituted [it, namely]:* [It is] a regulation [made] because of those who enter and leave [in the middle of the reading].

VI.1. On New Moons and on the non-sacred days of a festival, four read in the Torah], etc. (M 3:3A).

- B. *Ulla bar Rav asked Rava:* How does one read the passage about the New Moon [in Num. 28: 1-15, which is divided into three paragraphs in the text, verses 1-8, 9-10, and 11-15]? What should we do [regarding] “Command the Israelites and say to them: My sacrifice, My food...” (Num. 28: 1-8), *which consists of eight verses?*
- C. *If two [people] read three verses each [i.e., Num. 28: 1-3 and 4-6], two [verses 7-8] remain [in the paragraph];* and one may not leave fewer than three verses [in an unfinished paragraph].
- D. *If we read four [verses] each, seven [verses, i.e., Num: 9-15] remain: Two are [the paragraph beginning] “And on the Sabbath day” (Num. 28: 9); and five are [the paragraph beginning] “And on your New Moons” (Num. 28:11).*
- E. *What should we do?*
- F. *If we read two from this one [i.e., verses 9-10] and one from that one [verse 11], [22a] [we are in violation of the rule]:* One does not begin a paragraph with fewer than three verses.
- G. *If he reads two [verses] from this paragraph [i.e., verses 9-10] and three from that one [verses 11-13], two remain.*
- H. He said to him: I never heard this; [but] I heard something like it, *as we have learned:*
- I. **On the first day [of special prayer services, (*ma`amadot*), one reads [the paragraph in the Torah beginning] “In the beginning” [i.e., Gen. 1:1-5] and**

[the paragraph beginning] “Let their be a firmament” [i.e., Gen. 1: 6-8; cf. M Sheq. 4:3]. And it is taught regarding it: [The paragraph in the Torah beginning] “In the beginning” [i.e., Gen. 1: 1-5] is [read] in two [parts] and [the paragraph beginning] “Let their be a firmament” [i.e., Gen. 1: 6-8] is [read] as one [cf. M Sheq. 4:3]. And we debated it [as follows]: It is fine [to read] [the paragraph beginning] “Let their be a firmament” [Gen. 1: 6-8] as one [piece], because there are three verses, but [how can one read the paragraph beginning] “In the beginning” [i.e., Gen. 1: 1-5] in two [parts]? There are [only] five verses]. And it is taught: **One who reads in the Torah should not read fewer than three verses [T 3:17].** And it is said regarding it: Rav said: He skips [backward, and repeats a verse] and Samuel said: He divides [a verse into two]. Why did he [i.e., Rav] not say “divide”? He thinks: Any verse that Moses did not divide, we do not divide. And Samuel said: We do divide [it]. But said R. Hananiah, the Torah Reader (*qara*): I had a great difficulty in the presence of R. Hanina the Great, and he did not permit me to divide [the verses] except for young students, since they were only for practice. What is the reason [to allow the sub-division] there? Because it is impossible [otherwise]. Here, too, it is impossible [otherwise].

J. And Samuel said: He divides [it]:

K. Why did he not say: He skips [backward]?

L. It is a rule [made in consideration for] those who enter [late] and leave [early, both of whom may think that the reading was done improperly].

M. They retorted: One may read a paragraph of six verses in two parts], and of five verses in one. If the first [reader] read three verses, the second one reads two verses from this paragraph and one from another paragraph [or: from the next one], and some say three [verses], because one should not begin a paragraph with fewer than three verses. And if it happens, according to the one who said “skip [backward, i.e., Rav],” he should skip; and according to the one who said “divide [the text, i.e., Samuel],” he should divide [it].

N. That [case] is different, because it is possible [to deal with the problem] in this way.

O. Said R. Tanhum, said R. Joshua ben Levi: The halakhah is like the [opinion of the] “some say.”

VI.2 A. And said R. Tanhum, said R. Joshua ben Levi: Just as one should not begin a paragraph with fewer than three verses, so one should not leave in a paragraph fewer than three verses.

B. It is obvious. Here, where the first Tannaite authority is lenient regarding the beginning [of a paragraph, for he permits adding one verse from the next paragraph], the “some say” are strict; with the [issue] of a remainder, where the first Tannaite authority is strict, should it not be even more so that the “some say” are strict?

C. Perhaps you should say: [Late] comers are prevalent; [early] leavers are not prevalent, for they [would have to] leave the Torah scroll and exit. It teaches us [it is correct, as stated above].

- D. *And why does the first Tannaite authority, who said that one cannot leave [unread fewer than three verses] because of those who leave, not say, as well, that the beginnings also [cannot be left unread], because of the late comers?*
- E. *They said: One who comes [late] asks [what is going on].*
- F. *Rabbah son of Rava sent to Rav Joseph: What is the halakhah?*
- G. *He [Rav Joseph] sent to him: The halakhah is [that one should] skip [backwards and repeat]; and the middle [reader] is who should do it.*

VII.1 A. This is the generalization: Any [day] on which Musaf is observed...[i.e., it has an additional service or, in earlier times, an additional sacrifice, and is not a holiday, four read in the Torah, M 3:4A]:

- B. *It was asked of them: [On] a public fast day [into] how many [portions should the reading be divided]? On a New Moon or [the non-sacred days] of a festival, where there is an additional sacrifice, four [read], but here [on fast days], when there is no additional sacrifice, not so [i.e., only three are appropriate]? Or perhaps, here, too, there is an additional prayer?*
- C. *Come and learn: On New Moons and the [non-sacred days of] a festival, four read [cf. M 3:3A].*
- D. *So [we may conclude that] on public fast days, [only] three [read].*
- E. *[By the same reasoning, we can argue the opposite.] The beginning statement [of the Mishnah] says: On the second [day of the week] and [on] the fifth, and on the Sabbath at the afternoon service, three read [in the Torah] (M 3:2A). So [on a public fast day] four [should read].*
- F. *[Not really;] it is impossible to learn this from here.*
- G. *Come and learn: Rav once happened to be in Babylonia on a public fast day. He rose [and] read in the [Torah] scroll. He opened, and recited a blessing; he closed and did not recite a blessing. All of the people fell on their faces [i.e., recited the penitential prayers], but Rav did not fall on his face. Since Rav read among Israel [i.e., he was the third and final reader, who was required to close with a blessing], why did he close without reciting a blessing? Is it not because someone else must read after him? [So four read on fast days.]*
- H. *No. Rav read among the priests [i.e., he was the first reader], for Rav Huna read among the priests. And even Rav Ami and Rav Assi, who were considered the priests of the Land of Israel, bow to Rav Huna.*
- I. *But [why did this apply to] Rav?*
- J. *There was Samuel, who was a priest and ordered him [to do it].*
- K. *Samuel also bowed to Rav, and Rav honored him [in return].*
- L. *And he did [this] in his presence; not in his presence, he did not do it.*
- M. *Here, too, it makes sense that Rav read [the Torah] among the priests, for if you think that he read among Israel, why did he recite a blessing before it?*
- N. *It was after the [introduction of the new] regulation.*
- O. *If so, he should have recited a blessing after it, as well.*
- P. *It was different where Rav lived, because people entered [late], but [22b] they did not leave [early].*

- Q. *Come learn:* This is the generalization: Any occasion in which there is a loss of work [time] for the people [at large from extra readers], like a public fast day or the Ninth of Av, three read [in the Torah]. And when there is no loss of work for the people [at large], like New Moons and the non-sacred days of a festival, four read [in the Torah].
- R. *Learn from this.*
- S. *Said Rav Ashi: But we do not learn this way, [for we learn]: This is the generalization: Any day on which there is Musaf [i.e., either the additional service, or, in earlier times, an additional sacrifice] and is not a festival, four read [in the Torah; M 3:4]. What does this include? Is it not to include a public fast and the Ninth of Av?.*

- VII.2** A. *And according to Rav Ashi, who is [the author of the opinion in the] Mishnah? It is neither the first Tannaite authority nor R. Yosé, as is taught:*
- B. If [the Ninth of Av] falls on the second [day of the week] or on the fifth, three read and one concludes [with the prophetic reading].
- C. [If] on the third or fourth [days of the week], one reads [in the Torah], and one concludes [with the prophetic reading].
- D. R. Yosé says: Three always read [in the Torah], and one concludes [with the prophetic reading].
- E. *So “This is the generalization” is problematic.*
- F. *No. It is to include a New Moon and [non-sacred days of a] festival.*
- G. *But this is clearly learned [in the Mishnah]: On New Moons and on [the non-sacred days of] a festival, four read in the Torah (M 3:3A).*
- H. *He merely gave a mnemonic, in order that you not think that a festival [proper] and the non-sacred days of a festival are similar.*
- I. *Rather take this [general] rule in your hand:*
- J. *Any [occasion] that adds something over [what is done on] another occasion, has an additional person [who reads in the Torah].*
- K. *Therefore, on a New Moon and [the non-sacred days of a] festival, when there is an additional sacrifice, four read. On a festival on which work is prohibited, five [read]. On Yom Kippur, [whose violations are] punishable by karet, six [read]. [The] Sabbath, which has prohibitions [whose violation carries a punishment] of stoning, seven [read].*

- VII.3** A. *Reverting to the body of the foregoing: Rav once happened to be in Babylonia on a public fast day. He rose [and] read in the [Torah] scroll. He opened and recited a blessing; he closed and did not recite a blessing. All of the people fell on their faces, but Rav did not fall on his face.*
- B. *Why did Rav not fall on his face?*
- C. *It was a floor of stones, and it is learned: “And a carved(?) stone you may not place in your land to bow down upon” (Lev. 26: 1) [means] you may not bow down on it in your land, but you may bow down on the stones of the Temple.*
- D. *This resembles [the teaching of] Ulla, for, said Ulla: The Torah did not prohibit other than a floor of stones.*

- E. *If so, why is Rav different? The same should apply to everyone else also.*
- F. *It [i.e., the floor of stones] was [only] in front of Rav.*
- G. *So he could have gone over to the congregation and fallen on his face [there].*
- H. *He did not want to disturb the congregation.*
- I. *And if you wish, say: Rav used to perform [bowing through] extension of the arms and legs, and according to the teaching of Ulla, for said Ulla: The Torah prohibited only [bowing done by] extension of the arms and legs [so Rav could not bow at all].*
- J. *But he could have fallen on his face without [bowing through] extension of the arms and legs.*
- K. *He did not want to change his [regular] practice.*
- L. *And if you wish, say: An important man is different, and [he conducted himself] according to the teaching of R. Eleazar, for said R. Eleazar: An important person is not allowed to fall on his face, unless he is answered, like Joshua bin Nun, as is written, "And the Lord said to Joshua: Arise; [why are you falling on you face]" (Jos. 7:10).*

VII.4 A. *The rabbis taught:* [The act of "bowing" called in Hebrew] *qidah* is [performed] on one's face, as is said, "And Bathsheba bowed (*va-tiqod*) face to the ground" (1Ki. 1:31).

- B. [The act of "bowing" called in Hebrew] *keri'ah* is [performed] on the knees, and thus it says "...from bowing (*mi-keri'a*) on his knees" (1Ki. 8:54).
- C. [The act of "bowing" called in Hebrew] *hishtahava'ah* is [bowing performed through] extension of the arms and legs, as is said, "Will I, and your mother, and your brothers come to bow to you to the ground?" (Gen. 37:10).
- B. *Levi demonstrated qidah in the presence of R. and was crippled.*
- C. *And did this cause it?*
- D. *And said R. Eleazar: A person should never say sharp things against heaven, for a great man said sharp things against heaven and he was crippled.*
- E. *And who was he? Levi.*
- F. *Both things caused it [to happen to him]*

G. *Said Rav Hiyya bar Abin: I saw Abayye [23a] and Rava who were praying on their sides [to avoid falling on their faces].*

VIII.1 A. *On a holiday, five [read in the Torah]; on Yom Kippur, six... (M 3:4B-C):*

- B. *According to whom is our Mishnah?*
- C. *Not R. Ishmael and not R. Akiba, as is taught:*
- D. **On a holiday, five [read from the Torah]; and on Yom Kippur, six; and on the Sabbath, seven.**
- E. **One may neither reduce them nor augment them, the words of R. Ishmael.**

- F. **R. Akiba says: On a holiday, five [read], and on Yom Kippur, seven; and on the Sabbath, six.**
- G. **One may not reduce them, but one may augment them [cf. T 3:11].**
- H. *Who [then] is it [i.e., the authority behind the Mishnah]?*
- I. *If [it is] R. Ishmael, the addition [B] is inconsistent; if R. Akiba, the six and seven are inconsistent.*
- J. *Said Rava: It [the Mishnah] is [formulated according to the teaching of] a Tannaite authority of the house of R. Ishmael, for someone of the house of R. Ishmael taught:*
- K. **On a holiday, five [read]; and on Yom Kippur, six; and on the Sabbath, seven.**
- L. **One may not reduce them, but one may augment them, the words of R. Ishmael [cf. T 3:11].**
- M. *[If so], one teaching of R. Ishmael contradicts another teaching of R. Ishmael.*
- N. *[Not really. Actually there are] two Tannaite authorities of the house of R. Ishmael [who contradicted each other]. The one who taught this [the baraita] is the one who taught:*
- O. *On a festival, people delay coming and hasten to leave.*
- P. *On Yom Kippur, they hasten to come and delay leaving.*
- Q. *And on the Sabbath, they hasten to come and hasten to leave.*
- R. *One might say that it is R. Aqiba, who has an extra person [read from the Torah on Yom Kippur, which would delay the departure].*
- S. *You may even say that it is [according to the teaching of] R. Ishmael, because [on Yom Kippur] the day's recitation is long.*

- VIII.2** A. *To whom do these three, five and seven [people who read in the Torah] correspond?*
- B. *R. Isaac bar Nahmani and one of those with him disagree. And who is it? R. Shimon ben Pazzi.*
 - C. *And some say [the disagreement is between] R. Shimon ben Pazzi and one of those with him. And who is it? R. Isaac bar Nahmani.*
 - D. *And some say: R. Samuel bar Nahmani.*
 - E. [1] *One said: [They correspond] to the priestly blessing [the three verses of which contain, respectively, three, five and seven words].*
 - F. [2] *And one said: [They correspond] to “the three guardians of the threshold” (2Ki. 25:18), “the five of those who see the king’s face” (2Ki. 25:19), [and “the] seven who see the king’s face” (cf. Est. 1:14).*
 - G. *Taught Rav Joseph: Three, five and seven [correspond to] “the three guardians of the threshold,” “five of those who see the king’s face,” [and “the] seven who see the king’s face” [cf. F].*
 - H. *Said Abayye to him: Why did the master not explain this to us until now?*
 - I. *He said to him: I did not know that you needed it; did you ever ask anything of me and I did not tell you?*

VIII.3 A. Jacob the heretic said to Rav Judah: To whom do these six [readers] of Yom Kippur correspond?

- B. He said to him: To the six who stood to the right of Ezra and the six who stood to his left, as is said, “and Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden stand that they made for the occasion, and he stood next to him Mattathias, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Uriah, and Hilkiah, and Maasiah on his right; and on his left, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malkiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, Meshulam” (Neh. 8: 4).
- C. *They are seven.*
- D. Zechariah is Meshulam.
- E. *And why did they call him Meshulam?. Because he is conscientious [or: fulfilled(?)] in his work.*

VIII.4 A. The rabbis taught:

- B. **All [people] count among the number seven, even a minor, and even a woman.**
- C. **But the sages said: A woman should not read the Torah because of the dignity of the congregation [cf. T 3:11].**
- D. *It was asked of them:* Does the additional person [who reads a portion from the prophets] count among the seven?
- E. Rav Huna and R. Yermiah bar Abba. One said: He counts; and one said: He does not count.
- F. *The one who said “He counts” [did so] because he reads; and the one who said “He does not count” [thinks] like Ulla, for said Ulla: Why must he who concludes from the Prophet read in the Torah first? Because of the honor of the Torah. And because this [reading] is [done] only because of the honor of the Torah, it does not count among the number [of required readers].*
- G. *They retorted:* One who concludes from a Prophet should not do fewer than 21 verses, corresponding to the seven who read in the Torah [i.e., a minimum of three verses for each of seven people]. *And if he [who reads the prophetic section] is included, there would be 24.*
- H. *Since he [i.e., this extra reader] is because of the honor of the Torah, [23b] nothing is needed to correspond to him.*
- I. *Rava challenged it: [The passage beginning] “Add your offerings...” (Jer. 7:21-28) does not contain 21 [verses], and we read [it].*
- J. *That is different, because the topic is finished.*
- K. *And where the topic is not finished, is this not the case?*
- L. *For said Samuel bar Abba: Many times I stood before R. Yohanan, and when we had read ten verses, he said to us: Stop.*
- M. *A place where there is a translator is different, for Rav Tahlifa bar Samuel taught: They did not teach [this, i.e., that one may not read fewer than 21 verses], except in a place that has no translator; but [in] a place that has a translator, one can stop [before that].*

- A. [1] One does not conduct the recitation of the Shema; [2] and one does not pass before the ark; [3] and one does not raise his hands; [4] and one does not read in the Torah; [5] and one does not conclude from a Prophet; [6] and one does not stop and sit [after attending a funeral]; [7] and one does not recite the blessing for mourners or [8] consolations for mourners, or [9] the grooms' blessing; [10] and one does not invite [people to say the grace after a meal] in God's name among fewer than ten.
- B. [1] And regarding [the redemption of] land [that belongs to the Temple, a maximum of] nine [non-priests] and a priest, [2] and similarly regarding [the redemption of] a person. Gemara

- I.1** A. *From where [do we derive] these words?*
- B. Said R. Hiyya bar Abba, said R. Yohanan, that a verse said: "...and I will be sanctified among the Israelites" (Lev. 22:32). Any matter of sanctity cannot be [conducted] with fewer than ten.
- C. *How does that verse yield the required lesson?*
- D. *As taught R. Hiyya:* [The word] *tokh*, "midst," comes twice [in two different contexts]. *Here is written* "...and I will be sanctified among (*be-tokh*) the Israelites" (Lev. 22:32), *and there is written* "separate yourselves from among (*mi-tokh*) the congregation (*ha-'edah*)" (Num. 16:21). [And the word] *'edah*, "congregation," comes twice [in two different contexts], as is written [here, "separate yourselves from among the congregation" (Num. 16:21), and as is written] there, "How long will this evil congregation last?" (Num. 14:27). Just as there [regarding the report of the ten spies who feared going to the promised land, the text speaks of] ten, so here [it speaks of] ten.

II.1 A. **It and one does not stop and sit [after leaving a funeral]...with fewer than ten (M 3:5A6).**

- B. *[This is] because one must say: "Stand, dear ones, stand; sit, dear ones, sit." It is not proper [to do this] with fewer than ten people.*

II.2 A. *What is the blessing for mourners?*

- B. The blessing [of the] street, for said R. Isaac, said R. Yohanan: The blessing for mourners [must be said] among ten, and mourners do not count among the number; the blessing for grooms [must be said] among ten, and grooms do count among the number.

III.1 A. **...and one does not invite [people to say the grace after] a meal in God's name among fewer than ten (M 3:5A10).**

- B. *[This is] because one must say "Let us bless our God," it is not proper [to do this] with fewer than ten people.*

IV.1 A. **And [regarding the redemption of] the land [that belongs to the Temple] nine and a priest, and similarly regarding [the redemption of] a person (M 3:5B1):**

- B. *From where do we derive these words?*
- C. *Said Samuel: Ten [references to] priests occur in this section [i.e., Lev. 27:8-23]. One appears for himself, [and one for an exclusion], and the rest are an*

exclusion after an exclusion; and an exclusion after an exclusion is only for inclusion [namely, to teach that one needs] nine Israelites and one priest.

D. *But I might say [that] five priests and five Israelites [are required].*

E. *It is an unresolved difficulty.*

V.1 A. and similarly regarding [the redemption of] a person (M 3:5B2).

A. *Is a person holy property?*

B. Said R. Abahu: [This applies] if one said, “I vow my value,” *as is taught*:

C. He who says, “Incumbent on me is my value” — they estimate his value as if he were a slave, *and a slave is treated as comparable to real estate, as it is written, “You shall pass them on in inheritance to your children after you to inherit as property” (Lev. 25:46).*

3:6

A. **One who reads from the Torah should not read less than three verses.**

B. **And he should not read to the translator more than than one verse [at a time], [24a] and from a Prophet, [no more than] three [verses].**

C. **If the three [verses of the prophetic book] were three paragraphs, one should read [them] one by one.**

D. **One may skip [parts of the text] in a Prophet, but one may not skip in the Torah.**

E. **How much may one skip? As long as the translator does not stop.**

I.1. A. *To what do these three verses [cf. M 3:6A] correspond?*

B. Said Rav Assi: [They correspond] to Torah, Prophets, and Hagiographa.

II.1 A. And he should not read to the translator more than than one verse [at a time], and from a Prophet, [no more than] three [verses]. And if the three [verses] were three paragraphs, one should read [them] one by one (M 3:6B-C).

B. Like [these three one-verse paragraphs]: “For thus said the Lord: You have been sold for nothing” (Isa. 52: 3), “For thus said the Lord, God: At first my people went down to Egypt...” (Isa. 52: 4), [and] “And now, what have I here, said the Lord...” (Isa. 52: 5).

III.1 A. One may skip [parts of the text] in a Prophet, but one may not skip in the Torah (M 3:6D).

B. *And he threw back. [On Yom Kippur] one reads [the passage beginning] “...after the death [of Aaron’s two sons]” (Lev. 16: 1) and [the passage beginning] “Even on the tenth [of the seventh month] (Lev. 23:26 ff) [cf. T 3:7], and [therefore] one may skip.*

C. *Said Abayye: There is no contradiction. Here [it is done] so that the translator will stop; and here [it is done] so that the translator will not stop.*

D. *And regarding it, it has taught:*

E. **One may skip [parts of the text] in a Prophet, but one may not skip in the Torah (T 3:19).**

F. **And how much may one skip? As long as the translator does not stop (M 3:6D-E).**

- G. *From the rule regarding the Torah [that one does not skip], it seems [that] one should never skip.*
- H. *But said Abayye: There is no contradiction. Here [where skipping is prohibited, it is within] one subject; here [where it is allowed, it is] from one subject to another.*
- I. *But it is taught:*
- J. In [reading] the Torah, one may skip within one subject, and in [reading] a Prophet, from one [subject] to another.
- K. In both cases it is as long as the translator does not stop.
- L. *It is also taught:*
- M. **One may not skip from Prophet to Prophet, but within the Prophet[ic book] of the Twelve [minor prophets], one may skip, as long as he does not skip from the end of a book to its beginning (T 3:19).**

3:7

- A. **One who concludes from a Prophet conducts the recitation of the Shema, and passes before the ark, and raises his hands [for the priestly blessing].**
- B. **And if he was a minor, his father or teacher passes [before the ark] next to him.**
- C. **A minor may read in the Torah or translate [it], but he may not conduct the recitation of the Shema, or raise his hands [in the priestly blessing], or pass before the ark.**
- D. **One who wears torn clothes may conduct the recitation of the Shema and translate [the biblical texts that are read], but he may not read from the Torah, and he may not pass before the ark, and may not raise his hands [for the priestly blessing].**
- E. **A blind man may conduct the recitation of the Shema and translate [the biblical texts that are read].**
- F. **R. Judah says: Anyone who never saw light throughout his lifetime may not conduct the recitation of the Shema.**

- I.1 A. What is the reason [that one who concludes from a Prophet should also conduct the recitation of the Shema, pass before the ark, and participate in the priestly blessing]?
- B. Rav Pappa said: Because of honor.
- C. *Rabbah bar Shimi said: Because [if not,] he would come to quarrel [with the other person].*
- D. *What is [the difference] between them?*
- E. *The difference between them is one who does it gratis.*
- F. *We have learned: And if he was a minor, his father or teacher passes [before the ark] next to him (M 3:7B). If you say [this is done] because of quarrel, is a minor a quarrelsome person? So, what is [the meaning of the answer] “because of honor”; is a minor worthy of honor?*
- G. *But there is the [matter of] his father’s honor and his teacher’s honor; [24b] here, too, there are his father’s quarrels and his teacher’s quarrels.*

II.1 A. One who wears torn clothes may conduct the recitation of the Shema...etc. [and translate the biblical texts that are read, but he may not read from the Torah] (M 3:7D).

- B. *Ulla bar Rav asked Abbaye: May a minor in torn clothes read from the Torah?*
- C. *He said to him: Ask about a naked [child].*
- D. *Why not a naked one?*
- E. *Because of the dignity of the congregation. Here, too, because of the dignity of the congregation [a child in torn clothes should not read the Torah].*

III.1 A. A blind person may conduct the recitation of the Shema...etc. [and translate the biblical texts that are read] (M 3:7F).

- B. *It is taught:*
- C. **They said to R. Judah: Many have anticipated expounding the [secrets of the divine] chariot [cf. Eze. 1-3], but never saw it in their lifetimes (T 3:28).**
- D. And R. Judah?
- E. *There [regarding the Merkavah,] the matter depends on the understanding of the mind; he concentrates and knows. Here, it is because of benefit [of the lights mentioned in the blessings before the Shema]; and he [i.e., a blind person] has no benefit [from them].*
- F. *And the rabbis [think] that he does have benefit [from the lights], like R. Yosé, as is taught:*
- G. Said R. Yosé: My entire life I was troubled over this scriptural passage: "...and you will grope in the afternoon like a blind person gropes in the dark" (Deu. 28:29); [after all] does the difference between darkness and light matter to a blind person? [That is] until a certain thing happened to me.
- H. Once I was walking on a deep dark night, and I saw a blind man walking along the road with a torch in his hand.
- I. I said to him: My son, why do you have this torch?
- J. He said to me: As long as the torch is in my hand, people see me and save me from the ditches, and from the thorns, and from the thistles.

3:8

- A. **A priest who has blemishes on his hands may not raise his hands [i.e., may not participate in the priestly blessing].**
- B. **R. Judah says: Even someone whose hands are dyed blue may not raise his hands [in the priestly blessing], because the people look at him [attentively].**

I.1 A. *One learned:*

- B. **The blemishes of which they spoke are on his face, his hands and his feet [cf. T 3:29].**
- C. Said R. Joshua ben Levi: If his hands were misshaped, he may not raise his hands.
- D. *It is learned this way also [in a baraita]:* If his hands are spotted, he may not raise his hands; bent (*aqushot*, *aqumot*), he may not raise his hands.

I.2 A. Said Rav Assi: One from Haifa or Beit Shan may not raise his hands.

B. *It is learned this way also [in a baraita]:* One does not permit men of Beit Shan or men of Beit Haifa, or men of Tivonin to descend before the ark, because they pronounce Alephs [as] Ayyins and Ayyins [as] Alephs.

I.3 A. Said R. Hiyya to R. Shimon bar R. [Judah the Patriarch]: Were you a Levite, you would be barred from the platform [from which the Levites sang], because your voice is husky.

B. *He [i.e., R. Shimon bar Rabbi] went and told his father.*

C. *He [Rabbi Judah] said to him: Go say to him: When you arrive at [the phrase “and I will wait (ve-hikiti) for the Lord” (Isa. 8:17), do you not blaspheme [i.e., because you pronounce ve-hikiti, spelled with a Het, as ve-hiketi, “I will strike,” spelled with a Heh]?*

I.4 A. Said Rav Huna: One whose eyes constantly tear may not raise his hands.

B. *But there was such a person in Rav Huna’s neighborhood, and he did raise his hand.*

C. *He did so regularly [only] in his town.*

D. *It is taught this way also [in a baraita]:* One whose eyes constantly tear may not raise his hands; but if he did so regularly in his town, it is permitted.

I.5 A. Said R. Yohanan: A person who is blind in one of his eyes may not raise his hands.

B. *But there was such a person in R. Yohanan’s neighborhood, and he did spread his hand.*

C. *He did so regularly [only] in his town.*

D. *It istaught this way also in a baraita:* One whose eyes constantly tear may not raise his hands; but if he did so regularly in his town, it is permitted.

II.1 A. **R. Judah says: Someone whose hands are colored may not raise his hands [cf. M 3:8B].**

B. *One taught: If the work of most of the townspeople is with it, it is permitted [cf. T 3:29].*

3:9

A. **One who says “I will not pass before the ark [i.e., lead the Amidah] in colored clothes” may not pass [before the ark] even in white clothes.**

B. **...I will not pass [before the ark] in sandals” may not pass [before the ark] even barefoot.**

C. **[If] one shapes his Tefillin round, it is a danger, and there is no [fulfillment of the] commandment through it.**

D. **[If] he placed it [i.e., one of the Tefillin] on his forehead or on the palm of his hand, this is the manner of heresy.**

E. **[If] he overlaid them with gold or placed it [i.e., the tefillin shel yad] on his sleeve, this is the way of outsiders.**

I.1 A. *What is the reason [for M 3:9A-B]?*

B. *We suspect that heresy has been sprinkled on him.*

II.1 A. [If] one shapes his phylactery round, it is a danger, and there is no [fulfillment] of the commandment (M 3:9C).

- A. *One may say that we have already learned this, for the rabbis learned: Square phylacteries are a halakhah to Moses from Sinai.*
- B. *And said Rava: [This applies to] both their stitching and their angle[s].*
- C. *Said Rav Pappa: The Mishnah [speaks] about [a case where] it is made [shaped] like a nut.*

3:10

- A. **[If] one says [25a] [1] “May the good ones bless you,” this is the way of heresy; [2] “May your mercies reach to the bird’s nest, and may your name be mentioned for good”;[or] “thank [you...], thank [you...],” we silence him.**
- B. **[If] one paraphrases the [biblical passages about] forbidden sexual relationships [cf. Lev. 18], we silence him.**
- C. **[If] one translates “and you shall not permit of your seed to pass to Molekh” (Lev. 18:21) as “Do not impregnate an Aramean woman,” we silence him abruptly.**

- I.1** A. *[The statement in the Mishnah (3:10A2)] “Thank [you...], thank [you...]” is appropriate, because it looks like [belief in] two domains; and similarly [the statement] “...may your name be mentioned for good” because it suggests for good, yes, but for evil, no. And we have learned: **One must recite a blessing over the evil, just as he recites a blessing over the good [M Ber. 9:5]. But what is the reason [for prohibiting the saying of] “May your mercies reach to the bird’s nest”?***
- B. *Two Amoraim in the West disagree over it, R. Yosé bar Abbin and R. Yosé bar Zevida. One said, “Because it encourages jealousy in the creation”; and one said, “Because he makes the qualities of The Holy One, Blessed Be He, merciful, and they are only decrees.”*

- I.2** A. *Someone who descended [before the ark] before Rabbah said: You had mercy on the “bird’s nest” (Deu. 22: 6), Have mercy and compassion on us; You had mercy on “it and its child” (Lev. 22:28), Have mercy and compassion on us.”*
- B. *Said Rabbah: How [greatly] did this student know how to placate his master.*
- C. *Said Abayye to him: But we have learned **One silences him (M 3:10A).***
- D. *But Rabbah wanted to goad Abayye [into commenting].*

- I.3** A. *Someone who descended [before the ark] before R. Hanina said: “...The God who is great, powerful, awesome, glorious, mighty, and strong...”*
- B. *He [Rabbi Hanina] said to him: have you finished your master’s praises? Now these three [i.e., great, powerful, and awesome], if Moses had not written them in the Torah [cf. Deu. 10:17] and the Men of the Great Assembly had not come and formalized them, we would not say [even] them; and you have said all of these [others, too]? It is like a man who had a billion golden dinars, and people would praise him for [having] one thousand silver dinars. Is it not an insult to him?*

- I.4** A. Said R. Hanina: Everything is in the hands of heaven except fear of heaven, as is said, “And now Israel what does your God ask of you except to fear [the Lord your God...?] (Deu. 10:12).
 B. *Does this assume that fear is a minor thing?*
 C. *Yes, relative to Moses our master, it is a minor thing.* It is like a man from whom someone requests a large object that he has, and it seems to him a small object; [but if] someone requests a small object that he does not have, it seems to him a large object.

- I.5** A. Said R. Zira: One who says “Hear, [O Israel]...Hear, [O Israel...] is like one who says “Thank [you...] Thank [you...].”
 B. *They retort: [If] one recites the Shema and repeats it, this is improper. [Indeed,] it is improper, but one does not silence him.*
 C. *There is no contradiction. In one case, he recited it word by word and repeated it; in the other case, he recited it verse by verse and repeated it.*
 D. *Said Rav Pappa to Rava: Perhaps originally he did not pay attention [to what he was doing], and now he did pay attention.*
 E. *He [Rava] said to him: [Is there] fellowship with heaven [i.e., can one speak to God and not pay attention to what he is doing]? If he did not pay attention, one beats him with a blacksmith’s mallet until he pays attention.*

- II.1** A. **[If] one paraphrases the [biblical passages about] forbidden sexual relationships [cf. Lev. 18], one silences him (M 3:10B)**
 B. *Rav Yosef taught: [For example] he says “...the disgrace (qalon) of his father” or “...the disgrace of his mother” [instead of “the sexuality (or: the nakedness, `ervat) of your father” or “sexuality (or: the nakedness, `ervat) of your mother” (Lev. 18: 7).*

- III.1** A. **[If] one translates “and you shall not permit of your seed to pass...[to Molekh” (Lev. 18:21) as “Do not impregnate an Aramean woman,” one silences him abruptly] (M 3:10C).**
 B. *One of the house of R. Ishmael taught: Scripture is talking about an Israelite who had intercourse with a Kuthean [i.e., a Samaritan] and sired a child from her for foreign worship.*

3:11

- A. **The story of Reuben [Gen. 35] is read and not translated.**
 B. **The story of Tamar [Gen. 38] is read and translated.**
 C. **The first story of the [golden] calf [Exo. 32: 1-20] is read and translated; and the second [Exo. 32:22-24] is read but not translated.**
 D. **The priestly blessing [Num. 6:22-27 and] the story of David and Amnon [cf. 2Sa. 13] are read but not translated.**
 E. **One may not conclude [the Torah reading] with the [passage in Eze. 1-3 about the divine] chariot, but R. Judah permits [it].**
 F. **R. Eliezer says: One may not conclude [the Torah reading] with [the prophetic passage beginning] “Announce to Jerusalem” (Eze. 13).**

- I.1** A. *The rabbis taught:*
- B.** There are [biblical passages that are] read and translated;
- C.** and there are [biblical passages that are] read but are not translated;
- D.** and there are [biblical passages that are] neither read nor translated (T 3:31).
- E. Which [passages] are read and translated?
- F. The mnemonic for the following amplification is *b-l-t `q-n n-sh-p-h*.
- G.** [1] The story of creation is read and translated (T 3:31).
- H. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?]*
- I. *You might say:* They will come to ask what is above, what is below, [25b] and what is before and what is after.
- J. *It teaches us to the contrary.*
- K.** [2] The story of Lot and his two daughters is read and translated (T 3:31).
- L. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- M. *You might say:* We should be careful about Abraham's honor.
- N. *It teaches us to the contrary.*
- O.** [3] The story of Tamar and Judah is read and translated (T 3:31).
- P. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- Q. *You might say:* One should be careful about Judah's honor.
- R. *It teaches us [as we thought].*
- S. *It is his praise that he admitted [his guilt].*
- T.** [4] The first story of the [golden] calf is read and translated (T 3:31).
- U. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- V. *You might say:* One should be careful about Israel's honor.
- W. *It teaches us [as we thought].*
- X. *Even more so [is it permissible to read it], because they are satisfied, since they atoned.*
- Y.** [5] The curses and blessings are read and translated [cf. T 3:31]
- Z. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- AA. *You might say:* One should be careful, lest the congregation grow faint. D. *It teaches us [as we thought].*
- BB.** [6] Prohibitions and punishments are read and translated (T 3:31).
- CC. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- DD. *You might say:* One should be careful, lest they come to observe [them] out of fear.
- EE. *It teaches us [as we thought].*
- FF.** [7] The story of Amnon and Tamar is read and translated [[8] and the story of Absalom with his father's concubines (2Sa. 16) is read and translated] [cf. T 3:32]
- GG. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- HH. *You might say:* One should be careful about the honor of David.
- II. *It teaches us [as we thought].*

- JJ. [9] The story of the concubine in Gibeah [Judges 19] is read and translated (T 3:33).
- KK. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- LL. *You might say: One should be careful of Benjamin's honor.*
- MM. *It teaches us [as we thought].*
- NN. [10] [The passage beginning] "Announce to Jerusalem her abominations" (Eze. 16: 2) is read and translated (T 3:34).
- OO. *It is obvious [i.e., why not?].*
- PP. *This is to exclude [what was learned] from R. Eliezer, as is learned: It once happened that a man was reading in the presence of R. Eliezer "Announce to Jerusalem her abominations" (Eze. 16: 2).*
- QQ. He [Rabbi Eliezer] said to him: Before you examine Jerusalem's abominations, go out and examine your mother's abominations [cf. T 3:34].
- RR. They examined him [i.e., his familial] situation and found something wrong.
- SS. *And which [passages] are read but not translated?*
- TT. The mnemonic is *r-`b-d-n*
- UU. [1] The story of Reuben is read but not translated.
- VV. And it once happened that R. Hanina ben Gamaliel went to Kabul, and the synagogue leader (*hazan*) was reading "And it was when Israel dwelled..." (Gen. 35:22) [i.e., the story about Reuben].
- WW. And he said to the translator: Stop. Do not translate other than the last [part of the verse]; and the sages praised him [cf. T 3:35].
- XX. [2] The second story of the [golden] calf is read but not translated.
- YY. What is "the second story of the [golden] calf"?
- ZZ. From "And Moses said" (Exo. 32:21) until "And Moses saw..." (Exo. 32:25) [cf. T 3:36].
- AAA. It is taught: R. Shimon ben Eleazar says: A man should always be careful with his answers [to questions], because, as a result of the answer that Aaron gave to Moses, the heretics rebelled, as is said, "and I threw it in the fire, and this calf came out" (Exo. 32:24) [cf. T 3:37].
- BBB. [3] The priestly blessing are [is?] read but not translated.
- CCC. *What is the reason?*
- DDD. Because "May God lift [his face]..." (Num. 6:26) is written.
- EEE. [4] The story of David and Amnon are [is?] neither read nor translated.
- FFF. *But you have said: The story of David and Amnon is read and translated. [cf. M 3:11D].*
- GGG. *There is no contradiction. One [is referring to] when "Amnon son of David" is written; one [is referring to] when "Amnon" is written undesignated.*
- I.2** A. *The rabbis taught:*
- B. All passages written in the Torah negatively are read positively, like the following:
- C. [1] *yishgalenah*, "they will be ravished" (Deu. 28:30), [which is read] *yiskavenah* "they will be laid with";

- D. [2] *ba-`efolim*, “with piles” (Deu. 28:27), [which is read] *ba-tehorim*, “with hemorrhoids;
 - E. [3] *hiryonim*, “doves’ dung” (2Ki. 6:25), [which is read] *divyonim*;
 - F. [4] “to eat their turds (*horeihem*) and to drink their piss (*meimei shineihem*)” (2Ki. 18:27), [which is read] “to eat their excrement (*tzo’atam*) and to drink their urine (*meimei ragleihem*).”
 - G. [5] *le-mohera’ot*, “latrines” (2Ki. 10:27), [which is read] *le-motza’ot*.
 - H. R. Joshua ben Qorha says: [it should be read] *le-mohera’ot*, as it is, because it is an insult to foreign worship [cf. T 3:39-40, which is somewhat expanded].
- I.3** A. Said Rav Nahman: All jocularly is forbidden except jocularly [directed] at foreign worship, which is permitted, as is written, “Bel crouches, Nebo squeezes” (Isa. 46: 1), and [as] is written, “they squeezed [and] crouched together, but were unable to expel the load” (Isa. 46: 2).
- B. R. Yannai said [this notion is derived] from here: “For the residents of Shomron will fear for the calves of Beit-Aven, because its people and its priests who rejoiced over it mourn for its glory, since its honor is gone” (Hos. 10: 5); do not read *kevodo*, “his honor,” read *keveido*, “his load.”
 - C. Said Rav Huna bar Manoah in the name of Rav Aha the son of Rav Iqa: An Israelite is permitted to tell a star worshiper [to] take his foreign worship and stick it up his Shin Tav.
 - D. Said Rav Ashi: One who has a [justifiably] bad reputation may be disgraced with Gimmel and Shin.
 - E. And one who has a good reputation may be praised; and one who praised him, blessings will rest on his head.