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CHAPTER VIII.

MISHNA: (a) All spittle [a1](#) to be found in Jerusalem is considered clean, except such as is found at the upper market (for this place was secluded and those afflicted with venereal diseases were in the habit of going there). Such is the teaching of R. Meir. The sages say: In the middle of the street it is at ordinary times unclean, and at the sides of the streets, clean. During the festivals, spittle found in the middle of the street is clean; at the sides it is unclean, because such as are unclean on account of their minority usually walk at the sides of the street.

(b) All utensils found on the way towards the plunge-bath, in Jerusalem, are unclean; those found on the way from the plunge-bath are clean: for they were not carried down to the plunge-bath the same way that these were carried up from the plunge-bath. So teaches R. Meir. R. Jose says: "All are clean, with the exception of such baskets, spades, and pickaxes as are used for the bones of the dead." [b1](#)

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(c) If a butchering-knife be found on the fourteenth day of Nissan, a Passover-offering may be slaughtered with it forthwith. If it be found on the thirteenth, it must be again submerged. [c1](#) A severing-knife must be submerged both if found on the thirteenth or fourteenth. If the fourteenth, however, fall on a Sabbath, it may be used for slaughtering forthwith; so also if it be found on the fifteenth: if it be found together with a butchering-knife, it is treated just like the latter.

(d) If a curtain in the Sanctuary become defiled through some minor uncleanness, [d1](#) it is submerged on the inside of the outer court, and may be put back in its place; if it become defiled through a principal uncleanness, it must be submerged on the outside and then stretched on the rampart, because sunset must be awaited. At the time it is submerged for the first time (when new), it should be spread out on the roof of the gallery, in order that the people may see the beauty of the work.

(e) R. Simeon, son of Gamaliel, says in the name of R. Simeon, son of the assistant high priest, that the curtain was one

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span thick, woven on seventy-two warp-cords, each cord twisted out of twenty threads; it was forty ells long and twenty ells wide, and made (worth) of eighty-two myriads (Dinars). [e1](#) Two such curtains were made yearly: three hundred priests were required to submerge it.

(f) If meat of the Holy of Holies [f1](#) became defiled, be it through a minor or a principal

uncleanness, in the corridor or on the outside, according to the school of Shamai it must all be burnt in the court (in a place appointed for that purpose), except such as had been defiled by a principal uncleanness on the outside (of the court); according to the school of Hillel, everything is burnt on the outside except such as had been defiled by a minor uncleanness on the inside.

(g) R. Eliezer says: "Anything that has become defiled through a principal uncleanness, on the outside or on the inside, is burnt on the outside; anything that has become defiled through a minor uncleanness, either on the inside or the outside, must be burnt on the inside." R. Aqiba says: "In the place where a thing became defiled, there must it also be burnt."

(h) The joints of the daily sacrifice were laid down underneath the half of the altar-stairs on the westerly (according to others on the easterly) side; those of the additional offerings on the easterly (others say oil the westerly) side. The sacrifices of the new moon were placed above the railing (others say beneath) on the altar. [h1](#) The payment of Shekalim was only obligatory during the time that the Temple stood; the tithes from grain, cattle, and the deliverance of the firstlings were in force during the existence of the Temple and even after the Temple. [h2](#)--If

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one sanctify Shekalim or firstlings, they are considered sanctified. R. Simeon says: "If one say, firstlings shall be holy, they are not sanctified (because no Temple exists)."

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI., MISHNA *a.*

FROM the teaching of this Mishna, we may conclude that the number system of Pythagoras was known and prevailed in the times of the Sages of the Mishna, and accordingly the number, 13 was deemed inauspicious even in the earliest days.

Therefore many religious ceremonies were established with the express view of convincing the people of the absurdity of their belief.

It also seems probable that the Sages themselves entertained the superstition, and that they adopted the number 13 in the religious ceremonies as a cure for the mischief believed to have, been produced by the inauspicious number.

Footnotes

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CHAPTER VIII.

MISHNA *a.* Concerning this spittle, see Leviticus xv. 8. It being impossible that, of all the people congregated in Jerusalem at the times of the festivals, there should not be some who had

running issues and whose spittle was unclean, regulations were made where such men were to walk and where not. These regulations are cited by the Mishna. R. Meir said, that the upper market was the place designated for them, but the sages differ with him, and say, that the regulation was for the healthy men to walk in the middle of the street and the unclean at the sides during the festivals; but the whole year, the order was reversed. It is therefore self-evident, that, wherever the unclean walk, one is liable to contract uncleanness.

[33:b1](#) MISHNA *b*. This Mishna is explained by Maimonides and translated by Yost in a different manner than we have rendered it; namely: "All utensils found wrong side up on the way to the plunge-bath are unclean, and those found right side up are clean." This [p. 34](#) explanation is very complicated, and not in accordance with the literal text and other sources of explanation. Hence we simply translated the literal text and deem it correct. As for the last three articles, they are always unclean, on account of being used for bones of the dead; hence, in our opinion, they were never submerged. (See also commentary of Israel Lipshuetz, who also interprets it according to our explanation.)

[34:c1](#) MISHNA *c*. A butchering-knife, being in constant use, is always considered clean, and hence there is no necessity of submerging it. If, however, it be found on the thirteenth, when there is still one day's time, it should be submerged for the sake of precaution. A severing-knife, however, is considered the same as any other vessel, and is treated accordingly.

[34:d1](#) MISHNA *d*. For the explanation of the term "minor uncleanness," as used in this Mishna, it is necessary to state the different degrees of uncleanness, which are as follows: A corpse is called "the grandparent of uncleanness." One who touches a corpse becomes "a father of uncleanness"; anything touching the latter is, in turn, "a child of (or first of) uncleanness"; anything touched by this latter is a "second of uncleanness"; and so forth, "a third" and "a fourth." (See Tract Taharoth.) In this Mishna a minor uncleanness refers to a first of uncleanness, and a principal uncleanness to a father of uncleanness.

[35:e1](#) MISHNA *e*. The Palestinian Talmud asserts, that the amount of the cost of and the number of priests required to submerge the curtain is somewhat exaggerated; but, according to Dr. Büchler's "Priester und Cultus," the number of priests is not an exaggeration; and as for the cost, if the smallest existing coin be used for calculation (as in former times the sou in France, so also was the myriad mentioned in the Mishna), not even the sum will be exaggerated.

[35:f1](#) MISHNA *f*. For instance, the meat of the sacrifice mentioned in Leviticus vii. 6.

[35:h1](#) MISHNA *h*. This will be explained in Tract Midoth.

[35:h2](#) Because the Levites received their sustenance from this source, and having inherited no land from their ancestors, they were [p. 36](#) supported even after the destruction of the Temple by the same means. The details will be found in Tracts Becharath, Maasroth, etc.