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CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE LOTS THE PRIESTS DREW, WHAT PRIESTS SHOULD GO TO THE ALTAR, AND HOW MANY PRIESTS WERE NEEDED FOR EACH SACRIFICE.

MISHNA: Formerly, whoever desired to clear the altar of the ashes did so. When there were many of them (priests), they ran on the staircase (leading to the top of altar). Whoever first came within four ells, merited it. When two were on a par, the superintendent said to them (all priests): Put forth your fingers. Which did they put forth? One or two, but not the thumb in the Temple (which were counted instead of the persons they belonged to, and the service was given to the last).

Once an accident happened: one of two who were running up the staircase pushed his companion, so that he fell, and broke his foot. Seeing that it is attended by accidents, the Beth Din made the reform, that the altar should be cleared by lot. There were four lots: this is the first lot.

GEMARA: Why had not lots been used formerly? Previously it was thought that since it is done by night and not considered an important service by the priests, they would not come in considerable number, but when it was seen that the case was otherwise, this reform was made.

Was this reform only for this purpose? We know that he who cleared the ashes also arranged the pieces of wood on the altar, and brought the two measures of wood, and that was considered an important service? Said R. Ashi: Two reforms were made: at first, when it had been thought they would not come in considerable numbers, no lot was used at all; then, when it was observed that they came and accidents happened, the use of the lot was introduced. Then the priests ceased to come, since they were not sure of drawing the lot at all. It was then reformed, that he who clears the ashes should arrange the pieces of wood and bring the two measures also, that the priests might come to draw the lot, since it would be for important services.

"Put forth your fingers." We have learned in a Boraitha:

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[paragraph continues] "He said to them thus. Put out your fingers, that they be counted." Why did he not count the persons themselves? This can be a support to what R. Itz'hak has said: "Israel must not be counted, even for religious duties." As it is written [1 Sam. xv. 4]: "And Saul ordered the people to assemble, and he numbered them by means of lambs." 1 Said R. Elazar: Whoever numbers Israel, trespasses a negative commandment, because it is written [Hosea ii. 1]: "Yet shall the number of the children of Israel be like the sand of the sea, which may not be numbered." R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak says: He trespasses two commandments, as it is written, which cannot be measured nor numbered. R. Samuel b. Na'hman, in the name of R. Jonathan,

found a contradiction in the same passage: It is written that the number of Israel will be like that of the sand (then a definite number is given), and then it is said, it cannot be counted--that is, has no number. It presents no difficulty: When Israel shall do the will of God, they will be without number; but when they do not do God's will, they will be of a definite number. Rabbi in the name of Abbi Joseph b. Dustai says: There is no contradiction in it. Men cannot count the sand, but in Heaven they can count it.

R. Huna. said: How secure and careless should the man feel that knows that the Lord helps him: Saul committed only one sin; he lost his royalty: David committed two sins, and yet retained it. Saul's sin was, that he spared Agag. But he massacred the priests of Nob? That which is written [1 Sam. xv. 11], "I repent that I have set up Saul as king," was said already on the occasion of the sin of Agag [which was the first, chronologically]. What are David's two sins? That of Uriah and his numbering of Israel. But there is a third one? That of Bath-Sheba? For that of Bath-Sheba he was punished, as it is written [2 Sam. xii. 6]: "For the ewe he shall pay fourfold." What were the four punishments? The death of Bath-Sheba's child, the death of Amnon, the misfortune of Tamar, and Absalom. But for numbering Israel he was also chastised? As it is written [2 Sam. xxiv. 15]: "And the Lord sent a pestilence in Israel from the morning even to the time appointed." In that case all Israel was chastised, but not he himself. But in those instances it was also his children on whom the wrath was visited) not on

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himself? Nay, he was personally punished, too. As R. Jehudah says in the name of Rabh: For six months David became leprous, and the Sanhedrin separated themselves from him, and the Shekhina. As it is written [Ps. cxix. 79]: "Let those that fear thee return unto me, and those that know thy testimonies." And it is written [ibid. li. 14]: "Restore unto me the gladness of thy salvation." (The first refers to the Sanhedrin, and the second to the Shekhina.) But did not David also believe calumnies? (of Ziba). For this he was also punished, for R. Jehudah said in the name of Rabh, when David said to Mephibosheth [2 Sam. xix. 30], "I have said, Thou and Ziba shall divide the field," a heavenly voice was heard, proclaiming that Rehoboam and Jeroboam should divide the kingdom.

It is written [1 Sam. xii. i]: "One year old was Saul in his reign." ¹ Said R. Huna: That means, he was innocent of sin as a child of one year. R. Jehudah said in the name of Samuel: Why did not Saul's dynasty last long? Because there was no stain on his whole family. And R. Johanan in the name of R. Simeon b. Jehozadak said: A man must not be made the head of a congregation unless he has a whole heap of reptiles (family disgraces) at his back, in order that, if he should become haughty, people should be able to say to him: Look around, behind your back. R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh said: Why was Saul punished? Because he was willing to dispense with honors. As it is written [1 Sam. x. 27]: "But the worthless men said, in what can this one help us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he acted as though he were deaf." And soon after this is written: "Then came up Nachash the Ammonite," etc.

R. Johanan in the name of R. Simeon b. Jehozadak said again: A scholar who is not revengeful and remembers not injuries as a serpent, cannot be called "Talmud Hakham" (a teacher). But it is written [Lev. xix. 18]: "Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge"? There precautionary matters are spoken of (but in regard to bodily pain or honor it is different). As we have learned in the following Boraitha: "What is called revenge, and what is called bearing a grudge? Revenge is such a case: When one comes to the other, and asks him to lend a sickle to him, he

says: Nay. On the morrow, the second comes to the first, and wants to borrow an axe. He answers:

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[paragraph continues] I do not wish to lend to you, as you have not lent to me. This is called revenge. What is bearing a grudge? When one comes to another, and asks him to loan him an axe, and does not get it. On the morrow the second comes to the first, and wants to borrow a shirt. He answers: I lend it to you, because I am not like you, who did not want to lend me yesterday. This is called bearing a grudge." But in case of bodily pain, has not the Torah forbidden vengeance? Have we not learned in the following Boraitha: "Those who are wronged and not wronging, bear their shame and do not reply, do good deeds out of love, and rejoice not at afflictions, of them says the verse [Judges v. 31]: 'Those that love him are as the rising sun in his might.'"

Reply they should not bear a grudge in their hearts they may (and if *another* party avenges them, they need not interfere). Is that so? Did not Rabha say: He who leaves his injuries unavenged, will have his sins forgiven in Heaven? That means, if the offender comes to propitiate him, he should pardon.

"Which? One, or two?" If two, why is it said at all, one (or two)? This applies to those who have a disease, that they cannot stretch forth one finger, without stretching out the other also. We have learned in the following Boraitha: They used to put out one finger when healthy, but when diseased, they could stretch out two.

"Once an accident," etc. The rabbis taught: It once happened two priests were running, and were on a par. When they came to the top, one outstripped the other by four ells; he took a knife and stuck it into the other one's breast. R. Zadok stood on the staircase of the porch, and said: Brethren of Israel, hear! It is written [Deut. xxi. i]: "If there be found a slain person in the land . . . shall take a heifer." For whom shall we bring the heifer? For the city, or for the Temple? The whole people began to weep. Then the father of the young man arrived, and found him yet agonizing. He said: "May he (the dead) be an atonement for your sins; and as he shows yet signs of life, the knife has not become unclean (since he still lived)." We may infer from this, that the defilement of the knife was considered by them as a yet greater misfortune than bloodshed.

The rabbis taught: It is written [Lev. vi. 4] . "He shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes." We might think that, as on the Day of Atonement, he should strip himself of his holy garments and put on profane

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garments, for removing the ashes. Therefore it is written in both cases "garments," that from the analogy of expression we should understand that both are holy garments. And by "other," older ones are meant. R. Eliezer, however, said: From the expression "other garments, and carry forth," we can infer that even a blemished priest may carry forth the ashes. Said Resh Lakish: As R. Eliezer and the first Tana differ about the carrying forth of ashes, so do they differ about the lifting up of the ashes from the altar. R. Johanan, however, said: They differ only about the carrying forth of the ashes, but about the lifting up all agree that it is a respectable service,

which only an unblemished priest may perform. What is the reason of Resh Lakish, who says they differ on this point too? The reason of Resh Lakish is: If it were a real service, could it be performed only in two garments [ibid. 3]? And what will R. Johanan say to this? He says: The Torah only specifies these two, but all four are meant.

Rabh said: For performing the following four services a layman deserves capital punishment: namely, sprinkling, offering of incense officiating at the water-offering and the wine-offering. And so also Levi taught in his Boraitha; also as to the lifting of the ashes. What is the reason of Rabh's decree? Because it is written [Num. xviii. 7]: "And thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priesthood concerning every matter of the altar, and for that within the vail, where ye shall serve; as a service of gift do I give you your priesthood; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death." Service of gift, but not of removing. Levi says: It is written, "Every matter of the altar," which includes all things. Rabha pro. pounded a question: How about a service of removing from an altar in the Temple (inner)? Is this considered by Rabh like a service of gift, or like a service of removal? Rabha decided later, it is written [ibid.], "and for that within the vail"; but it is written, "and within the vail": that makes the service like to a service of removing. We have learned in one Boraitha according to Rabh, and in another according to Levi. According to Rabh we have learned as follows: "The services for which the layman is guilty of death are: Sprinkling of blood, inside or in the Holy of Holies (on the Day of Atonement); sprinkling the blood of a sin-offering of a bird; wringing-out of a bird's blood which is a burnt-offering [Lev. i. 15]; and officiating at the offering of three *lugs* of water or three *lugs* of wine." We

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have learned according to Levi as follows: "The services for which a layman is guilty of capital punishment are: Removing the ashes; performing the seven sprinklings within, and on a leper; and offering on the altar something either fit or unfit."

Wherefore was the drawing of lots repeated? Said R. Johanan: To cause more excitement in the Temple, as it is written [Ps. xv. 15]: "So that we took sweet secret counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in a great company."

In what garments were the lots drawn? R. Na'hman says, in ordinary garments; R. Shesheth says, in holy ones. R. Na'hman says, in ordinary clothes, because some of the priests being strong men, they could snatch the lot by force, and go to perform the service, if they had the holy garments on. R. Shesheth says, in holy garments, because, if they had the ordinary ones on, they might by absence of mind perform the service in them, since they were very eager to perform the service.

MISHNA: The second lot (determined) who should slaughter, who sprinkle, who should clear of ashes the inner altar and who care for the lamp, who should take up members to the staircase of the altar: the head, the leg, the two forelegs, the tail (tip of tail), the (left) leg (hind), the chest, the windpipe, the two flanks, the entrails, the fine flour, the things made in pans [1 Chron. ix. 31], and the wine.

Thirteen priests are privileged to do all this. Ben Azai, however, said, in the presence of R. Aqiba, in the name of R. Joshua: It (the animal) was offered as it had walked. (See Gemara.)

GEMARA: The schoolmen propounded a question: Were the lots drawn for each service separately, or at once for all services? Come and hear: R. Hiya taught, the lots were not drawn for each service separately; but the priest who had drawn the lot of the daily offering, obtained the service for the other twelve following him.

"*The second lot*," etc. The schoolmen propounded a question: Who received the blood into the basin, the priest that slaughtered or the priest that sprinkled? Come and hear! We have learned that Ben Katin made twelve cocks for the laver, that twelve priests might sanctify their hands at once. If the priest that slaughtered received the blood, then thirteen cocks would have been needed. Hence infer that the sprinkler did it.

"*Ben Azai said*," etc. The rabbis taught: What is meant

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by "it had walked"? In the following order: The head and the leg, the chest, the stomach, the windpipe, the two forelegs, the two flanks, the tip of the tail, and the other hind leg. R. Jose says: As it has been stripped, so it was offered. How had it been stripped? The head, the leg, the tail, the other leg, the two flanks, the two forelegs, the chest, the windpipe.

R. Aqiba says: As it has been cut to pieces. How had it then, been cut to pieces? The head, the leg, the two forelegs, the chest, the windpipe, the two flanks, the tail, and the other leg. R. Joseph the Galilean says: According to the excellence of the members. How is that? The head, the leg, the chest, the windpipe, the two flanks, the tail, the other leg, and the two forelegs. Said Rabba: Our Tana and R. Jose both agree that the members are to be offered in the order of their excellence. One, however, says, according to the size of the members; the other, according to the fatness. Why the head and leg together, according to all? Because the head contains too many bones, the leg, which contains more flesh, is added.

MISHNA: The third lot was drawn by new (priests) who had not yet fumed incense; the fourth, by new and old ones, (to determine) who should take up the members (parts) from the staircase to the altar.

GEMARA: We have learned in a Boraitha: No man has repeatedly offered incense. What is the reason? Said R. Hanina: Because the offering of incense renders rich. Said R. Papa to Abayi: Whence do we deduce this? Shall we assume this, because it is written [Deut. xxxiii. 10], "They shall put incense before thee," and in the next verse, "Bless, O Lord, his substance"? Then it should not be due to incense alone, since at the end of the tenth verse it is also written, "and whole burnt sacrifice upon thy altar." He answered him: A burnt-offering is frequent (besides being a daily sacrifice, it was offered by many individuals, and all could not get rich), but incense is not frequent.

Rabba said: You will not find a young scholar who decides questions in Law, who should not be of the tribe of Levi or Issachar. Levi, as it is written [ibid.]: "They (the tribe of Levi) shall teach thy ordinances unto Jacob; and Issachar, because it is written [1 Chron. xii. 32]: "And of the children of Issachar, those who had understanding of the times." But why not also Jehudah? As it is written [Ps. ix. 9]: "Judah is my lawgiver." I mean, to deduce the traditional

sayings from the written Law (this can only do those of Levi and Issachar).

R. Johanan said: For the evening daily offering, lots were never drawn; he who had drawn the lot for that of the morning performed this service also.

MISHNA: [The parts of] the daily sacrifice are offered [according to circumstances] by nine, ten, eleven, twelve--no less and no more. How so? Itself by nine. During the Feast [of Booths] one carries a pitcher of water; thus it is ten. Toward evening by eleven, itself by nine, and two carrying two measures 1 of wood. On Sabbath by eleven, itself by nine, and two having in their hands two spoonfuls of frankincense for the showbread. On the Sabbath which occurs in the middle of the Feast [of Booths], one carrying a pitcher of water [added to the eleven].

GEMARA: Said R. Abba, according to others Rami b. Hama or R. Johanan: Water must be offered during the Feast of Tabernacles only with the morning daily offering, but not with that of evening. This we deduce from the Mishna which states: When the Sabbath occurs during the festival, one is added for carrying water. If water had to be offered with the evening offering also, then it would occur on another day of the festival than a Sabbath, as two carry measures of wood, and a third would be needed for carrying the water (and twelve were needed).

We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Jochai said: Whence do we deduce that the daily evening offering requires two measures of wood, carried by two priests? Since it is written [Lev. i. 7], "And (they shall) lay the wood in order," and as this cannot occur in case of the morning daily offering, as it is written [ibid. vi. 5], "The priest shall burn wood upon it every morning, and he shall lay in order upon it the burnt-offering," we must suppose, then, that what has been said before, applies to the daily evening offering.

R. Hiya taught: The lots amounted sometimes to thirteen, sometimes to fourteen, or fifteen, or sixteen (fourteen on the Feast of Tabernacles, for the pitcher of water; fifteen on the Sabbath; sixteen for the Sabbath during the Feast of Tabernacles).

[paragraph continues] But did we not learn, seventeen? That Boraitha is not according to R. Eliezer b. Jacob, but according to R. Jehudah.

MISHNA: A ram was offered by eleven: the flesh by five; the entrails, fine flour, and wine by two, respectively. A bull is offered by twenty-four: the head by one, the hind leg by two, the tail by two, and the [left] hind leg by two; the chest by one, the windpipe by three, the two forelegs by two, the two flanks by two; the entrails, fine flour, and wine by three, respectively. This refers to public sacrifices. A private sacrifice could be offered, if one chose, by one. In respect of skinning and cutting to pieces, both [sacrifices] are equal [private or public, both may be skinned, etc., by a stranger].

GEMARA: We have learned in a Boraitha: The flaying and cutting into pieces may be performed by a layman. Said Hezekiah: Whence do we deduce this? Because it is written [Lev. i.

7]: "And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar." Hence only the fire must be put by priests, but the flaying may be done by others. But this verse is needful for its own sake, how can it be deduced from it? Said R. Simeon b. Ashi: I once heard how Abayi explained it to his son as follows: It is written [ibid. 5]: "*He* shall kill." A layman is meant. How is this known? Because it is written [Num. xviii. 7], "And thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priesthood," one might say, that the slaughtering is also meant. Therefore it is written: "And he shall kill the young steer before the Lord and the sons of Aaron the priest shall bring near the blood." From this we see that all that precedes the bringing near of the blood may be done by a layman. And it is also written [Lev. iii. 2]: "And he shall lay his hand . . . and kill it." From this it can be deduced that the layman who has laid his hand upon it may kill it.

[Rashi explains, that all this is stated in a Mishna elsewhere, and Abayi explained to his son that what Hezkiah had said is in accordance with that Mishna.] Now let us see: We have concluded that from the sprinkling of the blood onwards all must be performed by priests; and the fire is put upon the altar later. Why is it then necessary to say that Aaron's sons should do it? This is to exclude the flaying and cutting into pieces, which, though they come after the sprinkling of the blood, may be done by a layman.

It was taught: R. Assi in the name of R. Johanan said: If a layman has put the two measures of wood on the altar, he is

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liable to capital punishment, as it is a service belonging to the following day (and not the final service of the night). Rabba opposed: According to this supposition (that it is a service of the day), a lot had to be drawn? Rabba has forgotten what we have learned above, that he who drew the lot to lift the ashes, also obtained the privilege to arrange the measures of wood. Said Mar Zutra, according to others R. Ashi: How can it be said it is a service of the next day? Did we not learn further in the Mishna: "Go and see whether it is time to slaughter"? If the arranging of the wood was also a service of the next day, why was not this mentioned likewise (for if it were done when it was yet night it would be invalid)? This is no difficulty.

If the animal was slaughtered before the time, it was invalid, but if the wood was put on before the time, it could be removed and replaced by a priest after daybreak. [1](#)

Footnotes

[31:1](#) The Talmud translates *Telaim* lambs, but the ordinary versions regard it as a proper name.

[32:1](#) Literally it is thus, but translators have it, "When he had reigned one year."

[37:1](#) The Hebrew term is Gizrin--•••••. After Jost, we have translated it in Shekalim, VI., *f.*, p. 28, "cords"; but as it is too heavy for two men to carry two cords of wood, we have here translated only "measures," and according to all commentators on the Mishna it is a certain measure of wood for the altar, unknown to us.

[39:1](#) In the text there is still another interpretation, that R. Johanan means to say that the service in question is but the final service of the night and does not belong to the day; and again, questions and answers are raised and made, and it is so complicated that both Rashi and Tosaphoth could not explain it without additions and omissions, and the result seems to be, after all, that the service belongs to the day. We have therefore, contrary to our method, omitted it.

[Next: Chapter III: Time of the Daily Offering; Entry of a Layman into the Temple Court; Order of High-Priests' Service on Day of Atonement](#)